

“Illicit drive-through sex”, “Migrant Prostitutes”, and “Highly Educated Escorts”: productions of ‘acceptable’ sex work in New Zealand news media
2010 – 2016.

By

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ABSTRACT:

In 2003 New Zealand passed the Prostitution Reform Act, decriminalising sex work and associated activities. This thesis examines news media representations of sex work and workers from 2010 to 2016 to determine how these texts construct sex work in a post-decriminalisation environment. The key questions this thesis considers are: which sex workers are presented by journalists as acceptable, and what conditions are attached to that acceptability? Using media studies frameworks to analyse the texts, this thesis demonstrates that in a decriminalised environment the media plays a regulatory role, with the power to dictate what modes of sex work are acceptable largely shifting away from the courts. In the absence of a debate about the il/legality of sex work, a different kind of binaristic construction emerges, frequently related to public visibility or invisibility.

This thesis uses discourse analysis techniques to examine texts relating to three key media events: the repeated attempts legally restrict where street sex workers could work in South Auckland, texts about migrant sex workers around the time of the Rugby World Cup, and texts about independent or agency-based sex workers. My methodology involved examining the texts to establish who was situated as an expert through discourse representation, what words were used to describe sex workers and their jobs, and then discerning what narratives recurred in the texts about each event.

My analysis indicates that in a decriminalised environment news media representations of sex work afford acceptability to those who are less affected by structural oppressions: predominantly young, white, cisgendered, middle or upper-class women who see few clients and work indoors. However, for workers who fall outside these bounds news reports continue to reproduce existing sex work stigma. I highlight how racism and transmisogyny frequently play into news representations of sex work, even under a framework of decriminalisation, in ways that serve to avoid acknowledging the work of (some) sex workers as legitimate labour, and how transmisogyny is used in attempts to exert and justify bodily control over sex workers. By considering how these representations function to

undermine the legitimacy of the work, this thesis demonstrates the ways news media functions as a site at which stigma about sex work is produced, reinforced, or validated for a non-sex working audience.

Additionally, this thesis argues that the ways acceptable sex work is produced are predicated on agency and independent workers' performance of choice and enjoyment, requiring the actual labour involved in sex work to be obscured or minimised. This obfuscation of the "work" of sex work makes it more difficult to advocate for improved employment rights and conditions, which is heightened due to the advertorial function of some news media texts. Furthermore, the ways in which sex workers' narratives are constructed is also indicative of which workers are or are not acceptable: only certain workers are permitted to speak for themselves, and frequently only when their accounts are supported by other, non-sex working, voices.

This thesis therefore concludes that while news media represents some limited forms of sex work as acceptable, the ways in which this is discursively achieved restrict the ability of workers to self-advocate. Furthermore, even workers represented as acceptable are in a precarious position, with this acceptability being mediated by their ability or willingness to adhere to specific, heteronormatively mediated, identity categories, and to inhabit a specific enthusiasm in their voiced feelings about their work.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

In June 2003 the Prostitution Reform Act (PRA) passed its third reading in the New Zealand Parliament by one vote. The model which was implemented decriminalised all forms of sex work in New Zealand, including working in brothels, working independently indoors, street sex work, and sex workers working together for safety and support. Some restrictions exist on who may work as a sex worker, excluding anyone under the age of 18 or in New Zealand on a temporary visa¹, and regulating how many sex workers may work together before there is a requirement for a brothel licence to be obtained. The legislative change replaced a previous model in which many activities surrounding sex work were illegal, including brothel keeping and solicitation. In the ensuing 14 years, New Zealand's model of decriminalisation has been a subject of interest to researchers internationally (Warnock and Wheen, 2012; Bruckert and Hannem, 2013), while the impacts of the decriminalisation of sex work have been studied from a health and sociological perspective, notably by G. Abel and others, within New Zealand (G. Abel, Fitzgerald, Brunton, 2007; G. Abel, Fitzgerald, Brunton, 2009; Brunton et al, 2010; Armstrong, 2011). However, decriminalisation and its impacts have mostly been examined through the lens of health services and sociology. This thesis deepens an understanding of decriminalised sex work by using the lens of media studies theory to consider how the work is discursively constructed. This thesis aims to investigate the media representation of sex work and workers under a model of decriminalisation that has now been in place for some years, looking at news media discourses in order to establish what perspectives are most accessible and, therefore, persuasive to the general public, who may otherwise have little first-hand knowledge of the industry. Van Brunschot, Sydnie, and Krull argue that newspapers are a key mechanism by which the general public understand social problems and play an important role in claims-making about people and behaviours that are understood through this lens (2000, p. 48).

In this thesis, I consider and analyse the ways in which sex work and workers are discursively constructed in New Zealand news media post-decriminalisation. The kinds of workers and

¹ Only New Zealand citizens and permanent residents are permitted to work legally in New Zealand under the PRA. Those on student visas, working visas, and holiday visas are not protected by decriminalisation.

modes of sex work discussed is limited to adult women, both cis and trans, engaged in full-service sex work. In collecting news media samples for analysis, I considered predominantly television news broadcasts, radio, and newspapers. In addition, I searched magazines such as *North and South*, *Metro*, *Next*, and others that publish longer form journalism pieces, as well as segments from television programmes such as *The Paul Henry Show*² and *One's Breakfast*, and from current affairs programmes such as *20/20* or *60 Minutes*; and longer radio broadcasts, both from the publicly funded Radio NZ and from commercial broadcasters.

The coverage considered has been limited to items aired or published between 2010 and 2016, beginning seven years after the passing of the PRA in June 2003, following the publication of a review into the impact of the PRA on the sex industry in New Zealand by the Prostitution Law Review Committee in 2008. The reason for this post-decriminalisation time frame being selected is that after the Act was passed the public discussion around sex work necessarily moved beyond a focus on the question of whether New Zealand's approach should be to decriminalise prostitution. This is likewise the reason New Zealand has been chosen as a site for this research: the legal status of sex work allows for a greater freedom for workers to speak with the media about all aspects of their work without concern that they will attract unwanted attention from law enforcement. The area of interest for this thesis lies beyond the repetitive discussion of whether sex work is moral or immoral, instead focusing on the question of how sex work is discursively produced as a form of work. Further, it considers whether these discursive constructions require that some workers – divided along multiple lines, including class and race – should derive pleasure from their work, and the impacts that this expectation has on the ability of sex workers to have their profession respected as legitimate labour.

KEY QUESTIONS

The questions guiding my thesis relate to the acceptability of sex work and workers, and the ways in which stigma against some forms of sex work is produced within news media texts.

² A New Zealand current affairs program, hosted by the eponymous Paul Henry.

Key areas of enquiry, with some intersection of these questions, include: who is an acceptable sex worker and what makes them acceptable? What conditions are placed upon acceptability, and who is this notion of acceptability functionally accessible to? Which sex workers are deemed unacceptable, and how is this category constructed and enforced? How is the physical and emotional labour involved both in sex work and in discussing the work with media outlets either acknowledged or obscured? Following the question of emotional labour, I also consider: is the notion of acceptability related to a convincing performance of enjoyment by workers?

These specific questions were selected in order to explore the production and application of stigma in a post-decriminalisation legal setting. The expansion of related questions following the initial consideration of acceptability and how it is selected and applied relate to a necessity to explore the possibility such productions impact upon the ability of workers to advocate for improved labour conditions, and a more nuanced respect for their work. These questions allow for an exploration of how the stigma that has traditionally been attached to engaging in sex work changes or is perpetuated under a framework of decriminalisation. Furthermore, when considering how this stigma endures, I also address whether some mechanisms for establishing an acceptable model of sex work do in fact negatively impact already marginalised groups engaged in sex work, and, ultimately, leave acceptability open only to a small subset of workers who can adequately perform and display a particular model of respectability. Through this, I hope to contribute to a greater understanding of the mechanisms by which the sex work stigma changes under a decriminalisation model, instead of vanishing. I note, however, that the thesis does not engage in a comparative analysis between pre- and post-decriminalisation news media coverage. While at times I discuss aspects of the analysed coverage which likely could only occur under a framework of decriminalisation, the lack of analysis of pre-decriminalisation media coverage within this thesis means that such an analysis is outside the scope of my research.

An interrogation of how various legal models can functionally serve to increase stigma is extensively explored by Scoular in “What’s Law got to do With it?” (2010). Writing specifically about the Netherlands, Scoular considers which workers are systematically excluded from more formalised working arrangements because of their age, race, or health, and how the

changes in Dutch law therefore functionally resulted in improvements in work conditions for only a small subset of workers (p. 21). The issues within the Netherlands are different to those considered in this thesis, but Scoular's work indicates that these unintended consequences are a recognised phenomenon in the wake of changes to the legality of sex work.

Scoular's work on the production of acceptability and of stigma being influenced but not wholly informed by the legal status of sex work is also echoed by Brunton, Fitzgerald, Healy, and Abel's work on stigma in New Zealand post-decriminalisation (2010, pp. 239–240). Summarising previous work on stigma and its production, Brunton et al argue that it is produced through existing structures of power and dominance, and must be understood through these lenses. As such, the work within this thesis on the production and function of stigma, particularly against already marginalised groups, is supported by their work in this area – the stigma produced is informed or assisted by the existing marginalisations experienced by some sex workers.

Among the key markers of acceptability which became apparent throughout my analysis are: the ability to be functionally invisible or undetectable as a sex worker, to work very little, to work very discreetly, and to work indoors. This extends beyond simply being invisible as a worker, and into making invisible the effortful work and emotional labour that is carried out by workers: the delegitimising of sex work as a profession. This attempt to delegitimise the work then results in sex workers being grouped as separate to 'legitimate' business owners or employees, or being defined as a menace or threat to other businesspeople. When considering the media coverage of agency and independent sex workers, I also examine the way in which news media coverage may, in many respects, serve an advertorial function (advertising to attract both clients and staff), which operates in tandem with the obfuscation of the emotional labour involved for many sex workers. Finally, I will discuss how this construction of acceptability and the erasure of the labour involved in sex work functions to make it more difficult to advocate for and produce a discourse that is conducive to improving the labour rights of the industry as a whole.

With this in mind, the key theoretical areas which this thesis engages with are media theory (particularly pertaining to news media), sex work theory, queer and trans theory (particularly

in the chapter on street sex work), and questions of emotional and affective labour, with my work contributing further knowledge to media theory and sex work theory. The choice to use these frameworks was based on preliminary gathering of data, and observations about recurring themes and groups within the news media texts selected for study. As such, the decision to use queer and trans theory to frame the street sex work chapter – because of the evident importance of considering the transmisogyny which transfeminine workers are subject to – was made following initial analysis, in order to carry out a full and nuanced analysis of the coverage. The use of these theoretical bases allows the chapter to explore the intersection of stigmas that particularly affect trans people who engage in street-based work, and to properly contextualise the language used about them. Similarly, the decision to use theories of emotional and affective labour followed earlier reading in sex work theory that gave indications that this was a recurring theme in the existing literature, providing an additional lens to understand the work undertaken in dealing both with clients and with media enquiries.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE LITERATURE

As noted above, the key areas that this thesis contributes to include sex work theory, media theory, and, to a lesser extent, trans theory. This thesis expands on existing work that has identified specific stigmas against sex work and workers, through the application of media studies frameworks to knowledge generated by sex work studies. It also provides further evidence of how media theories and queer theory may be applied to questions relating to the acceptability of various modes of sex work, with news media texts selected because of their ability to produce a cultural definition of what sex work is. Additionally, it contributes through a demonstration of the ways in which stigma shifts but remains present under a model of decriminalisation, and how even workers who are permitted to occupy positions of acceptability are placed in a precarious position in which their acceptance is dependent upon being willing to display an ‘appropriate’ emotional engagement with the work. Much of the existing research considering news media coverage of sex work has a particular focus on violence against sex workers or focuses on their representation in criminalised environments; however, my thesis identifies a specific gap in the research that deepens the understanding

of how sex work and workers are constructed in news media texts (Grant, 2014; Jiwani and Young, 2006; Shah, 2013).

My expansion of existing knowledge is made possible by the uncommon legislative framework in New Zealand, setting it apart from existing research, which is located primarily in areas where sex work is criminalised or legally restricted. The analysis in this thesis provides an insight into how stigma about sex workers and their job develops and changes within a decriminalised legislative environment, examined specifically through the lens of news media texts. This provides a new frame of reference through which to consider the impacts and expressions of stigma about sex work. As discussed in detail in Chapters Two and Four, work already exists that discusses efforts to bar or remove street sex workers from specific geographic locations; however these works consider only areas where the work itself is illegal, not locations with decriminalisation. This makes the New Zealand model a rare opportunity to consider how stigma is enforced and produced by sites of power outside of the courts. Therefore, by looking at similarities and differences in how street sex work is constructed as a social problem under decriminalised and criminalised models, the ways in which decriminalisation does or does not help workers' acceptability can be better understood.

Following the decriminalisation of sex work, discussions can no longer be framed exclusively or predominantly through posing the question of if sex work should be legal or illegal. This distinction produces a different avenue of enquiry than that existing in areas (or time periods) where sex work is mostly or wholly illegal, or is heavily legislated. As demonstrated throughout my analysis of news media coverage post-decriminalisation, a key contention based on my findings is that, since the passing of the PRA, the power to produce stigma against certain groups of sex workers – and to a degree to determine what sex work is and is not acceptable – has passed from the courts to the media. S. Abel in “All the News You Need to Know?” (2004) discusses how framing within news media reinforces existing dominant paradigms, and this succinctly explains the mechanisms underpinning the production of some forms of sex work as acceptable and others as unacceptable. Abel is speaking specifically about the representation and framing of news stories about Māori, but many of the issues of framing that Abel describes can also be applied to news media coverage of sex work. Abel, for example, demonstrates that the problem of framing reinforcing existing hierarchies stems

not from a deliberate reinforcement of the status quo, but from an absence of an ability to imagine other points of view or consider how specific events and developments may be understood and experienced by different parties.

I demonstrate this adherence to dominant and existing narratives throughout my analysis chapters, considering how particular ways of engaging in sex work are framed as either acceptable, with normalising language used to discuss the workers in question, or as unacceptable, with the language used functioning to produce the workers as the other. Who or what constitutes an acceptable sex worker or an acceptable way to carry out sex work is produced or established in varied ways, depending on who is being discussed. My analysis covers both strict textual analysis, in terms of who is permitted to speak and what words are used to describe, them as well as thematic analysis, which looks in more depth at what models or schemas recur when discussing different groups. By combining these two approaches I demonstrate how this production of acceptability or unacceptability occurs both on a surface level in individual texts, and in a more ingrained systemic manner that reflects ongoing and developing discursive constructions in the years following decriminalisation.

FORMAT OF THE THESIS

Later in this introduction I deliver an overview of the media studies frameworks I used to provide a methodological framework for this thesis, establishing its position within the discipline. My second chapter provides considers existing research into sex work, relevant to my specific enquiries, as well as research from complementary areas that relate to the specific modes of sex work analysed within the three central chapters (specifically: street sex work, migrant sex work, and independent/agency sex work). The second chapter also considers the interdisciplinary theories that are used to ground this thesis, and indicates the linkages between various theoretical disciplines which my research contributes to. In my third chapter I discuss the present legal situation for sex workers in New Zealand in more detail than has been provided within this introduction. Additionally, I identify the limitations of my research and the specific scope of my analysis in detail, and define industry-specific terms as they are used and understood within the New Zealand context. This chapter also provides an in-depth explanation of the specific methodological approaches that are used to gather media texts,

and to identify and analyse the key themes present within them, including the theories of emotional labour that are applied as a framework for discussing the frequently obfuscated labour of sex work.

My analysis is separated into three distinct themes, each covering a different media event, with the events selected based on a preliminary search of news media texts within the selected time frame. In the first I examine news media coverage related to street sex workers in South Auckland and Papatoetoe, focusing on discussions about the attempts by the Manukau City Council and Auckland City Council to pass a by-law restricting the locations in which they could work. Many of the workers within this population are trans women or transfeminine people, and a greater proportion are Māori or Pasifika than in the overall sex work population within New Zealand, so this chapter has a strong focus on the intersection of marginalisations experienced by workers who occupy one or both of these identity categories. A key focus that emerges here is visibility – visibility of both sex work and workers in public spaces, issues of public/private approaches to sexuality, the conception of the sex worker as always working and always available, and trans visibility specifically. Relating to this is the way in which non-white and non-cis bodies are sexualised and persistently constructed as an implicit literal and moral threat, and how these frequently violent understandings and constructions of othered bodies impact upon how street sex workers are controlled and represented. Another dominant theme explored within this chapter, relating to my exploration of acceptability, is how street sex workers are systematically produced as being outside of the community they live in, and the implications of this on their ability to work safely.

My fourth chapter is centred around coverage of migrant sex workers in New Zealand, who are not explicitly protected under decriminalisation; the PRA prohibits anyone on a temporary visa (a work visa, student visa, or visitor visa) from working in the sex industry (Elms, Immigration New Zealand, via Tan, 2012). The decision to make this an area of analysis occurred largely because migrant workers are one of the only groups not afforded the legal protection of decriminalisation in New Zealand, and due to the concentration of news texts about migrant workers clustered during the selected time frame. The texts selected for analysis focus particularly on coverage of migrant workers around the period when the Rugby

World Cup was held in New Zealand (in 2011), partly because of the way in which this international sporting event synthesised multiple anxieties and issues of national identity within New Zealand. The extensive focus on the nationality of sex workers, combined with an analysis of which migrant sex workers are deemed unacceptable, occurs against a backdrop of a focus on tourism relating to the Rugby World Cup, revealing specific concerns about migration and belonging in immigrant populations in New Zealand. A secondary area of focus for this chapter is international student sex workers, and the way they are constructed as lacking agency and being vulnerable victims. The analysis of this news media coverage reveals how migrant sex workers, in many cases, are simultaneously produced as being both manipulated and manipulative, with much coverage focusing on their failure to adhere to visa conditions, or on them constituting a threat to New Zealand citizens – either other workers or clients. Evident within much of this coverage is how acceptable or ‘legal’ work is conflated with whiteness: almost exclusively, the migrant workers discussed within the analysed texts are Asian, predominantly Chinese.

My final analytical chapter considers news media representations of agency and independent sex workers, who typically work on call and indoors. A key focus in this chapter is the construction of an acceptable worker as being one who is functionally invisible as a sex worker, with the acceptability of some sex workers based upon all elements of their person aside from their job. Furthermore, within this chapter I explore the ways in which agency and independent sex workers are called upon to carry out uncompensated and unrecognised emotional work, both in their dealings with clients and in speaking with journalists. The media function here to obscure the nature of their work as work, instead recasting it as a pleasurable enterprise, which is undertaken enthusiastically, and only for a brief period (with few clients). The advertorial function of the news media coverage is most obvious here: the invisibility of this group of sex workers occurs partly because the effortful labour they undertake is rendered invisible, making it more appealing as an “authentic” experience to potential clients. The invisibilising of both the work and the workers uncovers a key point that will be expanded upon in Chapter Seven: the relationship that exists between particular economic modes of productivity within neo-liberalism and the granting of acceptability. Chapter Six also establishes other points which are explored in greater detail in Chapter Seven: the differences

between media constructions of various modes of sex work and how the production of acceptability benefits only a small subset of workers.

FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS OF NEWS MEDIA TEXTS

Before establishing in detail the literature that pertains to my field of research more specifically, in Chapter Two, I wish to establish the theorists used to anchor this thesis within the media studies discipline. In considering which literature on media's function and media analysis to situate my methodological approach within, I identified issues which had been raised by multiple theorists taking an interdisciplinary approach with a greater focus on sex work studies, regarding the influence news media has on public perceptions of sex work and workers. I noted a recurring theme in multiple texts concerning the media depictions of sex workers which identified similarities in which narratives about sex workers were given more precedence or coverage. In establishing my methodological underpinnings I sought media studies frameworks that could help to explain and contextualise these narrative recurrences, and give a theoretical basis for considering the production of texts that heavily influence public perception of a group.

Among the academic texts that are used as a basis for my own theoretical approach to the framing and construction of news are Galtung and Ruge's "Structuring and Selecting News" (1965/1981), which names 12 specific values that contribute to whether an issue or event is newsworthy, as well as work such as that by Harcup and O'Neill, whose 2001 text "What is News? Galtung and Ruge Revisited" offers critiques of Galtung and Ruge's identified news values – particularly in light of a changing news cycle since their article's original publication, and draw upon Gill's 2007 book *Gender and the Media*. Additionally, I reference S. Abel (2004) and her article "All the News You Need to Know?", which uses news media coverage of Māori issues, Māori people, and Māori viewpoints as a case study to illustrate the ways in which media coverage functions hegemonically, providing examples of how and why this occurs, despite it not necessarily being a deliberate intention of journalists. The specific points that underpin the work carried out within this thesis are expanded upon below.

Galtung and Ruge in “Structuring and Selecting News” identify 12 distinct characteristics that influence whether an event or trend will be considered newsworthy, referring to these characteristics as ‘news values’ (1965/1981).³ In my analysis of the representations of sex workers in New Zealand news media I draw upon these characteristics as part of my analysis of how a particular piece of media functions. For example, the characteristics that make a story ‘news’ may vary depending on whether the workers being discussed work in brothels or engage in street sex work. Among the news values that are most clearly applicable to the news media representations of sex work and workers in New Zealand, or that influence how these stories are understood and framed, are: frequency, rarity/unusualness, and being meaningful or culturally similar to the intended audience. The news values of an event or story being culturally intelligible to a particular audience, and the desire to make a story seem rare or unusual, partially explain some of the coverage analysed within this thesis. Many texts about street sex workers spoke more about local business owners (excluding the sex workers) than directly to the workers themselves, or the New Zealand Prostitutes Collective (NZPC), which can be understood as an attempt to make the resulting news media present a point of view culturally similar to the intended audience of the primarily print media in which these representations appeared. Further to this, the imperative to make a story seem rare or unusual establishes why many stories about independent indoor sex workers highlight their education or family background, or comment on presumed ‘unexpected’ characteristics about them; it indicates a subversion of the expected stereotypes about sex workers. As well as adhering to the ‘rare and unusual’ news value, this may also partially be explained by the news value of ‘elite people’, when sex workers are produced, or present themselves as ‘elite’ within their marketing. Galtung and Ruge’s 12 values therefore provide a useful indicator of

³ The values are: 1. frequency, particularly when considering which media an event will be reported in with events developing daily more likely to be reported in daily newspapers, 2. amplitude of an event, 3. signal versus noise; an event with clear meaning is preferred, 4. meaningful or culturally intelligible to the consumer of the media, 5. news which can be predicted or expected, 6. further to points 4 and 5 the event must also be exceptional or rare in some manner, 7. once something has been established as ‘news’ it’s highly likely it will continue to be understood as newsworthy for some time, 8. the composition of a unit of news media (an hour long broadcast) will relate to whether or not an item is added as news depending on how it would impact the whole. The further four values that Galtung and Ruge identify as occurring specifically in western nations are: 9. an event that concerns “elite” nations will be more likely to be reported, 10. an event that concerns “elite” people is more likely to be reported, 11. if an event can be understood as occurring because of the actions of specific people it is more likely to be reported, 12. the more negative the consequences of an event the more likely it will be considered news.

what specific features about the selected sex work media events may have made them attractive enough to journalists and editors to justify the repeated coverage of each, even without all being linked to a discrete event of high amplitude (stories on migrant workers that linked them to the Rugby World Cup being the obvious exception here.)

In their critical consideration of the applicability of Galtung and Ruge's news values in the early 2000s, Harcup and O'Neill attempt to apply the 12 values to stories from British tabloid newspapers to determine the values most prevalent in published stories ("What is News? Galtung and Ruge Revisited", 2001). In their analysis, Harcup and O'Neill determine that many news stories analysed as part of their work did not deal with a specific event, rather related to a series of 'mini-events', or were based on trends and speculation instead of discrete events. As part of their work to summarise the further research carried out since the publication of Galtung and Ruge's original list of news values they cite Vasterman (1995 as cited in Harcup and O'Neill, 2001, p. 265), who argues one of the weaknesses of Galtung and Ruge's approach is that it presumes journalists report the news, rather than creating and constructing it. Hall (1973, p. 181-184) argues that news values must be viewed as formalising a specific ideology of news rather than as a set of practices independent from overarching social hierarchies. This point is critical to my interrogation of the ways in which news media representations of sex workers shape the production of an acceptable sex worker; the media reports on sex work are already filtered and framed by existing hierarchical and hegemonic structures.

Harcup and O'Neill also argue that the 'tabloidisation' of news⁴ has led to a greater number of articles that aim to entertain in addition to – or rather than – simply informing or having any specific adherence to news values. They suggest that there is a preference for stories that provide entertaining or compelling images, which seems likely to be in part an explanation for trend pieces on sex work in New Zealand, which frequently include salacious images or video. This trend is further evidenced by the extensive focus on the physical acts that make

⁴ Harcup and O'Neill discuss this as the growth of "tabloid news values" in more traditionally non-tabloid outlets. They write: "a story with a good picture, or picture opportunity, combined with any reference to an A-list celebrity, royalty, sex, TV or a cuddly animal appears to make a heady brew that news editors find almost impossible to resist". (2001, p. 276)

up sex workers' jobs, rather than the more mundane administrative tasks that they are more likely to focus on when speaking of their own work.

In "All the News You Need to Know?" (2004), S. Abel expands on the construction of news, also referencing Galtung and Ruge's news values as a key influence on what is reported and when, as well as providing a specific insight into New Zealand news media which further aided my decision to use her text as a key part of my own framework. Abel discusses competing notions of what news is, noting three viewpoints are: news as 'just happening'; events uncovered by news workers and journalists, as something constructed which, intentionally or not, reflects the views of those who create it; or as a necessary result of the structures of news production organisations. Abel posits most scholars would agree that the news media is fundamentally hegemonic, and the ways 'newsworthy' events are identified helps to further attitudes that reaffirm the position of dominant groups. This hegemonic model differs from a 'manipulative model' of news production because it does not presume the presenting of a specific set of ideologies is necessarily deliberate, rather that media workers do what they assume is best or correct.

Gitlin (1980/2003, pp. 6-7) identifies how particular dominant frames are used within news media, and how the use of framing can influence the ways in which events are situated within a context to make them navigable to the intended audience. This is seen in the fourth news value identified by Galtung and Ruge: something needs to be 'meaningful' in the sense of being culturally similar to the intended audience in order to be intelligible to them, as in emphasising the views on street sex work from other community members, rather than workers, with these views perceived as more similar to the intended audience of the news media.

S. Abel argues that the three key reasons why dominant framing persists are:

- news constraints and organisational pressures such as time and budget restraints.
- an adherence to traditional news values.
- a lack of cultural diversity in newsrooms.

Abel also notes the three reasons overlap at points and reinforce each other (p. 188). Abel is speaking specifically about the lack of Māori perspectives in New Zealand news coverage but a failure to access industry knowledge may also contribute to the specific kinds of framing that occur with coverage of the sex industry. Abel summarises framing by saying that it places events and issues within a particular context, noting that while agenda setting (situating a particular issue as newsworthy or important through the frequency with which it is covered in news media) tells news consumers what to think about, framing tells them how to think about it (p. 193).

Bridging the gap between analysis of news values and news production, other commentators discuss the imbalance of women in newsrooms and the tendency to present news that presumes a framing based on masculinity and fuels the male gaze. In “Where are the Women?” (Harp et al, 2014) discuss the gender split in newsrooms in the US, analysing both writers and decision makers, commenting that women hold only 34.1% of decision making positions in news agencies (p. 291) and adding that women are less likely to be cited as sources than men and are more likely to have their comments kept brief and given less prominence when they are featured (p. 292).

Everbach in “In Newsrooms and Stories Women are Still Absent” (2012) also examines the underrepresentation of women, noting that in television news (again, based on US figures) women’s representation in television news is 40%, and in radio news it sits at 22%. Finally, Ross and Carter in “Women and News: A Long and Winding Road” (2011) write from a UK perspective and consider data from the Global Media Monitoring Project, dating from 1995 to their time of writing. They note that while women’s representation in news media has made movements towards equality, it has failed to fully achieve this goal. Additionally, they refer to Hartley’s work on gender imbalances in how news is framed and reported, saying news is presented “through the eyes of men” (1982, p. 146), and contend little has changed since the time of Hartley’s analysis in the early 1980s. As with the observation made by Harp et al, they note a prominent theme in feminist media studies theory is the observation that most news sources are middle aged, middle class, white, and frequently men.

In my analysis of media objects in New Zealand news media I consider which sources are most frequently accessed for stories about sex work, and examine the commonalities between these sources, referring back to Galtung and Ruge's news value of cultural intelligibility as a means of explaining why these sources are so prevalent. The 2015 Global Media Monitoring Project's New Zealand report confirms this is still a pressing issue in New Zealand. On the day when monitoring was conducted in 2015, only 18% of news subjects were women, although 47% of New Zealand journalists were women. This suggests despite an almost equal representation in news rooms, the sources used for news media remain largely male (Fountaine, 2015, p. 4). Within my analysis it becomes apparent that who is permitted to speak about sex work shapes the perspectives and narratives which come to the fore. While the degree to which sex workers themselves are absent from the discussion varies between different modes of work, a recurring theme is allowing other sources to speak for and over them. Using a framework which considers the trends among who has the authority to speak, as outlined above, deepens the understanding which can be gained from this analysis.

Additional research indicates similarly low representation of women in newsrooms in other western nations (Edstrom, 2013 cited in Byerly, 2014). This can be contextualised by considering the presumed audience of news media articles about sex workers, and while the cited data is not derived from New Zealand, it shows a strong trend exists across various countries. Additionally, this has implications for the point raised by Abel that journalists and news producers who are outside of the group they are reporting on may simply not consider other ways in which an issue could be considered or framed. A newsroom that has few women – and fewer still women who are also Māori, Pasifika, trans, or belonging to other minority or underrepresented groups – may be unable to present stories about sex workers within these groups in a nuanced and comprehensive manner. Instead, lacking a knowledge of what questions to ask or how the interplay of multiple oppressions may occur, the narratives presented may miss important details that would give greater depth to the coverage.

Finally, for a feminist approach to media as a whole, not just the news process specifically, I consider Gill's *Gender and the Media* (2007) and McRobbie's *The Aftermath of Feminism* (2009). Gill discusses Foucault's notion of the panopticon (pp. 60–64) and relates it to a relentless self-monitoring by women, pressuring them to simultaneously adhere to a specific

kind of femininity, and constantly check their own adherence to the same. I argue that this description of self-monitoring is also applicable to the ways in which sex workers represent their work in the media. The self-monitoring in this case is based on considering the ways in which they are being observed, and their limited ability to shape the views that observers (the audience) will take of them. Furthermore, particularly if the coverage also serves an advertorial function, workers are likely to be cognisant of the way they are expected to behave in order to access greater acceptability, fulfilling the trend identified by Gill of behaviour being self-regulated according to societal expectations.

Sex workers are already considered to be transgressing feminine norms by monetizing attractiveness and attention, which they are expected to deliver uncompensated. The impact of this can be related to Gill's point about women being expected to carry out media-encouraged self-censorship. As part of what Galtung and Ruge identify as news being 'rare or unusual', this suggests that highlighting normatively feminine aspects of (particularly agency or independent) workers' subjectivities is a framing mechanism to enhance the perceived newsworthiness of these narratives. The Foucauldian approach also stresses the role that confession plays in upholding systems of discipline and power, and this can likewise be applied to the desire for intimate details about the specific acts that comprise the work of sex workers in order that they can be judged as acceptable or unacceptable.

Gill also considers multiple possible definitions of "postfeminism" as a term, including an epistemological break in media analysis of cultural products, which calls for a greater grounding in intersectional approaches, understanding that gender cannot be wholly unlinked from other axes of marginalisation (pp. 249 – 250). Further linking Gill with the other key theorists identified earlier in this subsection, in her chapter "News, Gender and Journalism" Gill writes: "news is a cultural product that reflects the dominant cultural assumptions about who and what is important" (p. 114), a sentiment similar to the definitions of framing provided by S. Abel. This is relevant for analysing media representations of the sex industry in New Zealand, as the information included, and the information excluded, provides an insight into what dominant social groups consider relevant and important. Again, a clear linkage is seen through Galtung and Ruge, S. Abel, and Gill: all three in various ways identify the manner in which news media indicates the values of a dominant cultural group, making it

a useful lens through which to understand the perception of marginalised groups. Further, this reinforces my argument that post-decriminalisation the ability to determine who constitutes an acceptable sex worker has moved substantially from the courts to the media.

McRobbie, in *The Aftermath of Feminism* (2009), discusses the ways feminist ideals have been co-opted by institutions, including media outlets and media texts, to sell a specific individualistic, commercially driven identity to women. She proposes in her introduction that notions of “empowerment” and “choice” have been presented as key to this form of identity (p. 1). Later, McRobbie writes about the idea extended to women that their earning potential and success is based on a meritocracy: pushing the ideal of individual exceptionalism, rather than considering the structural inequalities that feminism sought to change (p. 16). Additionally, she examines the rhetoric of choice in ‘ironically’ sexist advertising, which frequently works on the presumption that the object of the gaze in advertisements is choosing to present herself as sexually available, reassuring male viewers the woman in question is displaying active desire and agency in this objectification (p. 17). This concept, that the impression of choice and empowerment is crucial for the enjoyment of the (presumed to be male) gaze when turned towards sexually available and appealing women in the media, is applicable to one of the primary questions that I seek to answer in my thesis. Specifically, if and how the idea of ‘choice’ as a key part of sex work being acceptable is presented within the analysed media texts, and the underlying reasons for this emphasis on choice.

One of my key considerations is if and how a particular form of attractiveness, and belonging to particular groups, is situated as required for inclusion in the category of “acceptable” sex worker, and in discussing this I cite McRobbie’s comments about the omnipresence of white bodies and white standards of beauty in sexual entertainment (pp. 42–43). This point from McRobbie is useful for comparing the differences in how sex workers are represented depending on whether they are working in a sector of the industry which is predominantly white (indoor agency workers), in a sector with a higher proportion of Māori and Pasifika people (street sex work), or are Asian migrant women (migrant sex workers).

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

As mentioned in Chapter One, the key theoretical area this thesis links to and builds upon is sex work theory/sex work studies, while also drawing upon elements from media theory, theories of emotional and affective labour, and queer and trans theory. The primary arguments made within this thesis are to sex work theory/sex work studies, but it is also theoretically supported by other fields, where necessary, within specific analysis chapters, for a deeper engagement with the examined texts.

Within many of these theoretical areas there exist sub-categories that are explored in some detail where finer grained consideration is pertinent to the subject matter of this thesis. I first discuss the theories applicable to the content of this thesis as a whole, followed by more specific investigations of the literature used in particular chapters. I begin with sex work theories pertinent to the key research questions answered by this thesis, including a summary of the history of sex work activism that sought to position sex work as legitimate work. I conclude by discussing existing research into media coverage of sex work, followed by an overview of the existing media theories related to the topics within this thesis. I then discuss established literature about representations of queer and particularly trans people, and the defining and descriptions of transmisogyny, and discrimination against trans women within media texts, which is extensively used in my analysis of coverage about street sex workers (Chapter Four). Much of this literature intersects with the work examined in the final part of this chapter, relating to public space and public sexuality, as well as the ways publicly discernible gender variance is frequently treated in the same manner as public sexuality. Through examining the existing literature that relates to media representations of sex work I determined my thesis contributes to establishing a stronger linkage between existing but separate theories of emotion work, invisibility as a sex worker, existing axes of oppression, and the possibility for specific groups of sex workers to be deemed acceptable.

EXISTING SCHOLARSHIP ON SEX WORK

In reviewing the existing literature about sex work, and sex work as it is discursively constructed and represented in the media, I have grouped my literature by five broad themes:

- writing by and about sex work activists and sex worker rights groups, particularly during the 1980s and early 1990s, which encompasses the ‘feminist sex wars’;
- sex work and the labour involved in it;
- texts addressing existing sex work media discourses;
- texts that consider whether existing media discourses around sex work support or critique the exploitation/empowerment binary the work is often framed within;
- the representation of sex work in the New Zealand media specifically, and sex work in a New Zealand context.

I begin with a brief overview of the sex wars and the activism that took place during the period pre-1990, in order to establish the origin of sex work being understood as a deliberate choice for (some) workers, and the origin of the term ‘sex work’ rather than ‘prostitution’⁵. Initial conceptions of sex work as a legitimate form of labour were also established in this period. From here I discuss literature that specifically refers to the labour involved in sex work, to provide a theoretical framework from which to examine media coverage that concerns itself with whether sex workers are engaged in a legitimate business or not, or that seeks to obscure some or all elements of the labour in their job, a need that became apparent following initial analysis of my selected texts. Following this I specifically consider existing literature that discusses media coverage of sex work. From the already documented discursive themes present in narratives about sex work, which are identified in multiple texts on this topic, I establish a basis for my methodological framework, and identify some of the key areas to consider when performing my media analysis. I also outline theories that discuss the exploitation/empowerment binary that exists within some media coverage of sex work, which I use in my analytical chapters to identify whether these false binaries are being reproduced within New Zealand news media coverage. Finally, I discuss sex work in a specifically New Zealand context.

⁵ Pheterson discusses the negative associations related to the word ‘prostitute’ in “The Whore Stigma” (1993), notably that it carries negative associations unconnected to the sex industry because of the way it is frequently applied as a slur. The use of ‘sex worker’ and ‘sex work’ can be seen emerging in *A Vindication on the Rights of Whores* (1989), with Pheterson switching to the term during the book’s second chapter.

The literature reviewed in this chapter was used to determine the selection criteria for news media texts I gathered for analysis, and used to establish possible methodological approaches to analysing them, based on practices identified in existing sex work research. The methodological approach selected is evident through, for example, much of the existing research taking the approach of grouping texts into broad narrative arcs before considering each arc separately. In the case of this thesis, this was achieved by identifying three separate ‘media events’, each examined in its own chapter. Texts that consider New Zealand’s unique situation with having recently decriminalised sex work and associated behaviours (such as soliciting and brothel-keeping), are also discussed within this chapter for their importance in contextualising my research, and justifying its importance and contribution to the wider field of sex work studies. New Zealand is one of very few places to have decriminalised all forms of sex work – except for migrant sex work – and most associated behaviours, unlike other jurisdictions such as NSW, Australia, where advertising sexual services or employment opportunities in the sex industry is illegal (although the applicable laws are rarely enforced) (SWOP, 2015).

Sex Work Activism and the Sex Wars.

Among the key works by and about sex work activists pre-1995 that provide an overview of earlier sex work activism and organising are Pheterson’s works, including *A Vindication of the Rights of Whores* (1989) which addresses the First and Second World Whore’s Congresses⁶, and “The Whore Stigma: Female Dishonour and Male Unworthiness” (1994), and Bell’s *Reading, Writing and Rewriting the Prostitute Body* (1994).

In *A Vindication of the Rights of Whores*, edited by Pheterson, the background and proceedings of the World Whore’s Congresses are laid out, including information about the issues that rose to the fore during this time, such as arguments about the morality of pornography, given the timing of the Congresses: the late 1980s, at the height of the “feminist

6 The World Whore’s Congresses were international meetings of sex workers, organised in part by Gail Pheterson and Margo St. James. St James had been active in sex work organising since the early 1970s, including work with COYOTE (Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics).

sex wars" (1989). The "sex wars" refers to heated debates between feminists occurring during the 1980s, which encompassed, among other things, the acceptability of prostitution or sex work; the possibility of establishing a feminist position that supported the rights of sex workers; and "the significance of pornography" (Bernstein, 2007, p. 11). Bernstein, in *Temporarily Yours*, describes the two opposing points of view held by feminist activists that relate specifically to sex work. Bernstein notes the position held by Pheterson and others was that sex work was not better or worse than others forms of service work, while other theorists – notably Jeffreys, MacKinnon, and Barry – viewed sex work as a form of gendered exploitation (Bernstein, 2007, p. 11). Other theorists, including Vance, offered more nuanced critiques of the two positions, with Vance noting that precisely which groups were asked to provide an explanation for themselves was in itself revealing of what behaviours were considered deviant or requiring of justification, writing "[t]he focus on the lower rungs of the sexual hierarchy tends to imply the need for prevention or cure" (Vance and Snitlow, 1984, p. 128).

Rubin, who presented at the 1982 Barnard Sex Conference, commented on the "feminist sex wars" of the 1970s and 1980s, noting the vitriolic fury which anti-pornography campaigners subjected some of the speakers to (2011, pp. 15–16). In discussing the events of the Barnard Sex Conference in "Blood under the Bridge: Reflections on "Thinking Sex"" Rubin writes:

"The Barnard conference has become extremely famous, in large part because it was the occasion of one of the most volcanic battles in the feminist sex wars...The attack on the Barnard conference was a particularly repellent episode in what was unfortunately a repetitive pattern of conduct. Some antipornography advocates preferred to resort to ad feminem attacks and character assassination rather than to debate substantive issues. They attempted to excommunicate from the feminist movement anyone who disagreed with them, and they aggressively sabotaged events that did not adhere to the antiporn party line. Their conduct left a bitter legacy for feminism. Like many others involved in the sex wars, I was thoroughly traumatized by the breakdown of feminist civility and the venomous treatment to which dissenters from the antiporn orthodoxy were routinely subjected." (2011, p. 16).

With such events setting the political climate of the time, Pheterson gives an overview of topics of discussion at the World Whores Congresses, and describes the concern workers attending had about their identities being disclosed. The fears of disclosure included to authorities, to clients at other jobs and to sex work management: “[a] Thai prostitute feared losing her job at her club in Bangkok if her management thought she was a troublemaker” (pp. 26–27). The wide range of reasons for a fear of disclosure indicates the multiple ways in which stigma against sex work is applied, from sectors aside from the ‘antiporn’ feminists of the sex wars, and how the precarious position of sex workers sometimes limited their ability to self-advocate. Pheterson writes:

“Police, courts, social welfare bureaus, families, managers and neighbours were all mentioned as obstacles to public disclosure and debate. Danger to loved ones or threat of forced separation from loved ones, especially children, was a deep worry, as was loss of employment and income” (p. 27)

In addition, there was a rising focus on the AIDS crisis, which became an urgently pressing issue between the First and Second Congress, leading to a discussion of the ways in which sex workers could cooperate with health organisations (p. 28). In her coverage of the Second Congress in *A Vindication of the Rights of Whores* Pheterson discusses the wording that was decided upon to articulate the aims of the Congress, intended to indicate support for workers who had a degree of choice in their work, while acknowledging economic coercion could often mean workers were limited in how much choice they had to stay in or leave their jobs. The phrase eventually decided upon was:

“Decriminalise all aspects of adult prostitution resulting from individual decision” (p. 33)

Pheterson’s work identifies that, even in relatively early stages of formalised sex work activism and organisation, it was recognised that a decision to engage in sex work did not necessarily mean a sincere enjoyment of the work. This point is explored more deeply in Chapter Six, and its persistence as a trope indicates that the issues raised during the late 1980s, as described by Pheterson, persist in contemporary discourses too. Furthermore, the recognition that enjoyment was not necessary for workers to perform was coupled with an

understanding that a lack of enjoyment did not undermine the legitimacy of the work as labour, or provide a reason to dismiss demands for respect and rights.

In “The Whore Stigma” Pheterson discusses the usage of the term ‘prostitute’ as a way of challenging the assumptions, which she demonstrates are incorrect, about the work which sex workers carry out (p. 39). Pheterson argues that the noun definition of “prostitute”, to hire one’s body for “indiscriminate sexual intercourse”, and the verb definition, to “sell one’s honor for base gain” are frequently collapsed into one, making it shameful and dishonourable to sell sexual services (p. 39). In this explanation she indirectly illustrates the rationale behind the shift from describing workers in the sex industry as ‘prostitutes’ to ‘sex workers’. The timing of Pheterson’s writing places it during a period when there was a drive to explain and defend the work of sex workers in the feminist movement, and much of the writing therefore focused on furthering an understanding of the labour involved in the profession – the skills required to be a sex worker, and the effort that goes into screening and selecting clients, situating it inarguably as work. She writes of discussions about dishonour as a sex worker which occurred at the First World Whore’s Congress, saying “whores... agreed upon the notion of high-quality prostitution wherein one could have pride in oneself and respect for one’s colleagues. Dishonor for them was attached not to sex work per se, but to a lack of competence or integrity in one’s work” (pp. 46–47). Pheterson does at one point present a list of attributes that she says some workers consider to constitute making up a ‘good’ or ‘bad’ whore, which I argue is unproductively prescriptive and judgemental of the varying ways and reasons which workers carry out their jobs (p. 44). In doing this, Pheterson is perpetuating and further establishing the notion that there is a more correct and acceptable way of doing sex work, saying that among some groups of sex workers to be ‘good’ is to take personal sexual pleasure from the interactions, while other groups would argue that ‘good’ requires a degree of professional detachment. One of the markers which Pheterson presents as being indicative of a ‘bad’ whore is the use alcohol or drugs while working, further marginalising drug using workers, within the already marginalised category of sex workers. This detail gives evidence of how even within early writing by sex work activists there was a desire to distinguish between the acceptable and appropriate sex worker, and the unacceptable or ‘bad’ worker.

Bell expands on the desire to define who may access acceptability in *Reading, Writing and Rewriting the Prostitute Body*, quoting the same demand for decriminalisation and discussing the ways in which the prostitute body is discursively produced (1994). Among the discursive constructions addressed by Bell is the similarity between radical, liberal, and socialist feminist approaches in the 1970s, to whom the prostitute body is “a terrain on which feminists contest sexuality, desire and the writing of the female body” but within which there is no space for the prostitute as a speaking subject (p. 73), particularly if what she (with the presumption that all sex workers are female embedded in the language) might say is likely to contradict what is said about her. Bell notes the debate changed during the late 1970s and 1980s, when sex worker led movements began to contribute to the feminist discourse about their work – creating their own identity. Bell identifies turning points in the construction of the body, considering historical political constructions as well as modern political, social, and artistic constructions in her discussion. Drawing on a Foucauldian model that identifies the ways in which prostitution and the prostitute body is historically segmented, Bell ultimately claims that sex workers are treated and identified as the “other”, thereby othered within the already marginalised category of “woman” (p. 2). Bell identifies this intersectional oppression as dating back to Wollstonecraft’s *A Vindication on the Rights of Women* which simultaneously advocated for the rights of middle class women while referring to prostitutes as “poor wretches” (p. 101).

Bell’s work, as with Pheterson’s, is concerned primarily with exploring the mechanisms by which stigma against sex workers was developed and applied. Central to the arguments made by activist groups during this period was the point that issues presumed to be problems with prostitution per se were more often problems caused by laws that prohibited the work, rather than inherent parts of the industry (Jenness, 1990, pp. 403–404). There were also efforts made to link the issues faced by sex workers with the problems seen by other women, and to reframe the sex industry with a focus on the work and labour involved. This is particularly true of work done in the United States of America by COYOTE (Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics), whose three key tenets to attempt to ‘reconstruct the social problem of prostitution’ were that:

1. Prostitution is work and the concept of work should replace the concept of crime when considering it.
2. Most women who work as prostitutes choose to do so, even in societies where it is illegal.
3. Prostitution is work that people should have the right to choose, and it should be respected and protected like other service industries. (Jenness, p. 405)

Within these texts a cohesive move towards demanding improved labour rights and respect for sex work, both from academic circles and worker led organisations, can be seen to take shape.

Sex Work and Understandings of Labour

Sex work activism in the 1980s and early 1990s dealt extensively with the requirement to recognise sex work as labour, and the literature in this subsection focuses specifically on an exploration of the different forms of labour that may be required to carry out different modes of sex work. As a key area that my thesis contributes to is the production of sex work as legitimate labour, as well as the question of who is permitted to be a legitimate worker, I also considered key literature from my field that discuss the establishment of sex work as real work. I use these texts to determine a theoretical basis for my work. Among the key texts in this area are Bernstein's *Temporarily Yours: Intimacy, Authenticity and the Commerce of Sex* (2010); Maher, Pickering and Gerard's "Privileging Work not Sex: Flexibility and Employment in the Sexual Services Industry" (2012); Scoular's "The "Subject" of Prostitution: Interpreting the Discursive, Symbolic And Material Position of Sex/Work in Feminist Theory" (2004); Brewis and Linstead's series of two articles "The Worst Thing is the Screwing"⁷ (2000a; 2000b); and O'Connell-Davidson's "Let's Go Outside: Bodies, Prostitutes, Slaves and Worker Citizens" (2014).

⁷ Both of Brewis and Linstead's articles refer to sex work in Australian states, particularly NSW and Victoria which have legal models of decriminalisation and legalisation, respectively, making them similar in many ways to the situation in New Zealand.

Maher et al's work (2012) discusses research carried out with workers in brothels in Victoria, Australia, many of whom mention the flexibility of the sex industry as being a key factor in their decision to remain working in the industry. The authors comment there is a "noisy regulatory space" in which discussions about changes to sex work laws occur (2012, p.655). This term refers to the regulatory space allowing workers little input into decisions, and the creation of a climate in which the major concerns are public morality, and public health, rather than labour rights, with the speakers given most attention not necessarily sex workers or sex work organisations. The authors note that public discourses about sex work and sex workers' decision to remain in their profession frequently ignores the context of their choices. This discourse often fails to consider what other work opportunities exist for people currently in the sex industry (particularly parents and students) and the workplace conditions of these other opportunities, instead more often focusing on issues of nuisance and morality. This focus on nuisance and morality instead of the practicalities of sex work as a job is an idea repeated in McLaughlin's work, detailed later in this chapter.

Although not identified using the same phrasing, the issue of a "noisy regulatory space" is similarly explored in Weitzer's "Legalising Prostitution: Morality Politics in Western Australia" (2009). He uses attempts in 2006 to alter Western Australia's prostitution laws as a case study in how politicians and lobby groups contend with discussions about issues framed as 'moral'. Aligned with Maher's conclusion that the regulatory space in which such decisions are made frequently side-line the contribution of the groups most affected, Weitzer describes the ensuing moral battle as reflecting the moral panic model of social discourse (pp. 89, 102). Weitzer identifies four major themes that emerge in the discussion of prostitution law reform, only one of which takes on board the considerations of current sex workers: public nuisance, traditional morality, oppression of women and children, and sex work. Weitzer identifies the sex work discourse as the only one that aims to reframe the debate as being about labour rights (p. 90).

In Maher et al the authors also propose that the discursive focus on issues of heterosexuality and gendered intimacy in sex work may act to diminish the focus on employment considerations within the industry. This has been identified in other studies, such as Day (2007), who, in discussing interviews with sex workers, wrote that "[t]ime and again...women

described their work...and explained carefully and patiently that work had nothing to do with sexuality or anything that lay beyond the workplace.” (p. 35). Lantz’s 2005 survey of Victorian sex workers, also found that in interviews sex workers expressed a dislike for their work being given greater weight than other personal attributes when defining them (Lantz, 2005, p. 388-389). In considering the implications of a failure to acknowledge labour issues within the sex industry, Maher et al refer to the work of Bacchi (1999), who noted that the way in which a social problem is configured will shape the types of policy frameworks that emerge in response to it. This insight indicates how public discourse, including media discourse, about sex work functions and impacts legislative responses to the work, indicating that employment rights need to be a focus in sex work discussions, particularly within the context of a general labour market that creates barriers to equitable employment for women.

Bernstein (2007) considers the role of authenticity and emotional work as specific performed skill sets within sex work. Her text examines the simultaneous growth of marketing that emphasises emotional intimacy as part of a sexual service, and the systematic removal of street sex workers from gentrifying areas. In this way a thematic linkage can be seen between Bernstein’s work and Mayer et al’s: both consider the ways in which different modes of sex work are understood dictate the policies created in response to them. Bernstein addresses how performances of emotional intimacy and authentic pleasure may be used by some workers as a class marker and as a way of distinguishing the way in which they carry out sex work as different (and better) than other ways (2007, p. 82-88). This class distinction also positions some kinds of low volume, indoor, sex work as a more acceptable way to work, because it allows workers to frame their job as ‘fun’ and personally fulfilling, making it defensible. Bernstein also discusses how a performance of emotional sincerity and authenticity is expected by clients as part of the service, but crucially is not recognised as ‘work’. The ability to invisibilise this effort is part of how some sex workers justify more expensive services, through the creation of an impression of exclusivity (pp. 125–130).

Scoular discusses sex work as being a ‘testing ground’ for parts of feminist theory but cautions that sex work cannot be viewed as a ‘straightforwardly paradigmatic’ model, because of the diversity of circumstances of people engaged in it (2004, p. 343). This point is illustrated by radical feminist theorist approaches to sex work, which presume that a specific and limited

set of circumstances are common to all experiences of sex work. Examples include the work of Jeffreys who claims that “sexual slavery...lies at the root of marriage and prostitution” (Jeffreys, 1997/2008, p.2), and Pateman (1983, p. 561; Pateman, 1988, p. 207) who argues that sex work is inherently negative and indicative of women’s subjugation under men. Scoular responds to such contentions by noting that while it is useful to consider the harm which women have experienced under “eroticised power relations” such theoretical positions are frequently achieved at the expense of recognising the agency of women who work in the sex industry, and ignore the structuring roles of class, race, and culture (p. 344). In this way, using sex work as such a testing ground without considering the material differences between various experiences of it risks drawing oversimplified conclusions.

In the second section of the text “The Alienated Subject of Prostitution”, Scoular discusses the domination theory of sex work, noting it is reductive: reducing all women to prostitutes and prostitutes only to the sex acts they carry out (2004, pp. 345–346). Such an approach requires that women are always understood as perilously close to being considered a prostitute, and once such an identity has been assigned, the humanity of the person it is assigned to is further reduced. She comments on radical feminist approaches to sex work, which imbue sex with a meaning outside and above other “bodily mediated activities” and frequently reinforces current normative understandings that ‘genuine’ sex exists outside of power (p. 344). Some theorists, such as Pateman, quoted in Scoular, define this difference as ‘paid’ and ‘loving sex’, which makes substantial assumptions about unpaid sex; notably that unpaid sex is always free from power dynamics within relationships, or presumes a form of affection or love accompanies and legitimises these sex acts. Furthermore, it carries the assumption that there are a narrow number of reasons why people engage in sex acts, and ignores the non-negotiated or non-financial but nonetheless transactional reasons for some of them.

Scoular also quotes Bell’s *Reading, Writing and Rewriting the Prostitute Body*, which accuses radical feminist theory of reproducing binary approaches to sexuality: the Madonna versus whore, victim versus subject binaries, for example. Scoular, however, cautions that Bell’s work can frequently romanticise the experience of sex work and should be read in tandem with other works that consider the impact of material structures and disadvantages to a

subject's ability to discursively challenge structural production of the sex working body. Scoular notes that one of the other areas in which Bell's work is valuable is in alerting readers to the ways contemporary constructions of sex work attempt what Scoular calls "rhetorical historicization" to understand prostitution in the 19th century (pp. 349–350). In particular, Scoular calls attention to the notion put forth by some theorists that there was a time of apparent feminist consensus on prostitution (the 19th and early 20th centuries). She adds that this is more accurately viewed as a time when the input of sex workers was ignored or not heard, with the supposed rhetorical consensus being that prostitution was inherently bad (p. 349). The concept of rhetorical historicization is something which I draw upon in this thesis to analyse contemporary discourses within the selected media texts about sex work in New Zealand prior to decriminalisation, particularly to consider the manner in which sex work is often considered unchanging, thereby deprofessionalising it. Rhetorical historicization is useful as a framework to consider whether the events that are mentioned or discussed are being posed within contemporary understandings of sex work. Further, I apply it to determine the ways in which framings from sex industry speakers may be affected by lived experiences themselves being a form of discourse.

The arguments made by O'Connell Davidson in "Let's Go Outside: Bodies, Prostitutes, Slaves and Worker Citizens" run parallel to those of Scoular, particularly in using sex work as a lens through which to consider broader issues of labour rights (2014). In discussing the sex industry, O'Connell Davidson suggests that sex work is discomforting to a liberal perspective on labour because it disrupts the notion of the subject/object binary (pp. 517–518). She cites the supposition that sex work involves selling oneself, or selling one's embodied personhood, rather than selling labour that can be viewed as distinct from an individual. O'Connell Davidson argues, following Kopytoff (1986, pp. 64, 68 cited in O'Connell Davidson, 2014, p. 517), that the definition of what constitutes a commodity is not based upon any particular values or characteristics of a thing sold or traded, but rather depends upon a cultural sense of what constitutes a commodity, with moral judgements about what is (or should be) unsellable informing arguments against sex as a marketable commodity. O'Connell Davidson also responds to one of Pateman's key arguments, that acquiring the services of a sex worker reaffirms the masculinity of the (presumed to be male) client, with the transaction affirming his political freedom (Pateman, 1988, pp. 206–208). This type of analysis of sex work

presumes that the benefit of the transaction sits wholly with the customer, ignoring the economic freedom that is gained by the worker. In summarising the attitude of sex work abolitionists O'Connell Davidson notes that they make "no distinction between voluntary and forced" engagement in the sex industry, with abolitionist approaches aligning with the radical feminist belief that no woman can genuinely consent to prostitution (p. 519).

O'Connell Davidson concludes "Let's Go Outside" by commenting that many sex work activists recognise that legalisation or decriminalisation of sex work do not in and of themselves guarantee workers will be protected or given labour rights (pp. 528-529). This conclusion closely mirrors the avenues of enquiry which I consider in later chapters of this thesis. When considering the news media discourses around sex work, it is apparent that, despite the legal situation of decriminalisation in New Zealand, the narratives about sex workers are so focused on the issue of (apparent) choice to do the work that questions of actual labour rights are neglected.

"The Worst Thing is the Screwing": Consumption and the Management of Identity in Sex Work" focuses on interviews carried out with adult female sex workers from the UK (England and Scotland) and Australia (Victoria, NSW, SA, and WA) (Brewis and Linstead, 2000a). Brewis and Linstead's research included the experiences of both cis and trans women, making it useful and relevant for this thesis given the focus in Chapter Four on the experiences of trans sex workers. Brewis and Linstead note they deliberately chose to limit their research to these geographical areas because of their broadly similar "advanced" societies and similar legislative approaches (p. 85). They take pains to point out that their conclusions should not be applied globally; however, given New Zealand's similar legislative approach⁸ and similar society, it seems reasonable to extrapolate some of the conclusions they draw for application to this thesis, particularly their findings about workers' understandings of themselves as small business operators, and the degree of emotion work that sex work entails.

⁸ NSW has a decriminalised sex industry, very similar to New Zealand, Victoria has legalised sex work with more regulation than New Zealand. WA has a legal model which allows sex work under some circumstances, but it is not decriminalised, while England and Scotland both allow the exchange of sex for money, but criminalise associated activities, in a model similar to that which existed in New Zealand pre-decriminalisation.

The text considers the ways in which workers manage the boundaries between the sex they have in their personal lives and the sex they have for work, identifying the emotional and mental labour of identity management as a key part of work within the sex industry. They note that sectors of the industry have adopted the 'sex worker' model, in which prostitutes are service workers who happen to be selling eroticised labour – identifying themselves as a legitimate business operator and the client as a consumer of leisure activities (2000a, p. 85). In analysing news media discourses within New Zealand, I consider the ways in which some workers are permitted to define themselves as small business owners, while others are not, and the similarities among the workers who are granted the agency of self-identification. Given one of the key questions that I aim to answer relates to who is permitted to be an 'acceptable' sex worker and how this category is produced, I apply Brewis and Linstead's discussion about the movement of decriminalised or legalised sex work into a sphere where it is understood as a profession. Within their discussion of the 'sex worker' model an area of emphasis is the importance of being able to negotiate with and decline clients, with a position of prominence being given to the right to refuse to provide services to prospective clients who make the worker feel uncomfortable.

In Brewis and Linstead's collated interviews many workers discussing the sex industry explain strategies they have for dealing with annoying, repulsive, or frustrating clients, and the ways in which their work can sometimes spill over into their personal lives – for example, where workers describe a lack of sexual desire for their private partners (2000a, p. 90). Further discussion of this seepage between professional and private lives occurs during my review of works on affective and emotional labour in Chapter Three. Brewis and Linstead's writing establishes this is a consideration that has previously been addressed in texts about sex work, providing an underpinning and precedent for my own integration of emotional labour theories into my analysis. However, while Brewis and Linstead's analysis considers the direct use of emotion work during interactions with clients, I consider the wider application of emotion work in workers' more public discussions of their job, and the ways in which successful performances are rewarded through these workers being accorded greater acceptability.

Brewis and Linstead's work closely considers issues of desire and enjoyment, and explicitly spells out the ways in which some workers take personal enjoyment in their work, while others view the work as purely a source of money, with a sliding scale in between, depending on the personal circumstances that led each woman to enter and remain in the industry. As such, Brewis and Linstead's work is highly relevant for the territory I am interested in exploring within New Zealand's own media discourse around the sex industry: the enjoyment of the work and the degree to which this is expected by the client, who views the exchange as a leisure activity, as opposed to the worker who sees it as part of her routine work day. My work expands on this idea, considering the affective labour that is required when there is a disconnect between the pleasure a worker derives from the work, and the pleasure which is expected by clients and by consumers of media making moral judgements on the work.

Media Representations of Sex Work

As previously discussed, one of my key areas of focus is the way in which an enjoyment of sex work is sometimes foregrounded in media discourse, and the ways in which this is discursively achieved. My thesis argues that this foregrounding of enjoyment of the work, rather than the labour rights required by workers, in itself demands an additional degree of emotional labour. Specifically, I propose that the labour expended in appearing to enjoy or derive satisfaction from sex work in some cases extends beyond the interactions with clients and into interactions with media outlets. This is partially explained through the use of media coverage as a form of advertising by some workers. A related question that I consider and answer within this thesis is: which workers are granted access to this advertising platform? The formation of sex work as legitimately enjoyable has links to neoliberal demands that workers enjoy their work, and is deployed in order to morally justify the existence of sex work as legitimate work within a neoliberal framework (Ross, 2009, pp. 6, 48).

The focus on sex work as work is evident in Dunn's 2012 article "'It's Not Just Sex, It's a Profession': Reframing Prostitution Through Text and Context". Dunn writes about HBO⁹'s

⁹ HBO is an American television network.

reality television series *Cathouse*, which focuses on a legal brothel in Nevada, USA, and considers the way in which presenting a compelling narrative for the television series interrelates with the day to day working lives of the women at the brothel. Dunn carries out a close textual analysis of the show, and spent several weeks observing how it was filmed, concluding that it generally treated the women working at the brothel as businesswomen who had to consider their professional image, pricing, how they attracted and retained clients, and the bookkeeping and timekeeping which formed significant parts of the daily routines of the brothel. Dunn argues that *Cathouse* presents a counternarrative to the more frequently presented images of sex workers as unwilling victims or as exhibitionists. She makes the point that appearing in the show has increased business at the brothel, turning it into a tourist attraction as well as boosting its profile. Dunn concludes her analysis by noting that the “sensational, sexual” parts of the show undermine the message that the job done by the women is ultimately work and should be respected as such (p. 359). This is in contrast to the opposing views she presents in her opening paragraphs, in which she notes the intent of the show is allegedly to situate sex work as a legitimate job, as seen in the titular quote from the series “it’s not just sex, it’s a profession” (pp. 345-346).

In contrast, academic texts that consider news media representations of sex work (as opposed to the notionally non-fiction but generally entertainment-focused reality television media of *Cathouse*) tend to conclude that the news media constructs sex work as a series of social problems in need of solution. Among academic texts which document this are “Fallen Women and Rescued Girls: Social Stigma and Media Narratives of the Sex Industry in Victoria B.C. 1980-2005” (2006) by Hallgrimsdottir, Phillips, and Benoit and “Images of Prostitution” by Van Brunschot, Sydnie, and Krull (2000). Both texts also focus primarily on sex work in locations where it is still criminalised or where elements of the work are illegal, setting them apart from texts concerning New Zealand post-2003 and from *Cathouse*, which deals with the day to day work in a legal brothel. I also briefly consider Jiwani and Young’s “Missing and Murdered Women: Reproducing Marginality in News Discourse” (2006) and Strega et al’s “Never Innocent Victims: Street Sex Workers in Canadian Media” (2014), as both these texts include information on how the intersections of race, class and homelessness impact upon how sex workers, particularly street sex workers, are discursively produced in news media.

Van Brunschot et al carry out an analysis of Canadian newspaper articles, noting that the focus of the articles, which were gathered from 1981 to 1995, varied depending on the status of the ongoing debate about Canada's sex work laws. The authors noted the articles could be grouped into four major categories: nuisance, child abuse, non-western prostitution, and violence, and two sub-categories: drugs/organised crime, and disease. Among the key arguments by Van Brunschot et al is that newspapers are a key part of the claimsmaking process by which readers understand social problems, and if sex work is framed as a social problem (e.g.: as a nuisance) then the reports will often suggest laws that deal with the perceived problem as a way of handling it (e.g.: laws against public nuisance) (2000, p. 48). In discussing the construction of sex workers as a social problem in news texts, they write:

"The sense of "troubling times" can generate "moral panic" which takes the form of a spiral "in which the social groups who perceive their world and position as threatened, identify a 'responsible enemy', and emerge as vociferous guardians of traditional values" (Hall et al, 1978:72). Cohen (1972:198) points out that the media manipulation of moral panics is made easier when "the object of attack is both highly visible and structurally weak" – a description which certainly fits the prostitute population. The claimsmaking of the media fuels moral panics by reflecting and guiding opinions, attitudes and beliefs of designated publics on issues that are deemed significant to the production and reproduction of "normal" "docile" subjects." (p. 51)

The authors argue that the ways sex work is produced in media reflect and continue the prevailing social attitudes, with the tone set by the progress of laws that would change the legal model for sex workers in Canada at the time. The authors identify the commonality across the four key themes as being the use of sex as a regulatory practice, drawing on the work of Butler on sex as normative and operating in this manner (1993 as cited in Van Brunschot et al, 2000, p. 65). They apply Butler's arguments to sex in the form of sexual practices and sexualised bodies, specifically identifying the way in which some bodies are sexualised or deemed sexual within news media coverage, while others are inherently asexual and therefore may only be situated as victims, not social problems (pp. 66–67). Additionally, the authors point out in their analysis of coverage of non-western prostitution, the victim

status conferred to child prostitutes is frequently extended to non-Western women, in large part because of the presumptions made about their lack of agency.

Hallgrimsdottir, Phillips, and Benoit's article considers newspaper coverage in Canada as well, focusing more specifically on media from British Columbia, but expanding their timeline to cover the period from 1980 to 2005. Their analysis groups the media objects by narrative categories, and then into three overarching storylines. This approach is similar to that used by Van Brunschot et al, who also assign broad categories to specific news stories, allowing them to consider particular themes or narrative conventions that occurred in each category. The narrative categories identified by Hallgrimsdottir et al were: vectors of contagion, population at risk or endangered, sexual slavery, moral culpability, predatory pimps, criminal culpability, community failure, and other, with the overarching storylines defined as: vectors of disease; criminality and moral malaise; culpability: savvy criminals and fallen women; and risk: entrapment and slavery, as routes to the sex industry (pp. 269–274). In their introductory comments the authors note that academic treatment of the sex industry (as of a decade ago) tends to take a binary view similar to that outlined in the introductory comments to this chapter, namely that sex work is either inherently violent and exploitative, or that it is simply work, with comparatively little investigation into the media representations of the industry. In discussing the importance of media representations, the authors note that media coverage is the only information that much of the population gets about sex workers, saying:

“Essentially, in the absence of any lived interaction with the sex industry, media texts are key cultural sites at which the stigmas of sex work are produced and consumed by the majority of citizens.” (Hallgrimsdottir, Phillips, and Benoit, 2006, p. 267).

In discussing the construction of sex work, and workers, the authors note that a disproportionate amount of media coverage has a focus both on outdoor or 'street' sex workers, and almost exclusively only considers women as workers, with men existing in the narratives only as clients or pimps (pp. 273-274). They add that workers are frequently portrayed as vectors of disease, although it varies as to whether this refers to a literal disease or a moral contagion (pp. 271-272). The authors add that over the time period they studied, they found a decrease in news articles that suggested the existence of the 'problem' of sex

work was due to a failure of community support systems (schools, churches, and family) and of discourses assigning criminal culpability or moral failings to individual sex workers (p. 273-274).

Hallgrimsdottir et al also compare media discourses with workers' self-reported presentations of their experiences, and found that while media discourses tended to focus on abusive or violent circumstances, workers instead focused on the more mundane and routine aspects of their work, and held a wide variety of feelings and opinions about it. This indicates a disconnect between how workers understand their jobs and how they are represented to the general public, who receive a version of sex work that is not analogous to the first-hand experiences and concerns of sex workers. The authors note that the social distance between the intended audiences of the mainstream news media texts and the objects of the sex work narratives limits the degree to which the audience can fact-check or otherwise work to determine the truthfulness of the media accounts. Although, in considering this it is also crucial to consider that self-reported experiences from workers are themselves a form of discourse and are therefore subjective. This can function to render narratives about the sex industry difficult to accurately critique. Scambler and Scambler refer to the "paradox of attention" whereby the most titillating aspects of the industry are foregrounded (illicit dealings, violence, abuse, glamour) while the more mundane aspects are ignored by the media because they are less attention-grabbing despite taking up a proportionately larger amount of time and energy for workers (1997, p. 112 as cited in Hallgrimsdottir, Phillips and Benoit, 2006, p. 278). Media reports tend to closely follow the particular cultural scripts and tropes similar to those identified by Hallgrimsdottir et al, to allow the audience to understand the information within existing cultural discourses.

This tendency among news outlets to follow existing scripts is reiterated by Jiwani and Young (2006), referring to the disappearance of women from Downtown Eastside in Vancouver, Canada. They note an 11-page special run by the *Vancouver Sun* which constructed many of the missing women as stereotypical victims, describing one woman as having "much in common" with others on the list, including being a drug user and engaging in sex work (p. 897). They add that the Aboriginality of the women was also emphasised in media reports, framing the issue within existing prejudicial notions of Indigenous Canadians as easily

victimised and in need of protection. Their work deals with a subset of the events covered more broadly in Strega et al's "Never Innocent Victims: Street Sex Workers in Canadian Print Media" (2014). Strega et al's work discusses the media discourse created around disappeared women (the work uses the term "disappeared" deliberately, explaining that it defines the women as victims of violence rather than being complicit as can be suggested by the term "missing") and the ways in which the discourse changed and began to humanise the disappeared women once their families entered the discussion in a public way. Strega's work groups the responses prior to the entrance of the families into the discourse into two broad streams: what she terms the "vermin/victim" discourse (pp. 12–16) which closely links to the 'nuisance' theme identified by other theorists (specifically Krull et al as well as Hallgrimsdottir et al), and the "Risky Lifestyle" discourse which she links closely to neoliberal ideas about personal choice and responsibility (pp. 16–20).

McLaughlin's "Discourses of Prostitution/Discourses of Sexuality" (1991) also identifies the binary split identified by Hallgrimsdottir et al, whereby sex work is viewed either as work, or as a sensationalist and dirty issue (or sometimes as a combination of the two). McLaughlin writes to challenge the contention that feminism had moved the image of the sex worker from being deviant, to being a professional working woman (although, notably – as identified by Hallgrimsdottir et al – the sex worker is still identified as exclusively female). McLaughlin discusses primarily fictionalised versions of sex workers, arguing that it is important to consider the ways in which sex work is constructed in media discourses because "representation [...] is a form of regulation outside which no one can stand" (p. 257). She adds that fictionalised narratives about sex workers often focus on either violence against workers, or a saviour-type narrative, both of which are constructions that heavily imply the work is inherently bad or at best, requires significant defence to be intelligible as work (pp. 253–256, 258).

In later chapters of this thesis I am interested in exploring a subtler version of the saviour narrative outlined by McLaughlin. This frequently takes the form of an implication that if a person doing sex work could be doing other forms of work then sex work is (or ought to be) a transient form of work with a higher purpose. This is seen in news media narratives that emphasise that workers are completing a tertiary qualification, or saving to purchase

property, for example, reframing their work as a means to an end, which is more acceptable to the presumed audience of the work. I also investigate whether the discourse of enjoyment is used to bolster this: that sex work is acceptable if – and only if – it is enjoyable for workers, or it is a temporary situation, with other circumstances marking the worker as a victim.

McLaughlin concludes “Discourses of Prostitution/Discourses of Sexuality” (1991) by looking at the relationship between prostitution law reform activists and the feminist movement, considering the ways in which prostitution has been variously viewed by feminist groups as letting down all women (particularly given the timing of the text – shortly after the debates known as the ‘sex wars’ outlined earlier in this literature review) and allowing oneself to be owned or controlled by men. She refers particularly to feminist artists and writers as examples of these views, mentioning works such as Chicago’s *Dinner Party* and Du Pleiss’ *Breasts* (p. 268). She further identifies that some feminisms attempt to utilise subversive representational models while assuming there is a shared gender identity common to all women, an approach that often overlooks differences in lived experiences due to class, race, cis/trans status, and health status, situating even more positive or progressive representations as problematic because of their ignorance of a variety of experiences. The sense of collective identity demanded by these particular forms of feminism is only possible if the material differences between group members are obscured. McLaughlin’s comment on media constructions of sex workers emphasise that representation alone is not sufficient: frequently the negative moral judgements about their work are present within the representations.

McLaughlin argues that understanding sex work as labour needs to occur in tandem with inspecting the ways in which workers are operating within an exploitative economic system. She contends that focusing on the economic aspects and potential benefits of sex work over other kinds of work tends to make a specific kind of worker more acceptable than other kinds of workers (p. 267). Her argument suggests that focusing on a limited number of positive representations of sex workers as businesspeople is ultimately short sighted, and does not in fact indicate substantial progress in terms of a more useful model for relating to and respecting sex work and workers.

Sex Work in the Media and the Exploitation/Empowerment Binary

As mentioned previously, a great deal of media representation of sex work deals primarily with the exploitation/empowerment binary, and the issues with this framing of the industry have recently (in the last decade) received a greater focus in academic writing on sex work. Among the key academic texts are Grant's *Playing the Whore: The Work of Sex Work* (2014), as well as Agustín's *Sex at the Margins* (2007), and academic texts by Ray, including "Why the Sex Positive Movement is Bad for Sex Workers' Rights" (2012) all of which address questions of the way in which the requirement that sex workers enjoy their work can obscure more pressing needs such as labour protections.

In this subsection I also consider texts dealing with the ways in which non-western sex workers are treated in the media, such as Shah's "Brothels and Big Screen Rescues: Producing the Idea of "Prostitution in India" Through Documentary Film" (2013), which focuses on the 2005 documentary film *Born into Brothels* and the way in which it removes the ability to shape discourse about sex work in India away from those who are, or have been, an active part of the industry. The question of reducing or removing the ability of workers to shape the discourse about their work is prominent in Shah's work and can also be used to understand the demand for a performance of satisfaction evident in Ray's analysis of how sex-positive feminism can harm the rights of workers. Shah's article is particularly relevant because it considers both the experiences of non-western sex workers and how their experiences are interpreted and presented to a western audience, giving it relevance for my chapter which considers New Zealand news media representations of migrant sex workers.

Grant opens *Playing the Whore* (2014) by discussing the popularity of prostitution sting videos on the internet, noting the point of such videos is to humiliate workers and make their humiliation permanent – the videos frequently remain available online for an indefinite period, which emphasises the idea that engaging in sex work as a worker (not, notably, as a client) is a permanent part of one's identity. Grant's point here is similar to the idea expressed in Maher et al, in which workers objected to 'sex worker' being the defining part of their identity over and above, for example 'student', or 'mother'. This observation is returned to in

various forms throughout Grant's work, and I use it extensively in Chapter Four of this thesis, when discussing the characterisation of sex workers as always and only workers.

Grant adds that she has no interest in debating why prostitution remains illegal in many jurisdictions and instead wants to consider "how much violence against sex workers have we made acceptable?", emphasising that in places where sex work is still illegal police are typically a greater source of danger to sex workers than clients or potential clients are (pp. 6–7). She notes that in areas where sex work is illegal it is primarily a "talking crime", where the illegal portions of the work are not the direct exchange of sex for money, but solicitation for example (p. 9). While the New Zealand context is clearly legally different from areas where sex work and associated activities are illegal, the point she makes – that the desire to have sex workers discuss detailed, intimate aspects of their work is in part a desire to have them admit their 'guilt' – has some relevance for considering which details are included, and which details are omitted in news media coverage of sex work. She also comments that the presumed omnipresence of work in the sex worker's life casts them in a particular role that is reproduced in media representations, making it difficult to present the emotional work of their job as being as much a requirement of their job as the physical (sexual) labour: "if a sex worker is always available, always working she (with this eye, it is almost always a she) – is essentially sexual" (p. 11).

In discussing the media that is most occupied by and controlled by sex workers¹⁰, she notes that the internet is one area in which workers are most in control of their own cultural production. She cautions however that

"...this media is meant for customers. It would be a mistake to read such advertisements and other marketing as complete representations of sex workers. They are not meant to convey life off the clock." (2014, p. 21)

¹⁰ Although crucially it must be considered that Grant is discussing primarily the United States and other regions where full service sex work – although not other forms, such as some pro-domme activities, stripping and phone sex – is still illegal.

This point is highlighted later in this thesis, in considering whether there are definable narrative trends in commentary from sex workers and agency managers interviewed by the media, and whether their public comments are potentially made with a consideration towards the clients or potential clients who may read or view it. This links directly to one of the key questions asked in this thesis, outlined in my introduction: namely whether an advertorial function is sometimes served by news media coverage of sex work and workers. Grant's work establishes the incomplete understanding of sex work that is produced by mistaking advertisements as being representative, indicating that if indeed news media does sometimes take an advertorial role, its representation of workers and their work must necessarily be incomplete.

In her chapter "The Peephole", Grant also addresses the impact that internet marketing of sex workers has on wider public perceptions of the industry, explaining that the ease of accessing information about sex workers (carefully cultivated to appeal to customers and potential customers) means that the information available necessarily shows a small slice of the experiences of workers.

"...that when we consider people who don't engage in commercial sex, who are most commonly known as the general public, they are far less likely to ever meet a sex worker in the physical world and are more likely than ever before to learn everything they know about sex work from marketing copy written for sex workers' customers."
(*Playing the Whore*, p. 74).

As outlined above, I consider whether the information most widely accessible to potential clients is curated to be more appealing by sex industry interviewees, in order to answer my question about advertorial functions of news media. Should this occur, it would indicate further evidence expanding on work carried out by Hallgrimsdottir et al, who noted that the focus of media texts about sex workers were often markedly different to comments from the workers themselves about their work. Specifically, they produce a mediated manner of viewing and understanding sex work, made intelligible and coherent for a particular audience, but do not necessarily reflect the primary concerns and experiences of sex workers.

Ray also writes extensively about the ways in which the demand that sex workers perform a certain kind of emotional labour outside of their direct interactions with clients impacts upon their ability to discuss their job without the discussion acting as a “self-serving marketing practice” (March 31, 2012, n. p.). Ray concisely summarises the inability of workers to express conflicting views about their work – for example, to express satisfaction with their clients generally but irritation with some elements of the practicalities of their work. She also identifies the problem with expecting that the persona present in media interviews is identical or similar to that presented to paying clients. One of the key points that Ray makes in “Why the Sex Positive Movement is Bad for Sex Workers’ Rights” is that within the context of the sexual revolution of the 1960s and 1970s or the sex wars of the 1980s and early 1990s, a key argument being put forth was that many sex workers found their job interesting, or pleasurable, or non-offensive. While contextually these statements may have been transgressive and important, they now more frequently serve to act as an oppressive force for sex workers who view their work as a financial means to an end, positioning their choice to engage in the work as invalid, Ray argues. Ray further illustrates this by discussing the workshops she has run on how sex workers can interact with the media where, she reports, almost inevitably one of the messages that attendees will desire to put forth is that they are not a “junkie” or “streetwalker”. Ray notes that these comments ignore the needs of the street sex work community and drug-using sex workers to be included among the wider sex worker community, deserving of respect and protection. Essentially, Ray’s argument is that in their haste to emphasise that some sex workers derive enjoyment from their work, feminist and media discourse may discount the needs of workers who view the industry in a more directly financial light.

Sex at the Margins considers the treatment of migrant sex workers in Europe particularly, with a focus on the ways in which migrant sex work is often produced as inherently different to other forms of migrant work (Agustín, 2007). Agustín situates many of the attitudes as drawing on historical views of sex workers, migrant women, and working-class women. Specifically, she notes that the desire to “help” the “unruly poor” out of prostitution by the middle classes can be traced back to the earliest invention of modern definitions of prostitution, and adds that many attempts to help migrant workers instead only function to strip them of agency (2007, pp. 7–8). Later, she adds that “[w]omen who cross borders have

long been viewed as deviant, so perhaps the present day panic about the sexuality of travelling women is not surprising” (2007, pp. 40–41). She also comments on attempts to frame sex work as inherently different to other forms of work that involve substantial emotional work and physical contact which are frequently carried out by migrant workers, such as child care or caregiving, and adds that the work to distinguish them can be identified as occurring on two levels. The first is that work traditionally carried out by women is frequently identified as either productive (usually occurring outside the house) or unproductive (housekeeping, child care, and sex). Charging for an “unproductive” form of work disrupts this (2007, p. 54). The second way this is established is by maintaining that sexual touch and intimacy are wholly different from all other forms of touch and intimacy, and therefore sex work can be defined as uniquely dangerous and different for migrant workers (p. 65). Agustín argues this difference in framing is used to justify paternalistic control being deployed against migrant workers, often under the guise of helping them or protecting them from their own decisions, and that by delegitimising sex work as a decision the workers’ agency is eroded and removed.

Shah, in “Brothels and Big Screen Rescues” (2013), examines how documentary films represent prostitution in India. Her work is included here because of its ability to be applied to media discourse about sex work in New Zealand, particularly the ways in which non-western prostitution is represented in western media, a point that is considered in more depth with regard to the ways that migrant workers in New Zealand were discursively treated around the time of the Rugby World Cup in 2011. Shah argues ‘prostitution in India’ is treated as a monolithic concept in which all people employed in the industry are inherently flawed or victimised. She suggests that the Indian industry is represented within a “hegemonic anti-trafficking framework” that furthers the saviour industry, and that a set of binaries are used to create and reinforce this framework (p. 550). In summing up the ways in which anti-prostitution films function, Shah discusses five specific parameters that are represented, which may have some value when considering the ways in which migrant workers in New Zealand are discussed and treated in media discourse. The parameters are: a refusal to consider sex work a livelihood; an exclusive focus on cis women and girls, ignoring trans people and men in the industry; a narrative in which sex work is seen to implicitly cause bodily and psychic harm; a conflation of sex work directly with violence; and overlooking any

organising among sex workers, viewing them as a homogenous group whom interventions should be enacted upon (pp. 557–558).

Shah's work identifies the ways in which sex work is imagined as a binary, in which the correct way to work (which implicitly involves being white, cisgendered, middle class and in a western country) is situated opposite a way of working that is presumed to be exploitative. Woolgar and Pawluch in "Ontological Gerrymandering: The Anatomy of Social Problems Explanations" (1985) discuss how social problems more generally are created over time, with claimsmaking attempts presuming that a social problem (as sex work is often constructed to be) has a correct or 'true' definition, rather than the definition being dependent on the experiences and circumstances of specific workers. The authors argue that commentators tend to draw their own boundaries (gerrymandering) when discussing perceived problems, so that the phenomenon they desire to delineate, identify, and define is clear, ignoring arguments or evidence to the contrary (pp. 215–218).

Sex Work in New Zealand.

Finally, in considering sex work in a specifically New Zealand context, the key texts within the sub-field my thesis occupies are: *Taking the Crime Out of Sex Work: New Zealand Sex Workers' Fight for Decriminalisation* (2010) edited by G. Abel, Healy, Taylor and Fitzgerald; "A Decade of Decriminalization: Sex Work 'down under' but Not Underground" by G. Abel (2014); *For Better or Worse? Decriminalisation, Work Conditions, and Indoor Sex Work in Auckland, New Zealand/Aotearoa* by Zangger (2015); *Managing Risks of Violence in Decriminalised Street-based Sex Work: A Feminist (Sex Worker Rights) Perspective* by Armstrong (2011); and "'It Isn't Prostitution as You Normally Think of It. It's Survival Sex': Media Representations of Adult and Child Prostitution in New Zealand" by Farvid and Glass (2014). These works give an indication of the current research being carried out about sex work in New Zealand post-decriminalisation, and are reflective of the scholarly understanding of the industry at present, as well as containing information about the functional operation of various different modes of carrying out sex work.

Abel, Healy, Taylor, and Fitzgerald's work covers the passing of the Prostitution Reform Act (PRA) in 2003 and the implementation of the new laws (the first five years), with contributions from active participants in the New Zealand Prostitutes Collective (NZPC). It provides an overview of the addition, at the last minute, of a clause in the PRA that outlawed working in the sex industry for people issued with a work or student visa, noting that since the mid-1990s there has been a conflation between victims of sex trafficking and people who migrated for work fully aware that they would be working in the sex industry (pp. 2–3). In discussing the changes in the kinds of work undertaken since the passing of the PRA the authors identify there appears to have been a move from managed work to the private sector since the law reform (from brothel work to independent work), which is also reiterated in Abel, Brunton and Fitzgerald (2007). The text notes that within the sex industry, as well as being segmented by the location in which the work is carried out (indoor versus outdoor or 'street' sex work), there is also a segmentation by gender and ethnicity, noting that while most workers are cis women, the male and transgender sex work populations are often ignored (p. 10). In my textual analysis this segmentation is evident in the varying ways in which workers from different ethnic groups and class backgrounds are represented in New Zealand news media.

Taking the Crime Out of Sex Work (2010) also specifically addresses the role of the media during the campaign for the passing of the PRA, and notes that some print media coverage did rely on "dominant moral discourses" which were highlighted by sex workers as reinforcing existing stigma (p. 197). Brunton et al examine the ways in which media 'framing' is carried out with regard to sex work in New Zealand. Framing, in the definition provided by Entman, involves selecting some elements of a perceived reality and placing them so they are "*more salient in a communicating text, so as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation* for the item described" (italics in original) (Entman, 1993). The use of dominant discourses to frame media coverage during the passage of the PRA, as discussed by Brunton et al, is an example of Entman's definition in action, with the "moral evaluation" occurring through the use of particular norms in the media texts. Brunton et al also refer to Hallgrimsdottir for the reiteration that, as sex work is still relatively hidden and marginalised, most of the understanding that the general public have of it comes from media representations.

Brunton et al also identify the media's ability to influence health policy, adding that the media can form part of the "disciplinary regime" for marginalised groups such as sex workers, reinforcing control strategies (p. 199), and add, "the media have become a basis for authoritarian solutions". In this thesis I contend that the power to define acceptable forms of sex work has passed largely from the courts to the media after the passing of the PRA, and the comments in *Taking the Crime Out of Sex Work* (2010) reinforce that this shift continues a trend which was beginning to occur during the campaign to reform the New Zealand legal model. This is demonstrated in many texts discussed throughout my analytical chapters, with the implications of this movement explored in Chapter Seven.

Brunton et al note that media representations generally construct an "us versus them" approach where sex workers are constructed as the other, and tend to ignore the day to day issues faced by sex workers, while also downplaying the wider social and structural issues that are central to their experiences. This was echoed in the interviews carried out for the text with sex workers, who commented that they felt that media coverage often perpetuated stereotypes and sensationalised the industry. Some workers who had been interviewed for print media or television commented that they found the coverage could function as "free advertising" (p. 204), while others said that media coverage of street workers often contained footage obtained without consent and portrayed the workers as lacking agency. They further noted that workers most likely to redefine themselves within the dominant discourse, challenging stereotypical notions about who a sex worker was, were usually those with the most resources – managed and private workers (p. 208). They refused dominant narratives by constructing alternative narratives, as businesspeople and respectable citizens, stressing that they pay taxes, among other markers of being a 'good' worker.

The current situation of sex workers in New Zealand as represented in New Zealand news media is discussed in "'It Isn't Prostitution as You Normally Think of It. It's Survival Sex': Media Representations of Adult and Child Prostitution in New Zealand" (Farvid and Glass, 2014). Farvid and Glass note, in a similar vein to Hallgrimsdottir et al, that few New Zealanders have regular direct contact with sex workers and therefore the media plays a significant role in shaping public discourse around sex work (p. 50). They contend that although all forms of sex work in New Zealand have been decriminalised, street sex work continues to be demonised

because it violates existing codes of femininity and female sexuality. They outline some of the key arguments that were put forward to advocate for the passing of the PRA: namely that the laws prior to June 2003 had negative effects for workers, while clients were not legally liable; that the laws against brothel keeping meant managers had minimal motivation to encourage health and safety in the workplace; and that safer sex practices were effectively discouraged, as possessing condoms and safer sex pamphlets was cited as evidence of illegal activity (p. 48). They argue that while the PRA removed legal censure, it did not necessarily challenge or remove “existing hierarchies of gender, class and respectability”, citing Harrington (2012, p. 339, 343), and note that even within academic discourse there tended to be a focus on the empowerment/exploitation binary (2014, p. 48).

In their discussion of the situation post-decriminalisation in New Zealand, the authors note there is still a stigma attached to being a sex worker, with this position supported by other sources, including a report from the Ministry of Justice (2008) and research by Abel, Fitzgerald, and Brunton (2009). Farvid and Glass add that a distinction is still made between being a street sex worker (presumed to be dirty, or engaged with drugs or gang violence) or an indoor worker (which is more generally portrayed as a legitimate occupation and as enjoyable, profitable, and ‘freely’ chosen) (pp. 50–51). This identified binary distinction between indoor and outdoor work, discursively produced as a respectable profession and the presumed unfortunate circumstance of some workers, respectively, form the basis of the analysis of news media to be carried out in later chapters. One of the key questions that this thesis seeks to investigate is whether news media coverage in New Zealand functions to produce a discourse around sex work that creates a ‘correct’ way in which sex work can be carried out.

Further discussion of the various modes of sex work engaged in in New Zealand is found in *For Better or Worse? Decriminalisation, Work Conditions, and Indoor Sex Work in Auckland, New Zealand/Aotearoa* by Zangger (2015), and *Managing Risks of Violence in Decriminalised Street-based Sex Work: A Feminist (Sex Worker Rights) Perspective* by Armstrong (2011). Both texts are used as supporting evidence to establish the landscape of the sex industry within New Zealand, with Zangger’s work used as a source for documentation of the conditions often present within the indoor managed sector (largely in brothels, as opposed to agencies).

Zangger's thesis incorporates interviews with 30 sex workers from Auckland, and reveals that the experiences of working conditions in brothels are often at odds with the conditions nominally guaranteed by the PRA. This is, again, in keeping with Scoular's work which indicates that the legal position of sex workers does not necessarily correlate with the actual experiences of how those laws are applied (2010). Zangger's work also confirms that opportunities for trans workers to work within the indoor managed sector are functionally non-existent – an important point in my fourth chapter, in which I discuss the disjuncture between proposed 'solutions' to street sex work and the options functionally available to many street sex workers (pp. 101–102.)

Armstrong examines the types of violence experienced by street sex workers in New Zealand, and the methods they use to minimise risk while working. She notes that the most common type of violence was that from passers-by, a point relevant for my discussion of the vigilante action by Papatoetoe Residents Reclaiming Our Streets (PRROS) against street sex workers in South Auckland in Chapter Four (pp. 76–77). She further notes that, in media coverage of street sex work in Christchurch, residents objecting to the presence of workers were reported to use cameras and torches to identify and intimidate sex workers, through the use of shame and the threat of publicising their profession (p. 145). Armstrong's discussion of the violence and abuse from non-client members of the public also highlights that underpinning such violence and abuse are negative and restrictive attitudes about sexuality, as well as a more general lack of understanding or knowledge about the sex industry, and a persistent 'othering' of sex workers, particularly publicly visible workers (pp. 147–151). Her thesis therefore indicates that the attitudes and behaviour of non-sex working residents reflected in the news media texts analysed in Chapter Four are not a singular occurrence, but are instead reflective of a wider issue relating to public responses to street sex work (while my analysis considers news reports from Auckland, Armstrong's research focused primarily on street sex workers in Wellington and Christchurch).

In "A Decade of Decriminalisation: Sex Work 'down under' But Not Underground" G. Abel further discusses the differences in understandings and discussions of indoor and outdoor (street) sex work (2014). Abel gives an overview of the progression of sex worker rights a decade after the passing of the PRA, and puts forth an argument that the model has been

successful in New Zealand and should be considered for adoption elsewhere. One of her key points is that the PRA was successful in large part because it was developed by the NZPC, and in consultation with current and former sex workers (p. 582). She also situates the political situation in New Zealand when the PRA was passed: most of the objections to the PRA lodged during the consultation period were moral or religious objections, with comparatively few objections situated within a radical feminist framework (p. 538). While the sex wars outlined earlier in this chapter are historically relevant for understanding the development of sex work theory and activism as a whole, within the specifically New Zealand context this kind of objection was rare in 2003.

Abel also discusses the way in which sex workers being functionally invisible is frequently viewed as a desirable outcome. Specifically, she describes indoor workers as being largely unseen and therefore “able to fly under the radar of moral indignation” (p. 587) adding that “[t]here have been attempts world-wide to eradicate the street based sector of the sex industry or at least render them invisible so as not to offend the rest of the population” (p. 588). This commentary on the desire to render sex workers and their work invisible is relevant in Chapters Four and Six as a key consideration when analysing the discursive production of acceptability. The desire to invisibilise sex work, and to grant acceptability to sex workers most able to work without being publicly visible, is also discussed extensively by Scoular in “What’s Law got to do With it?” (2010). Scoular’s article refers to sex work in Sweden and the Netherlands, but she identifies very similar attitudes to those outlined by Abel: in Sweden following a law change that criminalised clients there was a move to more indoor ‘invisible’ work by sex workers for whom this was an available option (p. 20), with acceptability available to sex workers who are able to “perform the rituals of middle class society” (pp. 33–34).

TRANS SEX WORKERS AND TRANSMISOGYNY

In my first analytical chapter I consider the news media coverage of street sex workers in Papatoetoe and South Auckland. Much of the discourse analysed within this chapter has a focus on transfeminine workers, particularly trans women of colour. In order to carry out a thorough analysis which considers the intersecting oppressions that this discourse reveals, it is necessary to establish a theoretical underpinning on trans politics. In particular the ways in

which trans women are constructed as a social group and the specific ways structural violence and discrimination against them is enacted.

Among the key theorists used for this theoretical consideration are Serano (2007/2016), particularly for definitions of terms, and descriptions of the ways in which transphobia specifically targeting trans women manifests. I also use the work of Capuzza (2015), for a commentary on how wider understandings of trans people are frequently informed by the mainstream media, providing a justification of the importance of critically examining how news media discourses treat trans people. For discussions particularly about trans bodies and how they are produced as acceptable or unacceptable, I consult the work of Edelman (2011) and Irving (2008).

Serano, in *Whipping Girl*, discusses specific ways in which discrimination against trans women manifests (2007/2016).¹¹ She notes that trans women exist at the intersection of three specific modes of discrimination – namely sexism, transphobia, and cissexism – and refers to the particular kinds of prejudice and discrimination which they are subjected to as “trans-misogyny” (pp. 14–16). Within the bounds of this thesis, many of the workers who are discussed or constructed, either as individuals or as a collective notion of who or what a trans sex worker is, are also subject to the added axis of oppression of whorephobia and racism.

Serano describes a persistent obsession with and objectification of trans bodies, especially the ways in which the genitals of trans people are subject to a prurient speculation and – particularly in the case of trans women – an allegation that the presence or absence of a penis is the defining factor in someone’s gender. She also outlines the ways in which trans bodies are the subject of scrutiny, and argues that trans women are frequently placed in an unwinnable situation with regard to their gender presentation: if they are deemed to be ‘too feminine’ (or too similar to cis women) they are a parody of femininity (or deceptive) whereas if elements of their assigned sex at birth are visible within their bodies in the form of masculinity they are displaying their ‘true nature’ and are viewed as pathetic (p. 49).

¹¹ A full definition of terminology relating to trans people can be found in Chapter Three, pp. 83-84.

Serano also discusses the ways in which transfeminine people are sexualised and constructed as sexual objects, designed to 'lure' straight men (pp. 253–259). Her commentary discusses how trans women are denied full personhood and reduced to objects of desire and temptation, hypersexualised, and frequently subject to sexual harassment. This observation about the particular ways in which trans women are sexualised and dehumanised is useful for identifying the specific kinds of transmisogyny that exist within news media coverage of street sex workers.

Capuzza, in her 2015 article "Who Defines Gender Diversity?", illustrates how concepts of gender are constructed and reinforced (and may have the capacity to be challenged) in sites of public discourse, including mainstream media. Moscovitz also identifies the impact of media discourses, arguing that mass media and popular culture serve as an instrumental site for regulating "the boundaries of gender and sexual identities" (2010, p. 26). Capuzza notes regulation within the media is usually achieved through processes such as underrepresentation and stereotyping (p. 115). As with Serano's commentary, Capuzza notes that there is extensive evidence on the recurring representation of trans people as criminals, drag queens, or reducing them only to the status of their genitals (p. 116).

Additionally, Capuzza comments on the lack of in-depth coverage of trans issues and trans experiences, saying this contributes to a lack of nuanced understanding of the community, and the pathologizing of trans bodies. Stories about trans people that lack a depth and complexity to allow their experiences to be accurately conveyed may function primarily to make them an object of pity, further discursively situating them in the position of 'other' from the perspective of the cisgender community.

For further commentary on the systematic pathologizing of trans bodies, in particular trans bodies of colour, I refer to Edelman's work in "'This Area has Been Declared a Prostitution Free Zone': Discursive Formations of Space, the State and Trans "Sex Worker" Bodies" (2011). Edelman considers the production of trans bodies as "perpetually and permanently 'out of place'" by discussing the establishment of a Prostitution Free Zone (PFZ) in Washington D.C (p. 852). The PFZ barred anyone who had engaged in, or was suspected of engaging in sex work, either at the present time or in the past, from entering it. By using such a tremendously

broad definition the function of the zone was to profile subjects (that is, subjects who were visibly gender variant) based on the presumed potential of their bodies.

Edelman describes how bodies that are not white and that are not cisgendered are identified as “[t]he ideological other, here as the “brazen” prostitute, who pollutes with disregard the neighbourhood with their mere presence” (p. 857). The offence here is being present, entering the zone – the actual engagement in sex work is unnecessary. This highlights the way in which not only are sex workers “always working” as Grant puts it, but some bodies are always presumed to be sex workers, under all circumstances, and at all times. In speaking about how the police chief at the time discussed the PFZ, Edelman writes:

“He [the police chief] situates these prostitute bodies as dangerous, dirty and a threat to safety of the public; within this paradigm, sex workers are placeless entities, embodying illegality, always corrupting the moral landscapes of the good and incapable of community and residence.” (p. 857)

This mode of constructing trans bodies, sex working bodies, and those presumed to be one or both, is applied with regard to the systematic discursive dismissal of street sex workers as part of the community (or indeed, *a* community) in South Auckland. Furthermore, Edelman’s text outlines how public space is permitted to be used: a ‘good’ use of public space is one that is heteronormative and cisnormative.

Questions of legitimacy and who is permitted to exist freely are further explored in Irving’s “Normalized Transgressions: Legitimizing the Transsexual Body as Productive” (2008). Irving explores the ways in which a desire to create what he terms “proper trans social subjects” further marginalises trans people who exist at points of multiple intersecting oppressed identities (p. 39). Specifically, Irving discusses how queer and trans rights movements frequently emphasise the normative aspects of (some) trans identities, specifically the engagement with and adherence to “exploitative economic relations of production” (p. 39). Irving inspects the manner in which this desire to create an acceptable trans subjectivity functions to further marginalise those who do not, cannot, or do not desire to, exist within this framework. He contends that there is a constitutive relationship between normalised and

acceptable sex/gender presentations and roles, and such exploitative economic systems – medical and psychological writing about trans people historically comments extensively on the ability of trans men to act as economic providers, and comments on the degree to which trans women perform suitably demure femininity, and accept lower wages and fewer job opportunities (pp. 44–46). Irving’s text, then, is a rich source to draw upon for discussions of how the normative femininity of trans women is subject to intense interrogation and investigation, evidenced by many of the criticisms of transfeminine street sex workers that focus on their ability or failure to ‘successfully’ perform a specific mode of femininity. Further, Irving’s work identifies the juncture between transphobia and capitalist frameworks, making clear another reason why trans sex workers are discussed in such a critical manner.

Additionally, Irving comments that given the drive to construct trans subjects as “deviant, abnormal, criminal and socially destructive” movements to establish social legitimacy frequently did not have the ability to theorize trans subjectivities within a socioeconomic context (pp. 49–50). The impact of this method of constructing trans subjectivities as normative is that it further marginalises trans people who are disabled, not white, non-passing, sex workers, mentally ill, or migrants, those who cannot make themselves functionally invisible (pp. 50–51). This construction of an acceptable trans subject who is permitted to exist in public space demands that the subject be undetectable. This suggests a crossover point between the argument made by G. Abel (2014) that the most acceptable form of sex work is invisible sex work, and a desire to make gender variance publicly invisible too.

PUBLIC SPACE/PUBLIC SEX

This question of what appropriate usage of public space is, and who is permitted to use it, (or discursively constructed as a member of the public for whom it is intended) is also addressed in Chapter Four of this thesis. For my theoretical grounding in these concerns, I use Ross’ “Sex and Evacuation from the City” (2010), which considers the moral and legal regulation of sex workers in Vancouver between 1975 and 1985, for a consideration of public space specifically pertaining to sex work, and Berlant and Warner’s “Sex in Public” (1998) for a more general discussion of how publicly displayed sexuality is constrained and understood.

Ross refers to Foucault's *History of Sexuality: Volume I* to discuss the ways in which sex work throughout the 20th century was constructed as a social problem to be handled through police interventions (p. 198). She discusses specifically the campaign of harassment against street sex workers in a gentrifying neighbourhood in Vancouver from 1975 to 1985, noting that a group who were a particular focus of anti-sex work rhetoric were trans women and women of colour. Throughout her discussion of how the workers were constructed as an illegitimate group, she extensively refers to how the groups of "concerned citizens" repeatedly worked to construct sex workers as existing outside the community, not within it (p. 202). This construction runs parallel to many of the themes that emerge in news media coverage about street sex workers in South Auckland and Papatoetoe.

Ross identifies that much of the discussion about street sex workers in Vancouver sought to establish them as a group with no claim or right to public space, and no right to be present and visible within their own communities. Ross writes that "...sex workers were reclassified as trespassers with no legal, civic, or moral purchase on the definition of 'standards' or 'community'" (p. 208). I apply Ross' commentary in my own examination of how some groups of sex workers are constructed as outside of their own communities, and as an impediment to the enjoyment of public space by more normative groups. Ross notes that the leaders of many groups involved in trying to remove street sex workers from the area were gay men, indicating a desire to establish acceptable and unacceptable modes of public sexuality. The way in which street sex workers are discursively and literally forced out of the 'community' and public space speaks not only to a concept of heteronormative sexualities being tolerable within public space, but of specific constrained homonormativities being accepted too. However, these acceptable and constrained homonormativities are defined largely through establishing themselves in opposition to the deviant 'other'.

Berlant and Warner (1998) also discuss the implications of heteronormativity on conceptions of acceptable uses of public space. They refer to Foucault's notions of normalisation, saying that heteronormativity becomes culturally intelligible through "the ideologies and institutions of intimacy", which require intimacy to be private (p. 553). The discomfort and punishment meted out for transgressive displays of sexuality in public are rooted in a presumption that there is a divide between 'personal life' and work or public spaces; furthermore the definition

of what constitutes a transgression is defined by the norms of a monogamous, heterosexual, nuclear family. Within the context of street sex work, this is apparent in the way in which sex workers are critiqued for their mere presence – after having subsumed sex, which is presumed to be part of a private life, and work, the expectation appears to be that these two are always intertwined. Again, as Grant puts it, the sex worker is always working, and is therefore always in defiance of presumed acceptable uses of public space (2014, p. 11).

Berlant and Warner also speak to the way that when the overtly sexual streets in New York (containing pornography cinemas and adult stores) that had formed a nexus of some queer communities were exiled through by-law changes, many ‘respectable’ gay men distanced themselves from the areas. Berlant and Warner suggest this is because of a denial of the debt which they owe to these regions and their communities for the work done to make being a respectable queer an option (p. 563). I briefly explore this when considering how sex workers talk about other workers who operate in different ways – how indoor workers discuss street sex workers, for example. In my thesis I examine whether there is a similar attempt at establishing and delineating an artificial hierarchy within the industry according to notions of acceptability.

CONCLUSION

Throughout this chapter I have established the current state of research in my field, and relevant histories of research into sex work within media studies and other adjacent fields. A key theme within the existing literature comes via the multiple theorists who confirm the role of news media in shaping the general public’s understanding of marginalised groups, particularly those with whom they have little direct interaction. Further to this, my review of literature on news media, included in Chapter One, indicates the ways deeming something ‘newsworthy’ is inherently subject to specific framings according to dominant cultural norms, further limiting the ability of news media texts to represent marginalised groups in a nuanced and complex manner.

My thesis highlights the intersections of various theoretical topics outlined within this literature review and considers how these intersections may be used to gain a deeper understanding of the ways in which sex work and workers are constructed and represented within a decriminalised environment. The juncture between the affective labour of sex workers, the desire for sex workers to adequately perform 'choice' as a way of justifying their job, and the advertorial function of some media coverage is one area where multiple theoretical topics can be fruitfully combined. A further area is considering how transmisogyny intersects with whorephobia, notions of acceptable use (and users) of public space, and the production of news media, resulting in manifestly transmisogynistic language and tropes being included in news media texts. Work on this topic already exists in academic and non-academic spaces, and combining these various theories adds to the existing corpus of knowledge about this, notably how this occurs in a decriminalised environment, with most existing work on these topics focusing on north America where sex work is still illegal.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION.

This thesis investigates news media constructions and representations of sex work and workers since the passing of the Prostitution Reform Act (PRA) in 2003. Within my analysis I consider key questions, including whether post-PRA the news media has discursively constructed a specific identity, or set of identities, as being the 'respectable' sex worker, and by extension, which sex workers are produced as unacceptable.

As outlined in my introduction, the key questions that I consider in my analysis of New Zealand media objects are:

1. Does New Zealand media coverage provide distinct representations of sex workers who carry out their work in various ways (street sex workers, parlour workers, agency workers, and independent workers)? Are these representations linked to the class, race, immigration status, and trans or cis status of the workers? If a link is created, how is it constructed within media discourse? Do the representations function to create a respectable or more acceptable way in which to be a sex worker?
2. Does the New Zealand news media coverage include the "adveritorial" framing that has been identified in some overseas coverage of sex work? If so, does participating in interviews for media texts which feature this framing require additional emotional labour on the part of workers? Is there the expectation identified by Grant in *Playing the Whore* (2014) that workers give an impression of enjoying their work in order for it to be respected as labour?
3. Is there a link between being deemed a more acceptable sex worker and the performance of enjoyment? What specific behaviours or attitudes are associated with this acceptability?

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

While this thesis does not include any interviews with human subjects and therefore does not require a formal ethical approval from Victoria University of Wellington, due to the subject matter I consider it important to outline the ethical considerations at play. In determining the appropriate measures to be taken to ensure my research is ethical and respectful of the sex working populations likely to be affected by the outcomes and findings of it, I have referred extensively to the work of Armstrong, particularly “Reflections on a Research Process” (2012), in which she discusses the ethical considerations involved in her interview-based thesis about safety measures taken by street-based sex workers in Wellington and Christchurch. She quotes Hubbard (1999), who outlines four principles that should be adhered to and would typically be expected before assistance from sex industry gatekeepers could be respectfully requested. While my research does not involve interviews with sex workers, or request the time and energy of sex work organisations, I still consider it important to adhere to her guidelines as a best practice when writing about sex work and workers. Hubbard’s four points are:

1. That the research must be capable of producing knowledge which would reduce stigma around sex work
2. That the researcher has an understanding of the realities of sex work
3. That sex work is understood by the researcher as a legitimate form of work
4. That the researcher believes in the minimisation of health and safety risks for sex workers in their work (Armstrong, 2012, p. 4)

I strongly believe that fostering and beginning a conversation about who is perceived as an ‘acceptable’ or ‘respectable’ sex worker will also make apparent which sex workers are still stigmatised, and the mechanisms by which this stigma is applied. I therefore believe my research fulfils Hubbard’s first point. For points two and three I briefly refer to my personal experience: I have worked as a sex worker in a number of areas of the industry, including full service work, and therefore carry into my research a first-hand knowledge of the realities of

sex work in a variety of conditions.¹² Additionally, these years of experience in the industry have given me a keen appreciation for the very real and underappreciated labour which sex workers engage in during their interactions with clients, management, and colleagues. While I am aware of my privilege in working as a young, white, middle-class person I do also feel that I have some added awareness because of my first-hand experience, although my thesis is written from an academic perspective, not as a personal account. Finally, one of my goals in carrying out this research is to identify limitations on how freely sex workers can speak about issues within their workplaces, allowing a more open dialogue about potentially dangerous situations regarding health and safety.

OBJECTS OF STUDY AND LIMITATIONS

The decision to use news media texts as objects of analysis was based on the way these texts are frequently used by non-sex working people to form opinions and a perceived understanding of the sex industry. Within a New Zealand specific context there are a greater breadth of texts that fall under the category of news media than there are fictionalised accounts since the passing of the PRA in 2003, meaning there is a greater depth of information to draw upon in this genre. In “Fallen Women and Rescued Girls: Social Stigma and Media Narratives of the Sex Industry in Victoria B.C. 1980–2005” by Hallgrimsdottir, Phillips and Benoit, the authors write: “[e]ssentially, in the absence of any lived interaction with the sex industry, media texts are key cultural sites at which the stigmas of sex work are produced and consumed by the majority of citizens.” (2006, p. 267). While they speak primarily of the stigmas attached to sex work generally, my analysis aims to determine whether these stigmas are more prevalent, or emphasised, for some modes of engaging in sex work than in others, or for particular kinds of workers.

Brunton et al also comment on the role and importance of the media in *Taking the Crime Out of Sex Work*, saying that the dominant discourses present within media coverage have been highlighted by sex workers as a method by which stigma is reinforced (2010, p. 197).

¹² Prior to commencing this thesis I was an independent contractor to two of the workplaces named in the analysed texts, however my employment with them ended over a year before beginning this research.

Additionally, they mention that the media form part of a “disciplinary regime” for sex workers (2010, p. 199), contributing to my argument that since the decriminalisation of sex work in New Zealand the ability to define ‘acceptable’ sex work has largely passed from the courts to the media.

News media coverage also constitutes a mechanism by which figures of authority are established, with the positions of authority made visible in my analysis by considering who is permitted to speak, and on what subjects. This is expanded upon in the “Analysing the Media Texts” subsection of this chapter, but constitutes a further rationale for the decision to study media texts: they are a medium by which particular groups may influence public understandings of identity categories to which they belong. As discussed in the chapter on agency and independent sex workers, some workers may utilise news media in an advertorial manner, further complicating the question of representation and accuracy. Advertorial usages of news media texts may highlight some aspects of the work, while obscuring or minimising others to present a version that is more palatable to potential or current clientele. News media, therefore, forms a rich and fruitful corpus from which to establish and discuss overarching narratives and themes relating to sex work and workers in New Zealand. In keeping with Hubbard’s first principle for research on sex work, this thesis has the capacity to produce knowledge which could be applied to reduce the stigmatisation of sex work.

In my preliminary searches for potential texts I found that searching for “sex worker” on *Stuff.co.nz* returned over 70,000 results (as of October 2015), while the *New Zealand Herald* website returned over 1000 results (again, as of October 2015). These two sites were chosen as key sources of texts for analysis as they represent flagship online presences for New Zealand’s two major commercial media owners: Fairfax and NZME respectively. In order to restrict my analysis to a manageable number of articles, I decided to limit my search both thematically and by date. I focused on texts from 2010 to 2016 and restricted the analysis to texts that dealt with three major media events or trends.

An obvious limitation of my data collection method is that it is possible that the data which fell outside these restrictions contains additional information that relates to my key questions about the respectability or acceptability of sex workers, or the construction of choice and

agency within sex working groups. This therefore represents a potential area for future study. The three media events and trends selected cover a range of ways of engaging in sex work, and groups that sex workers may self-identify with or be identified as. This work is not intended to be representative of the entirety of news media coverage during the specific time period, but rather to indicate the differences between representations of workers belonging to different identity categories.

The trends selected for analysis are:

1. The coverage of migrant sex workers in relation to the Rugby World Cup which was held in New Zealand in 2011 and of international student sex workers during other periods.
2. The coverage of the attempts by the Manukau City Council and later the Auckland City Council (following the incorporation of councils in 2010) to pass a by-law restricting the areas in which street sex workers could work.
3. The regular publication of human interest/lifestyle articles¹³ focusing on agency-style sex work and independent indoor sex workers (where workers are on call and booked by appointment rather than working shifts), particularly those that interview workers or owners.

The decision to select these three media trends and events was made because of the breadth of sex work specific issues and particular groups encompassed by them. In order to answer the key questions established earlier in this chapter, the media texts needed to relate to multiple sex working groups and modes of working, as well as contain texts that could be examined for evidence of the advertorial slant identified by existing literature. The three key events cover indoor and outdoor workers; managed and self-managed workers; workers protected by New Zealand's decriminalisation legislation, and those not protected by it. Further, through the inclusion of the Manukau City Council's attempts to restrict where street sex workers could work and coverage of migrant workers, I was also able to consider how

¹³ By this I mean stories that do not deal with a specific news event: rather stories where investigating the life and work experiences of a sex worker or brothel owner constitutes the entirety of the news story.

news media texts reported on and framed interactions between sex workers and sites of power (city councils, Parliament, and the Immigration Department.) The specific justifications for each mediascape are explored in more detail below.

Briefly, the coverage of street sex work in the Manukau City Council region frequently focuses on trans sex workers, as well as sex workers who are presumed to be homeless or drug-users. Additionally, many of the street sex workers in New Zealand are Māori or Pasifika, relative to the demographic of the general sex working population (Abel and Fitzgerald, 2012, p. 18), meaning this specific topic allows for a consideration of how racism plays into the understanding and construction of sex work and workers. Coverage of migrant sex workers provides an avenue to consider the ways in which New Zealand's PRA affects workers who are not New Zealand citizens or permanent residents, and are therefore not protected under decriminalisation and subject to deportation if found working. I analyse coverage specific to the Rugby World Cup, as it highlights an event around which much of the coverage centred but also represents a period of nominal exceptionalism (exceptional behaviour, an emphasis on performances of both masculinity and nationalism), as well as coverage focusing on international student sex workers during other periods. Coverage of migrant sex workers also encompasses some discussion of shift-work based brothels.

Shift-work in brothels is often mentioned in passing in texts discussing independent or agency-based workers, frequently as a point of comparison. Agency and independent work has been chosen as the third area that I will address as a key sex work related media trend. Agency and independent workers were more likely to appear in 'lifestyle' news pieces, appealing to a different set of news values than the other two analysed media events. As discussed in further detail in Chapter Six, agency workers were more likely to present themselves as engaging in sex work temporarily, and to be white and middle class, again, giving an opportunity to consider who is located within an 'acceptable' category of sex worker, if such a thing exists.

Through these three trends I gained a reasonable overview of three of the four most common working situations for sex workers in New Zealand (street sex work, independent indoor work, and agency work, with brothel/shift-based indoor work being the fourth) and thereby

consider the ways in which each kind of work and worker is constructed and represented in terms of their acceptability and respectability (Abel et al., 2007, pp. 28–40). The spread of the events allows for an examination of the ways intersectional oppressions play out in coverage of sex work and workers, highlighting if and how respectability politics is enacted within the analysed discourse.

IDENTIFYING AND OBTAINING OBJECTS OF STUDY

In searching for objects of study, my methods were based around searching websites and databases for New Zealand news media, including Newztext (www.knowledge-basket.co.nz), the Victoria University of Wellington Te Waharoa search portal, and the Australia/New Zealand Reference Centre Database, as well as the host websites of New Zealand news outlets such as *Stuff.co.nz*, *nzherald.co.nz* and *tvnz.co.nz*. I used terms such as “sex work”, “sex worker”, and “prostitute” initially, refining my search as more precise search terms became apparent. In identifying articles that related to migrant workers and the Rugby World Cup 2011, I used a combination of terms such as “brothel + world cup”, as well as the “immigration” tag on the *New Zealand Herald* website. In considering the attempts by the Manukau City Council I also used the specific name of the second bill the council attempted to pass, “Regulation of Prostitution in Specified Places”, as a key search term. Frequently I also found that among the ‘suggested’ articles produced in the sidebar of news websites I would find further media texts that related to my research.

I focused on collecting predominantly media texts which were at least 500 words for analysis, primarily to avoid comparing longer form articles about agency-based sex workers with shorter news updates about the progress of the Manukau City Council (Regulation of Prostitution in Specified Places) Bill, on the basis that these comparisons might reveal differences more related to the format of the item than any specific differences of discursive construction. When I found that my analysis was returning broadly similar information to that already uncovered within the previously collected texts, a point of diminishing returns, I ceased searching for new texts. This point was determined by conducting initial analysis and collection in tandem over a period of eight months during late 2015 and early 2016: I identified the broad themes within collected texts (the mechanism by which this was carried

out is discussed in greater detail in the following sub-section), and once it became apparent that collecting further texts would not introduce additional information for analysis the collection ceased.

ANALYSING THE MEDIA TEXTS

I based my discourse analysis methodology largely on the work of Fairclough, in particular “Intertextuality in Critical Discourse Analysis” (1992), with reference to Curtis’ “Foucault Beyond Fairclough” (2014), and McKerrow’s “Critical Rhetoric: Theory and Praxis” (1989). Fairclough situates himself and his approach to critical discourse analysis by stating he considers how discourse connects with wider processes of social and cultural change (p. 269). He cites Bakhtin (1986) in contending that all texts are inherently intertextual, that all texts either respond to previous texts (or conversations) or anticipate future texts or commentary, but they cannot be considered alone or without examining them in a wider social and cultural context. As such, my analysis of media texts will consider not only elements occurring in specific texts but also the overarching themes which are present within them, particularly the intertextual and reflexive manner in which different modes of doing sex work are constructed. Fairclough writes on both manifest intertextuality, where the intertextual nature of the text is clearly signalled, as through quoting, and constitutive intertextuality in which the intertextual nature of a text is apparent through its acting as a response or a precursor to other conversations. Fairclough also submits that manifest intertextuality can be indicated through direct reportage and clear signalling, but may also occur subtextually, and adds that there is a secondary potential for constitutive intertextuality to exist in “the configuration of discourse conventions that go into its production” (pp. 271–272).

Fairclough’s model of intertextuality also suggests that texts are a productive site of cultural change, and he emphasises the relationship between historicisation and texts: history is built out of discursive recollections. He does however note that the productivity of texts is not limitless, and existing social structures limit this productivity and capacity for change (p. 271). He speculates that a model of hegemony could be used here to explain the specific limitations and how they occur, but notes it as being outside of the scope of his work. In my analysis I also use Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall’s work on intersectionality (2013) to partially consider

the ways in which discursive productions are affected by intersecting axes of oppression. Curtis (2014) examines this further, noting that while Fairclough cites Foucault as a contributor, particularly to his early work on critical discourse analysis, one of his primary critiques of Foucauldian discourse analysis is that it pays insufficiently rigorous attention to the interrelation between discourse and existing social structures (p. 1755, 1757). Fairclough (1992) and McKerrow (1989) also make use of Foucault's theory of 'orders of discourse', to construct a model for who is permitted to speak on which topics, and with what degree of authority.

McKerrow (1989) incorporates and furthers elements of a Foucauldian discourse analysis method, and elaborates on the questions of intersectional oppressions later mentioned by Fairclough and Curtis. McKerrow specifically notes that too close an emphasis placed on the dominant and dominated parties can reduce the ability to discern multiple influences on a piece of discourse (p. 96). In discussing the principle of a close rhetorical analysis, examining small fragments of a text piece by piece, McKerrow posits that absence within texts is as important as what is present, in an argument similar to Fairclough's approach to constitutive intertextuality, and that fragments of texts may be interpreted in multiple equally valid ways, with no singular correct interpretation. Again, this has close ties to Fairclough's work on intertextuality: a text may reference, signal, or anticipate various other texts and conversations before and since its production, with each interrelation providing a valid frame of analysis.

With regard to Grant's contention that prostitution is a "talking crime" and that sex workers, or former workers, are often required to speak about the physical elements of their work (2014, p. 9) I will also pay attention to any evidence of this occurring in the texts I analyse. This will be considered regarding Foucault's work on confessions as a "ritual of discourse" (1976/2008, p. 61). Foucault suggests that the confession constitutes "the general standard governing the production of a true discourse on sex" (p. 62) and I will consider whether sex workers are compelled to speak about the sexual labour and specifics of their work to justify or absolve themselves.

My initial sorting of the texts was based on which of the three media trends or events they dealt with. From here I arranged them chronologically to determine whether the articles clustered around particular dates or events, and consider whether there were thematic changes in the articles depending upon the social and political context of their publication. This also allowed for identification of references to events that had occurred in the past: mentioning the Rugby World Cup months or years after it had occurred, for example. After grouping the texts by event, I examined them for broad themes that emerged (alleged trafficking in texts about migrant workers, or the perceived impact on retail businesses in texts focusing on street sex work). During this portion of the analysis I also used the presence of established themes reoccurring to determine when to cease collecting new texts for inclusion. Once I established that a text being considered contained only themes which had already been documented it was discarded as not contributing further insight for later close analysis. When this occurred with multiple texts examined in a row I ceased searching for new examples.

Following this process, I noted who was interviewed or permitted to speak in texts, looking for recurrences which would indicate who is given credence as an expert within the discourse and to determine whose words were quoted, whose were paraphrased, and who was not granted the right to speak. In this I use Fairclough's preferred terminology of "discourse representation" to delineate between direct and indirect reportage (pp. 272–274). In determining who was interviewed most frequently, I counted representatives from the New Zealand Prostitutes' Collective (NZPC) separately from current or former sex workers. This was deliberate, reflecting differences in how these interviewees tended to be identified, and the position from which they were quoted. While some NZPC representatives are current or former sex workers, they are usually not identified as such in the analysed texts, instead referred to by their titles, such as "National Coordinator". Additionally, NZPC spokespeople were usually interviewed as representatives of sex workers as a group, rather than speaking on their own personal experiences of the work, unlike individual sex workers.

After identifying who was interviewed, quoted, or paraphrased, I further examined the texts to establish whether specific words, phrases, or tropes recurred in texts referring to each media event, and if themes were expressed in markedly similar ways across multiple texts. In

doing this I considered the presence of verbal, visual, and written tropes, and isolated examples of these for a close rhetorical analysis, as outlined by McKerrow (1989). Additionally, I tracked the words, phrases, and short descriptions used for sex work and sex workers to determine whether different terminology was used for workers operating in different sectors of the sex industry.

When conducting my analysis of the texts I additionally considered if the reporting contained language that could be considered advertorial in nature and, if this language was present, whether it furthered the discursive construction of a more acceptable way in which to carry out sex work. As part of determining whether advertorial language was present I referred to the websites of specific agencies and workers, if they were mentioned by name in the text, to determine whether the themes and phrases used in the media texts mirrored or matched the language used in advertising and website copy by the businesses and workers.

I also examined the texts selected for analysis with an eye to determine if they contained evidence of the sex workers being interviewed, quoted, or reported on engaging in further emotional or affective labour. As outlined in detail later in this chapter, my primary theoretical source here is the work of Hochschild (1979/2012) with *The Managed Heart*. Evidence of this trend has been identified by other theorists, including Grant, who has written that “[s]ex workers, more than any other, are expected to justify their labor as a choice, as if the choice to engage in a form of labor is what makes that labor legitimate” (2014, pp. 93–94). Grant is writing primarily about the ways that sex work is constructed in areas where it is still wholly or largely illegal, and one of the questions which my thesis sought to answer is whether this justification (possibly as an adjunct to the confessions that I looked for evidence of) is still required of workers in a decriminalised environment.

EMOTIONAL AND AFFECTIVE LABOUR

In considering the way in which some workers may use interviews and media coverage to present themselves as appealing to customers, I refer to texts on emotional and affective labour. While this subsection represents an overview of this field of research, I include it in my methodology because I approach these frameworks as tools with which to identify

evidence of this kind of labour within my analysed texts. One of my central arguments in interpreting the mechanisms by which representations of acceptability function is that much of the actual work of sex work is obscured or unrecognised, particularly the emotional labour carried out. To contextualize this labour as effortful and legitimate, I engage with the existing field of work on these topics. Among the theorists who I draw most heavily upon is Hochschild's *The Managed Heart: The Commercialisation of Human Feeling* which outlines the ways in which emotional labour (the form of emotion work done for pay, or in expectation of being paid) is carried out and expected in service-oriented professions (1979/2012). In speaking about affective labour and emotional labour, affective labour refers to the work done to produce or coax emotional responses from others (in this context, usually customers or clients), while emotional labour refers to the work done to manage ones' own emotions or present a desired emotional state. At points emotional labour may additionally serve as affective – the managing of emotions or presentation of a particular emotional state may *also* serve to induce an affective response from others.

Hochschild outlines emotional labour as the work of both managing one's own emotions as they are perceived by clients, managers, and co-workers and also working to induce a particular emotional state in others (p. 147). *The Managed Heart* deals primarily with Hochschild's work interviewing flight attendants, whose work requires them to be in close contact with passengers for hours at a time and is frequently denigrated as being low-skill, despite the amount of emergency training that attendants undergo. In describing the growth of emotional labour Hochschild mentions that it is a key part of jobs that involve "face to face, or voice to voice" contact with clients (p. 147), and that in such roles "the emotional style of offering the service is part of the service itself...Seeming to 'love the job' becomes part of the job" (p. 5). This is applicable to my work regarding the ways in which sex workers in New Zealand are required to give an appearance of sincere enjoyment in order for their labour to be respected as legitimate, and for them to be considered deserving of workplace rights. Sex workers are placed in the position of having to both justify their labour and also exert more energy in doing so: performing an adequately convincing version of enjoyment and choice for an audience who, largely, are not paying customers is an additional toll on workers.

In discussing how emotional labour is carried out in the workplace, Hochschild says she sought out discussions in which respondents talked about managed feelings. “Trying” to feel sad, “putting a damper on” love, or “knowing” they should feel guilty – attempting to produce the emotion that was expected of them despite their actual feelings (p. 12). She argues that ‘trying’ to feel a particular way in a given situation is frequently a form of gift exchange. The attempt at producing the correct feeling, or impression of a feeling, is a tribute to the other person or people involved, and Hochschild terms the production of these emotions for the purposes of work “transmutation of an emotional system” (pp. 17-18). In discussing the presentation of enjoyment of sex work in media coverage I discuss and attempt to identify the emotional labour required, while keeping in mind that this labour is performed for an audience, sometimes of clients, sometimes of managers and sometimes of anti-sex work lobbyists. I want to be abundantly clear that my argument is not remotely that such discussions of enjoyment of the work are presumed to be always or necessarily false, or that they represent a false consciousness, but rather that they are presented as a specific kind of discourse for a specific audience.

Hochschild also discusses the notions of “surface” and “deep” acting, explaining that surface acting involves the worker presenting a physical facsimile of the emotion they wish to convey while being aware it is different to their own personally felt emotions, and that deep acting involves trying to genuinely summon the required emotion to make the emotional labour less detectable to observers (pp. 33-48). In Chapter Four she considers the ways in which people, in both personal and professional circumstances, adjust their feelings or their physical demeanour according to what they believe is expected of them. As outlined earlier in Chapter Two, Grant argues that much of the information available about sex workers is advertising copy presented as fact. In this thesis, specifically Chapter Six, I demonstrate that many interviews with sex workers are similarly a promotional tool, if not for them directly then for the industry as a whole, presenting themselves in a light intended to subvert negative stereotypes about sex workers, and help to further the notion of a singular acceptable way to carry out sex work.

Other texts that I use in my analysis of the emotional and affective labour that is carried out in interactions with media outlets by some sex workers are Wharton’s “The Affective

Consequences of Service Work” (1993), Steinberg and Figart’s “Emotional Labor Since the Managed Heart” (1999), Kruml and Geddes’ “Exploring the Dimensions of Emotional Labour” (2000), Gregg’s “Learning to (Love) Labour: Production Cultures and the Affective Turn” (2009), and Rivers-Moore’s “Affective Sex: Beauty, Race and Nation in the Sex Industry” (2013).

Wharton (1993) considers the consequences of carrying out emotional labour as part of service work, including a quantitative analysis of workers in various service jobs, and concludes that whether or not emotional labour is damaging to workers depends on their investment in their job and their degree of autonomy (pp. 225–227). As such, my argument is not that it is inherently negative to individual workers that they carry out further emotional labour in their interactions with the media. Rather, I argue that such interactions should be understood as an additional form of labour, with the discourse produced therein viewed as an extension of their work, in some cases.

Steinberg and Figart (1999) review work on emotional labour since Hochschild’s original publishing of *The Managed Heart*, and reiterate that emotional labour is skilled, effortful work that produces value and profit (p. 9). For a definition of emotional labour they refer to James, who defines it as “the labour involved in dealing with other people’s feelings” (1989, p. 15), which can be seen in the emotional labour required of workers both in dealing with those in their immediate working environment and also when dealing with the stigma and preconceptions with the wider public may have about their work. Steinberg and Figart furthermore stress the point that emotional work is a legitimate form of labour, adding that key feminist arguments in response to the contention that some jobs were being deskilled depended on inherently gendered notions of what constituted a skill (referring specifically to (Phillips and Taylor, 1986; Steinberg 1990; Gaskell 1991; Wajcman 1991)). Kruml and Geddes (2000) echo the point put forward by Wharton, that carrying out emotional labour is not an inherently negative facet of a job, but that it *is* a legitimate kind of effortful work.

Gregg (2009) discusses affective labour, talking specifically about the labour of community building carried out by fans and by academics, identifying it as the “energy and time” expended discussing a particular work or brand (p. 209). The expectation from other members

of a community that a degree of unpaid work – or work that is not directly compensated – will be carried out with the intention of furthering or bettering the community is what constitutes affective labour as Gregg defines it. I argue that this idea can sometimes be applied to sex workers engaged in discussions with media outlets, specifically the expectation that if they possess the resources to contradict negative stereotypes about sex workers then they ought to, in order to benefit the wider sex work community. I also consider whether this labour serves to assist media outlets in creating a discourse in which some sex workers are acceptable while others are not, and the degree to which a willingness to engage in this kind of emotional work is viewed as a marker of acceptability.

Finally, Rivers-Moore, in her 2013 text “Affective Sex: Beauty, Race and Nation in the Sex Industry” considers the ways in which presenting and producing an ideal of beauty in the sex industry constitutes a form of affective labour¹⁴. Her research is based on interviews with workers in the sex tourism industry in Costa Rica, and with North American tourists who visited Costa Rica to use the services. Rivers-Moore considers the recent turn in academic writing towards considering the impact of affective labour, with this shift in focus also identified by McElhinny (2010). Rivers-Moore posits that in the post-industrial, neoliberal economy much of the value of production in an increasingly service-based economy comes from the work of affective labour.

Coleman and Figueroa (2011), argue that affect is a useful way of considering beauty as a form of work because it emphasises not only the content of beauty but also the processes required to achieve it. Building upon this, Rivers-Moore adds that discourses about beauty are almost always discourses about race as well. This construction of whiteness as beauty, or the ‘other’ as exotic (pp. 156–157), is used in my analysis of New Zealand media discourses about sex work when considering the ways in which sex workers from different ethnic groups, and those who work in different ways, are described. Rivers-Moore continues to discuss the way in which the Costa Rican workers were constructed as ‘other’ by the sex tourists interviewed, who suggested that they were more willing to ‘please’ clients or enjoyed sex

¹⁴ Rivers-Moore’s definition of affective labour for the purposes of the article is that it is “the production of immaterial, intangible feelings” (p. 154).

more than American sex workers. She says: “[s]ex tourists assumed that women’s enjoyment of sex was natural and unconnected to payment for services rendered...” (p. 157).

In discussing the labour carried out by the workers, Rivers-Moore notes that the clients experienced a benefit from being seen in the company of beautiful women, and that many expressed that a key component of the service for them was spending time with the workers, cultivating a more date-like atmosphere. The workers were very aware of this as a drawcard for clients, with one commenting that the work required a lot of patience, while another commented that tolerating “unbearable” clients was necessary as part of the job (p. 159). They discussed using their youth, beauty, and ability to give the appearance of engaging authentically with clients in order to benefit the wider industry and promote Costa Rica as a whole for its sex tourism.

Rivers-Moore comments that in the Costa-Rican industry specifically there is a sharp divide between the work that requires a high degree of affective labour (in sex tourism, which tends to attract longer bookings) and the “quick exchange of sex for money” in the red-light district (p. 162). Sex tourism workers draw on the affective labour of beauty when seeking to distinguish themselves from the red-light district sex workers. Many of the women interviewed made negative remarks about the education level and bodies of the women who worked in the red-light district. One sex tourism worker commented “imagine what it’s like to be with eight, ten men a day” (p. 163) as a way of distinguishing her work from that of street sex workers. The message constructed here is that there is a correct way to do sex work, and it is to not do *too much* sex work.

Despite the contextual differences, versions of this message are apparent in the New Zealand sex industry: many ‘high end’ escort agencies will stress in their marketing that their employees see only one or two clients a day, emphasising their exclusivity and simultaneously subtly shaming workers who work in more high-volume establishments. This is further identified and discussed, with examples, in Chapter Six when considering news media coverage of agency sex workers. Sometimes this marketing (and the less overt advertising present in news coverage of sex work) will describe the workers as remaining ‘fresh’ and ‘enthusiastic’: a clear indicator that the emotional labour component of the work is also used

as a way of delineating between the acceptable and less acceptable areas of the sex industry, both in explicit advertising and in media coverage of the industry.

In considering the news media texts that I draw upon for my analysis, one of my key contentions is that the media has taken the position of having the power to substantially define what is an acceptable and what is an unacceptable form of sex work from the courts in the wake of the PRA. Media discourse is a key source of information about sex work for much of the general public, despite the fact that many sex workers interviewed for the media (and presumably most, if not all, agency owners and brothel owners) use the coverage with a hope it will act, at least secondarily, as a kind of free advertising. The media have a key place in 'claimsmaking' about sex workers, and I analyse whether the New Zealand media discourses adhere to specific narrative frameworks, as has been noted in similar coverage in other countries. As previously mentioned, Maher et al describe a "noisy regulatory space" around sex work legislation (2012, p. 655), and this is an idea that is considered with regard to coverage of sex workers constructed as 'less acceptable' in New Zealand media, especially with regard to whose voices are present in discussions about sex work, and how the discourses are framed in the context of structurally dominant narratives within news coverage (as covered earlier in Chapter One with reference to S. Abel (2004)).

Additionally, in considering the way in which constructing some sex workers as more acceptable than others, contingent on their presenting an impression of sincere enjoyment of their work, I apply McLaughlin's discussion of the saviour narrative. Within this narrative sex workers are required to present the idea that they do not need saving, if they wish to comment on workplace conditions (which may require improvement), with their role reduced to one of "victim" if they do not sufficiently perform the role of finding their work pleasurable. The saviour narrative is also considered when media coverage withholds the right from some workers to influence how they are represented, or when examining who is produced as an object without their consent.

Finally, in considering the affective labour required of workers in some media coverage I also use O'Connell Davidson's argument that decriminalising or legalising sex work does not in and of itself ensure good working conditions for sex workers (2014, pp. 528–529). The

requirement that workers enjoy their work is based on an understanding of consent that presumes it is simply a matter of sexual or personal desire, rather than a more complex question which has many contextual and economic cues (Grant, 2014, pp. 90–94). This simplistic understanding of sexual consent presumes that work sex and personally desired sex are directly comparable, and fails to comprehend that a lack of enjoyment in providing a service does not make that service inherently degrading or negative for the worker, and that enjoying one's work is not a prerequisite for it to be respected as work.

TERMS USED THROUGHOUT THIS THESIS.

For the purposes of clarity of understanding I will give a brief description of the types of sex work discussed within this thesis and the terms used for each, as well as an overview of the typical working conditions and practices.

Street Sex Work:

Workers attract and sometimes negotiate with clients on the street, typically clustered in particular locations for reasons of safety and to make finding clients easier (Armstrong, 2011, pp. 152–156). The primary area focused on in this thesis is Hunters Corner in Auckland. Workers are self-employed, making their own decisions about how much to charge, and usually keep all their earnings. They do not work fixed or set shifts.

Parlour or brothel work:

Parlours (also known as brothels) are typically run on a shift-based system, where clients may walk in and meet with the workers, speaking to them before deciding whether they will book or not. Parlours will often require a minimum shift, most commonly 12 hours (Zangger, 2016, p. 108). It is also common for some parlours to financially penalise workers for failing to attend a shift or being late, and to keep 40–60% of the money paid by a client, in addition to requiring a shift fee from workers (Zangger, 2016, pp. 126, 135–140). Furthermore, parlours may withhold earnings for days or longer as a mechanism of control, as discussed by some street sex workers in a few of the analysed media texts. The workers are typically independent

contractors, with no sick leave or holiday pay, but few of the benefits which independent contracting nominally provides.

Agencies:

An agency is a sex work establishment run primarily on pre-bookings, with workers typically kept 'on-call' until a job is confirmed rather than working fixed shifts. Zangger, who wrote about managed workers in New Zealand post-decriminalisation, notes that workers will often be given 20–30 minutes notice to arrive to the agency's premises or to the client's hotel or home for an appointment (p. 109).

Sex work:

For the purposes of clarity, the term 'sex work' within this thesis refers to what is frequently termed 'full service', generally referring to the provision of oral sex, penetrative sex or manual genital stimulation, or a combination thereof. This echoes the definition provided in the Prostitution Reform Act 2003 which defines a sex worker as someone who provides commercial sexual services, described as:

“sexual services that –

- a) Involve physical participation by a person in sexual acts with, and for the gratification of, another person and
- b) Are provided for payment or other reward (irrespective of whether the reward is given to the person providing the services or another person)” (s4(1), Ministry of Justice, 2003.)

As such, workers who provide sexual entertainment but do not engage in direct sexual contact with their clients are not referred to as engaging in sex work, or as sex workers, for the purposes of this thesis.

Transgender and Cisgender Workers

As one of my chapters deals extensively with trans sex workers, I will also provide a brief overview of terminology used to discuss transgender workers. Briefly, within this thesis I use the term 'trans women' to refer to women whose gender identity is incongruent with the sex assigned to them at birth and 'transfeminine people' to refer to trans people whose gender identity is incongruent with that assigned to them at birth, who are transitioning towards a feminine gender presentation but may or may not identify themselves as women (Serano, 2007/2016, pp. 29–30). 'Trans people' is used as a general umbrella term for persons who are either transgender or gender variant. 'Cis', or 'cisgendered' is used to describe people whose gender identity is congruent with the sex assigned to them at birth (Serano, 2007/2016, p. 33). I also use the term 'transmisogyny' to discuss the forms of transphobic discrimination which are specific to trans women (Serano, 2007/2016, pp. 14–16).

CHAPTER FOUR: STREET SEX WORK IN SOUTH AUCKLAND

INTRODUCTION

In 2005 the Manukau City Council put a bill before the Local Government and Environment Select Committee: the Manukau City Council (Control of Street Prostitution) Bill (Shuttleworth, 2012). Later, in 2010 following the merging of several Auckland city councils, the bill was resubmitted as the Manukau City Council (Regulation of Prostitution in Specified Places) Bill. This bill aimed to allow Auckland City Council to regulate the places in which street sex workers could work, placing it at odds with the Prostitution Reform Act 2003 (PRA) which intentionally avoided restrictions on where street sex workers could work and wait for clients. The original iteration of the bill was introduced by Hon George Hawkins. In the first reading of the bill it was justified as necessary on the basis that the Counties-Manukau Region was “the hookers’ capital” and “that those involved in prostitution have a huge impact on the community” (Hawkins, 2005). The Manukau City Council (Control of Street Prostitution) Bill failed at its second reading, but a second version, as the Manukau City Council (Regulation of Prostitution in Specified Places) Bill, was introduced by William Sio in 2010. In speaking at the first reading of the second bill, Hawkins again said that Manukau City Council sought help, and claimed that in the “electorate of Manukau East we have been plagued by street prostitution for a number of years” (Hawkins, 2010).

The bill was ultimately voted down at its second reading¹⁵ in Parliament in February 2015, giving a total period of almost ten years in which it was subject to parliamentary debate and news media coverage (Shuttleworth, 2012; Hansard, 2015). As evidenced by the comments recorded in the Hansard¹⁶ from the introduction of each bill, attempts to place street sex workers in South Auckland under more stringent regulation were justified through a persistent construction of street sex workers as external to the community which local MPs represented, and an inherently a negative presence there. The debate over the respective

¹⁵ In New Zealand’s Parliament a bill must pass three readings in the Chamber in order to be passed into law.

¹⁶ The Hansard is the official, publicly accessible, record of Parliamentary debates in New Zealand.

bills emerged shortly after the PRA was passed and continued for several years, accounting for the decision to select this event as a site for analysis, as it allowed for a substantive amount of material to be gathered. During the analysis it became apparent that the demographic makeup of the workers discussed within these texts made this media event useful for answering my research questions about who acceptability is accessible to.

The ways in which discussions about proposed by-laws are structured and framed within the selected texts also contributes substantially to answering my inquiry about the key regulatory site at which questions about who is an acceptable sex worker are decided. Additionally the framing of these discussions supports my argument that this site has substantially moved from the courts to the media. As I outline, the media literally serve the regulatory function previously served predominantly by legislative bodies: the demarcation of what is a public space and what behaviours may occur in it are played out within media landscapes. Furthermore, many of the texts analysed in this chapter indicate that in the absence of literal policing, 'unacceptable' sex workers become subject to community policing of where they may go and how they may behave.

Non-governmental groups attempting to enforce where street sex workers may operate has been documented previously, specifically in the form of neighbourhood watch/street watch groups in the United Kingdom (Hubbard, 1998; Sagar, 2005; Hubbard and Sanders, 2003) as well as in Canada (Ross, 2010). As demonstrated in this chapter, such patrols are often accused of harassing sex workers, including when they are not actively soliciting (Hubbard and Sanders, 2003, p. 81; Sagar, 2005, p. 103). Additionally, previous research on community responses from non-sex working residents to street sex workers indicates the important role which the news media play in shaping discourses around the work, and mediating which responses are given a position of prominence. Hubbard analyses news media reports about street sex work in Balsall Heath and writes:

“...the media played a central role in circulating seemingly natural meanings of events, activities and experiences, creating imaginary moral geographies which helped to construct and structure material space” (1998, p. 62)

While O'Neill, Campbell, Hubbard, Pitcher, and Scoular note that "[c]ertain media products may therefore be highly significant in supporting exclusionary urban policies" (2008, p. 74). Within this chapter I demonstrate the ways in which street patrols are used as a mechanism to harass and control street sex workers and identify that many of the behaviours observed from such patrols in locations where soliciting is criminalised can still be seen taking place in a location where soliciting is legal, although not accepted by some parts of the community.

In this chapter I examine media texts that discuss street sex work in Manukau and South Auckland, particularly the Hunters Corner area, and which report on the progress of the bill. In particular, this chapter will consider that a proportion of the street sex workers being discussed are trans women or transfeminine people, and how this impacts the ways in which their work is produced and framed. Abel, Fitzgerald, and Brunton, in a survey undertaken in 2007, report that street-based workers were more likely to report some Māori ethnicity and more likely to be transgender than workers in other sectors of the industry (2007, pp. 61–62). The specific demographic makeup of street sex workers in New Zealand is relevant for understanding the precise ways in which stigma against them is produced and enacted, in this case via attempts at legal censure and through publicly applied hostility and stigma. While my analysis of the discourse about the progress of the bills has been carried out predominantly through analysing media texts, at times I will refer more directly to Hansard records in order to demonstrate the ways in which the media coverage and production of the bills' progress as a 'debate' was frequently propelled by a small group of private citizens and local body councillors, despite attempts to situate the legislation as a national political issue.

Among the key themes that are apparent within the analysed news media texts are consistent attempts to discursively position street sex workers as both outside the community in which they work, and to delegitimise them as people running a business or working. Linked to this, I discuss the prevalence of members of Papatoetoe Residents Reclaiming Our Streets (PRROS) speaking within media texts, frequently instead of street sex workers themselves, and the

PRROS' stated aims to undermine and reduce the client base of street sex workers¹⁷. In addition, I will address PRROS's deliberate use of language that is dehumanising to street sex workers and the ways in which this language was reported (often unchallenged) within news media texts. This chapter will also demonstrate the pervasive transphobia and transmisogyny that exists within much of the news media discourse. It will also demonstrate the manner in which many trans women engaged in sex work are perceived and constructed as implicitly threatening and offensive because of their gender identity within news media texts. Briefly, the term transmisogyny as used in this chapter refers to the way it is defined by Serano in *Whipping Girl*, referring to the specific intersection of transphobia, homophobia and misogyny which trans women and transfeminine people are subject to (2007/2016, pp. 14–16).

Furthermore, this chapter considers the ways in which being a visible sex worker (or presumed sex worker, fuelled by the presumption that a sex worker is never not working, as articulated by Grant (2014)) is often constructed as anti-social or unacceptable behaviour in and of itself. I will also analyse the mechanisms by which much of the resentment towards, and refusal to accept, the presence of sex workers is as much or more to do with their visibility, both as trans people and as sex workers, as to do with any alleged issues of littering, noise, or anti-social behaviour. My analysis therefore constitutes further evidence that the existence of visible sex work is construed as inherently anti-social. It also examines the objections presented by non-sex working commentators which function to discursively 'other' street sex workers.

Finally, I discuss the repeated assertion in news media texts, by supporters of the bill, that a solution to the 'problem' which they perceive street sex workers to be, would be for all sex workers to work in brothels or indoors, and the underlying issues with this argument which are seldom explored or acknowledged by the journalists and reporters responsible for the coverage. Notably, brothels in New Zealand typically do not accept transgender workers, and

¹⁷ PRROS was an organisation lobbying for the passage of the bills through parliament, with one of the most visible members of the group (appearing in many of the analysed texts) being John McCracken, cited variously as Chair of the Otara-Papatoetoe Local Board and as a member of PRROS.

the conditions supplied by brothels are considered by some sex workers to be more restrictive and dangerous than street work, a point identified in only one of the analysed texts. The presumed ideal working situation is either unappealing or inaccessible to many workers.

EXPERTS AND NAMES

Of the texts analysed in this chapter thirteen are text based and one is a radio panel from *Radio NZ*.¹⁸ The text-based news media selected for analysis are drawn primarily from Auckland newspapers, including the *New Zealand Herald*, due to the location of the street sex workers being discussed. To determine who was situated as an expert on street sex work and who was given the opportunity to discuss the presence of street sex workers within the South Auckland community, I conducted an analysis of who was interviewed and how frequently, drawing on Fairclough's notion of discourse representation (1992, pp. 272–274). The purpose of this initial analysis was to determine which speakers were given a substantial public platform from which to discuss the progress of the bill and to present their own framing of street sex work and workers in South Auckland. The person interviewed most frequently, by a significant margin, was John McCracken, who appeared in eight of the texts. Following him in frequency were texts that interviewed representatives from the New Zealand Prostitutes' Collective (NZPC), numbering five; texts interviewing Len Brown, Auckland Mayor, interviewed five times; and Pat Taylor, Chair of the Hunters Corner Town Centre Society, interviewed, paraphrased or quoted four times. In only three of the fifteen texts were sex workers or former workers quoted, paraphrased, or interviewed.¹⁹

Sex workers and the NZPC, an organisation representing and advocating for their safety and rights, were only given space to discuss the bill being lobbied for in a small fraction of the texts directly discussing them and their work. Those given most space to discuss sex work were those opposed to the presence of street sex workers in South Auckland, particularly McCracken, who participated in PRROS, an organisation described by some within the

¹⁸ A table of texts analysed in this chapter can be found on p. 207.

¹⁹ The texts in which this occurred were "Not on the Street Where we Live", "Cleaning Up the Streets", and "Street Legal: Ten Years After Prostitution Decriminalisation" which interviewed former sex worker and former MP Georgina Beyer.

analysed texts as “vigilante” which was known for both filming and harassing workers and their clients and for sending accusatory letters to the home addresses of presumed clients (Taylor, 2013; Radio NZ, 2009; Wane, 2011). As outlined in my methodology, following McKerrow (1989) and Fairclough (1992), an area of focus for my initial analysis of texts is identifying who is permitted to speak on experiences, whether their own or others, and with what degree of authority. The split of who is permitted to speak about sex work and whose voices are amplified within the media texts already identifies street sex workers as being relegated to being spoken about, instead of being permitted to speak for themselves. An absence of sex worker voices in news media texts about street sex work has been documented elsewhere. Hubbard, writing about Birmingham, England, notes that “while the press was often used by the police as a way of publicising their campaigns against street prostitutes and kerb-crawlers, there was little or no incorporation of prostitutes’ voices in the media coverage of the events in Balsall Heath” (1998, p. 65).

The words and phrases used to describe street sex workers are also indicative of the people and organisations who are predominant in the media texts speaking about them and their work. Among the negative and transphobic terms and phrases used for street sex workers and their work within the analysed texts were: illicit drive-through sex, six-foot-three trannies, hookers, streetwalker of indeterminate gender, “open-air Polynesian whorehouse”, “knickerless transsexuals”, drag queen, “six men”, bullying prostitutes, transvestites, selling their bodies, street walkers, obnoxious transvestites, drugged to the eyeballs, peddling their bodies for money, “big, strong people” (Wane, 2011; Maas, 2012; Shuttleworth, 2012; Rudman, 2011). While some texts use the term ‘sex workers’, most opt for ‘prostitute’, and many texts use descriptions which misgender trans women or fa’afafine²⁰ who are street sex workers, or words commonly understood to be whorephobic slurs. Additionally, the word ‘prostitute’ is also frequently accompanied by a negative modifier to present the worker (or workers) being described in a particular light. In many cases these terms reflect the descriptors used by interviewees or commentators; however in others – particularly with the

²⁰ Fa’afafine is a Samoan term for people who were assigned male at birth but adopt more traditionally feminine modes of dress and expression; some may undergo medical transitions to make physical changes to their body (Schmidt, 2003, p. 417; Schmidt, 2010, pp. 2-4).

decision to use 'prostitute' instead of the more widely accepted 'sex worker' – these choices were made by the media outlets and journalists in their own reporting, not within reported speech.

It is apparent that many of the terms used are primarily and deliberately transmisogynistic, including some that were not part of reported speech. The function of this is to “embed normative discourses” about gender identity and gender variance, by playing upon cisnormative and damaging stereotypes (Capuzza, 2015, p. 115). In an attempt to dehumanise the street sex workers being discussed in these texts, many commenters use phrases that undermine and ignore the gender identity of the workers as part of an ongoing theme of treating them as undeserving of respect. The terms used frequently draw attention to the perceived differences between the physicality of trans women and cis women, noting trans women's size and presumed strength. As outlined by Serano this “obsessive” focus on trans bodies and their capacity to “pass” as cis is a way of creating transfeminine people as the other and subjects of undisguised scrutiny (Serano, 2007/2016, pp. 185–186). She writes:

“Another common form of *trans-objectification* occurs when cissexuals become hung up on, disturbed by, or obsessed over supposed discrepancies that exist between a transsexual's physical sex and identified gender. Most typically, such attention is focused on a trans person's genitals. Because objectification reduces the transsexual to the status of a “thing”, it enables cissexuals to condemn, demonize, fetishize, ridicule, criticize and exploit us without guilt or remorse” (p. 186)

The pathologizing of trans bodies functions to make them “humanly unrecognisable”, and in the case of the workers discussed in the analysed texts, is used to justify speaking about them as a nuisance in need of solution (Butler, 2004, p. 98 as cited in Serano, 2007/2016). The use of terms which construct the sex workers being discussed as outside acceptable norms of behaviour and gender presentation also function to establish them and their work as aberrant and therefore not intelligible within the texts as work, or them as workers. The denial of sex work as labour is underpinned by the exclusionary language that situates the workers as the menacing other (as in phrases like “bullying prostitutes”). While it is not by chance that trans workers are subject to the most vehement hatred, it is also evidently a useful discursive device

for commentators who object to street sex work: linking street sex work and trans women in public discourse presents an opportunity to play upon existing transmisogynistic stereotypes and fears to produce street sex work as inherently dangerous, and workers as undeserving of respect or protection. The prevalence of the term ‘prostitute’ and ‘street prostitution’ over ‘sex worker’ or ‘street sex worker’ is further evidence of this: the work in question is quite literally omitted from the discussion.

“NOT ON THE STREET WHERE WE LIVE”: STREET SEX WORKERS AND COMMUNITY

One mechanism used repeatedly to discredit and undermine street sex workers’ right to work safely and freely was the assertion that their presence, often typified as the evidence of their presence in the form of litter or noise, disrupted the community (Ryan, 2012). This mechanism has been observed before in campaigns to drive out street sex workers from a specific area. Ross, in “Sex and Evacuation From the City”, discusses the systematic attempts to remove street sex workers from a gentrifying portion of Vancouver during the 1970s and 1980s, and comments that the workers being targeted were part of the community, living and working there (2010, p. 202). Despite this, a group, branding themselves as “concerned citizens”, emerged to attempt to construct the workers as “illegitimate, ‘out of place’” in order to restrict their ability to work near their homes (pp. 200, 202). Ross adds that trans women and people of colour were a particular site of harassment from the group of (predominantly white, male) protestors (p. 202). As part of the comprehensive attempt to construct sex workers as outside of the community, Ross notes that the sex workers were situated as a group who had no claim to either public or private property; instead situated as an “impediment” whose presence created an objectionable nuisance to other, more allegedly legitimate, residents (pp. 209–210). As Sagar, writing about a Street Watch program aimed at monitoring and reducing street sex work in Cardiff, notes, street patrols, such as those carried out by PRROS aim to make public space safe for specific groups of people within the community; those who fit with their notion of “how life should be lived in the area” (2005, pp. 101-102).

The theme of constructing street sex workers as a nuisance to be managed is also apparent in Strega et al’s “Never Innocent Victims: Street Sex Workers in Canadian Print Media” (2014). They write that street sex workers are the most visible, but smallest sector of the sex industry,

and are frequently represented either as vermin or victims within news media coverage. Additionally, the ways in which street sex workers are discussed, they say, frequently adhere to the “risky lifestyle” discourse, which places the blame for violence or harassment on the victim – or, in the case of the texts analysed here blames them for their being systematically dismissed as legitimate citizens. In “Cleaning up the Streets” the Mayor, Len Brown, is paraphrased as saying “it is a safety issue – for the sex workers as well as people living and working nearby” (Morton, 2011). Simultaneously, Brown expresses the notion that engaging in street sex work is inherently dangerous (despite research indicating one of the key groups who pose a threat of violence to street sex workers are passers-by (Armstrong, 2011)) and through this statement positions workers as both outside the community, and an implicit threat to it (Morton, 2011).

Community responses to street sex work are discussed in “What’s Antisocial About Sex Work?” which give an indication of common responses from non-sex workers to the presence of visible workers (Scoular et al, 2007). The authors analyse responses to street sex work in the UK, saying some residents claimed the presence of street sex workers impeded their ability to use public space, again echoing Ross’ comments about street sex workers being portrayed as ‘out of place’ within their own communities (p. 12). Scoular et al also discuss the use of street patrols (similar to a tactic utilised by PRROS who conducted “name and shame” patrols of street sex workers and their clients until 2009, as reported in “Not On the Street Where we Live” (Wade, 2011)), and note that in the UK communities examined, many residents, who were not involved with the patrols, saw them as bigoted and unreasonable (p. 13) a finding supported by Sagar (2005, p. 102). This suggests that the approach favoured by a small but vocal sector of the community does not in fact have the support that is sometimes presumed or presented within media texts, where it is not always apparent whether the most vocal objections to street sex work are representative.

In the analysed texts, ‘community’ is a group constructed by those who object to street sex work to exclude the street sex workers, and furthermore constructs the physical geography of where a “community” exists in an explicitly heteronormative manner. The construction and conflation of community as a tangible location, and community as a discrete group, relies on implicit understandings of each. The most immediately obvious way in which this construction

is achieved by the groups interviewed frequently in the texts is in the name chosen: 'Papatoetoe Residents Reclaiming Our Streets' or PRROS. The name of the group positions those within it as 'residents', and the streets where the sex workers are working as something to be reclaimed from them, and inevitably reporting on the group must include this terminology.

The notion of what, geographically, constitutes public space can be seen within the name: the 'streets' are not a place for sex workers or any detectable non-normative sexuality. While not explicitly defined, it is presumed that exactly which streets are being referred to will be understood by 'residents'. The streets are viewed as belonging to a group of residents constructed as including only normative community members, represented in the media primarily by Pat Taylor and John McCracken, both white men who are engaged in local politics. While the presentation of these views by the news media is not indicative of a specific framing per se, the overrepresentation of these voices relative to other points of view does emphasise one discursive position, elevating it to greater prominence.

As previously outlined, this method of constructing street sex workers, particularly trans workers and non-white workers, as outside a community has been documented in other locations, although only in spaces where street sex work is still criminalised. Ross, writing about Vancouver, Canada, notes the workers in question were "cast as a menacing nuisance" (2010, p. 202). She also argues that the way trans street sex workers were viewed was frequently as "hyper visible objects of fear, disgust and discrimination", with this used as a rationale for forcing them out of the communities they lived in, into industrial areas (2012, pp. 138–139). This mode of constructing sex workers as out of place and inherently threatening (morally or literally) because of the identity categories they occupy is one of the themes evident in my analysis of this corpus of news media coverage. In "'Obnoxious' Transvestites Descend on Corner", the media outlet chose to use the descriptor "obnoxious", from a complainant, in their headline, functioning both to subtly condone this word choice and to indicate from the headline the framing the text will contain (Maas, 2012). The text quotes Pat Taylor as saying "...[t]hey're a group of transvestites and they're openly flaunting themselves wearing hardly any clothing on the streets before 10am when there are children walking to school." In "\$1000-a-night Street Workers in Turf War", the journalist paraphrases

and quotes Kehi Moana Fameitau, a crime prevention officer, saying: “[c]hildren on their way to school were being exposed to prostitutes waiting in bus stops wearing g-strings, “and they can see everything”” (Koubaridis, 2012). Both quotes indicate that there is an indignation about visibly transfeminine sex workers within the community: the source of the perceived threat of moral contagion resides within their physicality. This is in keeping with Ross’ assessment of trans sex workers being considered “hyper visible”, in that the offence committed by the workers is being present in the community during daylight hours.

In both texts, a complaint from other residents is that street sex workers, particularly those from outside the local region, were ignoring agreements to only solicit customers during specific hours, an attempt to control how and when they were permitted to use public space. The reporting of objections like those above conflates the allegations of solicitation during the day with workers being present in public space in any capacity, accomplished through placing these two separate complaints near each other in the text. In “\$1000-a-night Street Workers in Turf War” for example, there is a complaint that “[t]he behaviour had become so brazen they often walked up to cars and propositioned men, despite them being with their families”, followed by a statement from Fameitau that “they come here earlier in the morning and walk around in front of people”, and finally that street sex workers were seen waiting in bus stops (Koubaridis, 2012). The discursive effect of these three complaints grouped together (with the first as direct reportage, not as a quote from a source) is to suggest the presumed threat or offense posed by street workers soliciting is the same as the threat posed by their engaging with, and existing in, a community. Their bodies are considered inherently obscene and dangerous, and normal activities are cast as suspect (as seen in the “allegation” that a street sex worker used a bus stop, potentially to wait for a bus.) The major complaint in many of the analysed texts is ultimately about public space being used by sex workers, whether actively working or not, and the presumed transformation of the space which their presence produces. While some texts, including “‘Obnoxious’ Transvestites Descend on Corner” do then give a right of reply to NZPC representatives, these are often presented after quotes from parties who object to street sex work and were actively supporting the passage of the Manukau City Council (Regulation of Prostitution in Specified Places) Bill (Maas, 2012). Situating such responses second, if at all, functions to foreground objections to sex workers as the key argument.

The two most visible members of PRROS, and those who speak to the media most frequently, are Taylor, a motel owner (Taylor was formerly a banker (Wane, 2011)) and McCracken, a real estate agent. Given the recurrent attempts to situate sex work as illegitimate work, the white collar professions held by the PRROS representatives are pertinent to mention. Activities that PRROS were reported to have engaged in included sending letters to the addresses of suspected clients of sex workers, printed on pink stationery and scented with the intention of attracting the attention of clients' wives and girlfriends, and photographing clients and workers. In "Not on the Street Where We Live" PRROS founder Stephen Grey is quoted as saying "we were killing their business" and the journalist comments that in footage shot by the group "the prostitutes are visibly upset by the intrusion into what is, after all, their legal place of work, the residents' patrol can be heard laughing and seem to be enjoying their night out." (Wane, 2011.) The reporting in this instance indicates the journalist is at least somewhat uncomfortable with the actions of PRROS. The apparent pleasure which PRROS representatives take at interrupting and intimidating the workers appears to indicate a desire to demonstrate to street sex workers as a cohesive group that they are unwelcome. In "Not on the Street Where we Live", for example, the opening paragraph states "the people of Papatoetoe" are attempting to ban street sex work from the town centre, a phrase that clearly situates sex workers as outside the class of residents (or, arguably, the class of 'people', within Papatoetoe) (Wane, 2011). Juang refers to this in "Transgendering the Politics of Recognition" while discussing the ways in which hate crimes, public attacks, and harassment are justified by the attackers through a process of rendering the "victims as targets who "deserve" to be hated" (2006, p. 714). Juang argues that the non-recognition of marginalised victims renders invisible the frequency of the harassment, and furthermore suggests (referring to Perry's *In the Name of Hate*) the ways in which such acts are designed to be a "spectacle of subordination", designed to send a threat to other members of the targeted community (pp. 712–713).

While PRROS in this text seem confident that their behaviour is defensible and reasonable, the journalist in question is critical of their aggressive interactions with sex workers and their clients. The concerted attempt to reduce business for the street sex workers is conducted in tandem with voicing complaints that street sex work is damaging to local businesses. Once again sex work is constructed as an unacceptable form of work and sex workers as

unacceptable community members. The framing of the text situates street sex work as manifestly negative and unwelcome, despite the journalist's discomfort with some of the tactics employed by PRROS. Within direct reportage the journalist discusses the origin of street sex work in South Auckland, writing that a power outage in central Auckland "transformed this middle-class neighbourhood into a hot zone for illicit drive-through sex", a turn of phrase that positions the issue in clear moral terms. Middle class here could be argued to be a "dog whistle" for respectability, while the use of the term "hot zone" indicates an implied danger. Later in the text, Wane writes:

"Back in the early 1900s, Hunters Corner was a fashionable day trip to the country, topped off by a refreshment stop at Elizabeth Hunter's famous tearooms, which gave the locality its name. Now it's just a 20-minute drive down the Southern Motorway, with a reputation so notorious that a courier package addressed to "Hookers Corner" was delivered without question.

And this galls the good citizens of Papatoetoe, who see themselves as decent folk caught in a pitched battle to reclaim their community. As one local puts it, if you're looking for a used car in Auckland, you go to Greenlane. If you're looking for fast, cheap sex with a streetwalker of indeterminate gender, you head to Hunters Corner." (Wane, 2011).

The construction of these two paragraphs situates street sex workers as a moral threat to the community, by contrasting the presumed bucolic ideal which Papatoetoe previously inhabited with its current status as a location where street sex workers live and work. The clear indication of who is permitted to access notions of community is embedded within the language. While the hyperbolic use of descriptors is clearly engaged for dramatic effect, the contrast between the descriptors chosen is startling. The non-sex working community are "good citizens", while street sex workers are typified as a "streetwalker of indeterminate gender". The non-normative bodies and identities of the trans and gender non-conforming sex workers are utilized as evidence of their transgression against propriety and acceptability. O'Neill et al identify this as a process of exclusion designed to "reinforce social hierarchies of class, gender race and age" (2008, p. 74), often aided by media reports. From the language

used in the analysed media texts it is evident that this exclusion is also used to reinforce existing hierarchies about the trans or cis status of residents as well.

The construction of acceptability is used to determine who is entitled to be a community member and which businesses are counts as worthy of protection. In “Sex and Evacuation from the City”, Ross notes a similar attitude to workers in Vancouver, noting “[c]learly only certain expressions of sexual commerce – discreet, indoors, and taxable – were legitimised and accommodated, while others were rendered illegitimate, ‘out of place’” (p. 202). Sex workers in Papatoetoe are constructed as being a disruption to other residents.

The construction of street sex workers as threatening and unacceptable to other residents is achieved in several ways throughout the media texts studied. While much of the most dehumanising language occurs in direct reportage from interviewees, this is only challenged occasionally within the analysed texts, and the commentary from non-sex working residents is frequently foregrounded in the texts, establishing their perspective before permitting a rebuttal from workers themselves or the NZPC. In “Not on the Street Where We Live” non-sex worker interviewees refer to street sex workers as ‘them’ or ‘they’, saying that if “it was happening” in an area like Remuera they would “have the clout to be rid of them”, and referring to an area free of street sex work as having “clean streets” (Wade, 2011). The effect here is to identify sex workers as a problem that is ignored by higher authorities because of the area where they work – seen in the comparison with Remuera, a wealthier suburb.²¹

McCracken also argues that the street sex workers come “by the carload” from elsewhere, attempting to justify the placement of street sex workers as outside the ontologically created categories of citizens, community, and businesses. Later in the text, NZPC representatives address this point directly: Annah Pickering says directly that the sex workers are “part of this community”, while Catherine Healy says the NZPC do not want to see “sex workers pursued

²¹ New Zealand Parliamentary Services provide data on the population and median income of various electorates. Epsom, which Remuera falls under, has a median income of \$34,100, and the three most represented ethnic groups are European, at 59.9% of the population, Asian, at 25.8% and Māori at 4.9%. In Māngare, which Papatoetoe is part of, the median income is \$20,600, and the three most represented ethnic groups are Pasifika people at 58.8% of the population, European at 20.8% and Māori at 18.1% (all data collected in 2011). (NZ Parliamentary Library, 2012a; NZ Parliamentary Library, 2012b).

as if they are alien to the community and not part of it". While the inclusion of their comments provides a counterpoint to the commentary from McCracken and others, this occurs after an extended coverage of complaints about the workers. Sex workers are systematically excluded from the protections and inclusions which being deemed 'residents' might afford them: the othering of workers evident here is related to the deliberately violent misgendering and dehumanisation that transfeminine workers in particular are subject to, as discussed in detail later in this chapter.

In "Street Legal: Ten Years After Prostitution Decriminalisation", which discusses the then ongoing attempt to pass the second bill which aimed to restrict where street sex workers could work, the ongoing debate about the bill is characterised thus: "[t]he background is a long and often bitter campaign by residents and business owners to rid their once seemly and quiet slice of Auckland life of street hookers who have lowered the tone." (Taylor, 2013). This sentence is yet another example of the discursive tactic outlined earlier: the debate is structured as having two opposing sides, residents and business owners, and "street hookers" (here the term is not included as part of a direct quote from an interviewee, but instead within the body of the text). The street sex workers are presumed to have invaded the area rather than also living, shopping and working there (and contributing to the economic life of the area, which is positioned as being crucially important within the texts, with "Street Legal" commenting on empty shopfronts up for lease and "Not on the Street Where we Live" alleging that four businesses has relocated largely because of the presence of street sex workers) and their presence is seen to have changed the "tone" or characteristics of the area.

Sex workers are repeatedly positioned as interlopers and a menace to be removed or dealt with. Irving, in "Normalized Transgressions", writes about how trans social subjects are considered acceptable only if they are economically productive (2008). Trans subjects who transgress norms in other ways, by being mentally ill, unemployed, or sex workers, are further marginalised and denied social legitimacy (pp. 49–51). The attempt to construct business owners as a group wholly separate from sex workers is evidence of denying subjectivity to people not engaged in normative productivities. Street sex workers under this construction are not running a business, are not legitimate subjects, and are not permitted to be identified

as legitimate residents, due to their presumed failure to engage with acceptable economic models.

This construction of street sex workers is also apparent in “Prostitute Pamphlet Riles Academic” and “‘Obnoxious’ Transvestites Descend on Corner” (Fletcher, 2012; Maas, 2012). “Prostitute Pamphlet Riles Academic” discusses objections by Lexie Matheson, an Auckland University of Technology lecturer, to the transphobic language in a book produced by the Auckland City Council about their attempts to regulate the locations in which street sex work could be conducted, through by-laws. The book is described within the news text as containing “personal accounts from business owners and residents”. The business owners and residents mentioned do not include sex workers. In Edelman’s “‘This Area has Been Declared a Prostitution Free Zone’: Discursive Formations of Space, the State and Trans “Sex Worker” Bodies” he writes that the prostitution free zone being discussed represents a site of conflict between capital investors, property owners and “bodies deemed perpetually and permanently ‘out of place’” (2011, p. 852). Edelman adds that such spaces, nominally being made safer by the removal or barring of sex workers (or attempts to remove them) are in truth only safe for “otherwise ideologically sanctioned subjects”, not all members of the community, not everyone who may wish to use the space (p. 854). Edelman identifies that the appeals to ‘safety’ in fact only make locations safer for some residents, while denying access to public space to others, and defining what is ‘public’. This is clearly present in the arguments made in the pamphlet: movement to dictate who has access to public space are supported by bureaucracy (Auckland City Council in this case) and presented as though attempts at control originate from a concern for public safety. Len Brown, Auckland Mayor, is quoted as writing in the pamphlet that new legislation is needed to “overcome a problem in the southern communities of Auckland” (Fletcher, 2012). In this statement from Brown sex workers are systematically dehumanised: they are not people; instead they are a ‘problem’.

The text does contain some rebuttal of the language used about street sex workers within the analysed texts, primarily within quotes and reported speech from Matheson. When interviewed, Matheson identifies those who produced the book and complained about the street sex workers as being predominantly “middle-class, white, privileged heterosexual men”. In this statement she identifies that those who are attempting to construct the notion

of community and the definition of resident are a very particular population, and that those they are trying to exclude from this definition are street sex workers, many of whom are non-white or transgender or both. The definitions of resident and community as developed by this small group, who have the funds and connections to produce a book arguing for the disruption of street sex workers' business, are people like them. The idea of anti-prostitution groups who situate themselves as representative of 'residents' in fact only representing a small facet of the community has, again, been documented in other geographic locations. O'Neill et al mention that such groups "are often led by sections of the community who have a moral objection to sex work, and do not always enjoy the support of all residents" (2008, p. 78), while Sagar, writing about Street Watch in Cardiff, notes the programme "cannot be said to represent the goals and objectives of the *whole* community" [italics in original text] (2005, p. 101). Matheson's comments, and the established history of some voices presuming to speak for an entire community, are pertinent when considered with relation to who is quoted in "'Obnoxious' Transvestites Descend on Corner": two local councillors are quoted first, while Annah Pickering from the NZPC is not interviewed until the second half of the text. The absence of quoted sex worker voices is also evidence of what Fairclough terms "discourse representation", where who is permitted direct or indirect reportage indicates the authority that they are accorded (1992, pp. 272–274).

The foregrounding of comments by particular members of the community, and not others, neatly demonstrates the validity of Matheson's complaint. The prominence of Pākehā voices in New Zealand news media has been explored by Rankine et al, who write "[n]ewspaper and television items have been found to be persistently structured from within a Pākehā cultural paradigm" (2014, p. 217). They identify a key reason for this imbalance in who is deemed an appropriate source occurs largely because of the cultural relationships that exist between journalists and sources (pointing out that Māori are underrepresented in newsrooms in New Zealand). Gans has suggested that, in terms of overrepresentation of already culturally dominant voices, "those who lack power are... generally not sought out until their activities produce social or moral disorder news" (Gans, 1980, p. 81), which accurately describes the framing in the analysed texts about street sex workers. These findings are evident when considering which sources occur most frequently in the analysed texts: despite Māori and Pasifika people being proportionately overrepresented in street sex work as compared to

other sectors of the industry, the most prominent commentators sought out for interviewees (or, presenting themselves for interviews) are Pākehā.

“‘Obnoxious’ Transvestites Descend on Corner” alleges that a group of transgender sex workers from Hamilton had arrived in South Auckland and were working on Sutton Crescent (Maas, 2012). The text uses the term ‘transvestites’ to dismiss the gender of the sex workers, and further entrenches the construction of street sex workers as existing outside the community: in this instance, suggesting that they travel from outside the South Auckland region in order to work there. The construction of street sex workers as non-residents goes further than simply creating a definition of resident that excludes them and alleges they travel to South Auckland to work, similar to McCracken’s comment in “Not on the Street Where We Live” that “carloads” of workers arrive from elsewhere. The sex workers are identified as literally non-resident, with the use of terms like “carloads” to suggest a substantial influx of visiting sex workers. Annah Pickering from the NZPC is quoted later in Maas’ text disputing this: she again reiterates that most of the sex workers live in the local area and should be treated as community members. This is a familiar argument from the NZPC who have contact with many of the street sex workers being discussed and are therefore likely a substantially more reliable source of such information than PRROS and their members.

The efforts to produce street sex workers as existing outside the community in which they live and work were directed and propelled by comments from McCracken, Stephen Grey, Len Brown, and other proponents of the Manukau City Council (Regulation of Prostitution in Specified Places) Bill. That their comments are reported by news media texts, frequently free from rebuttal, or given priority over comments from NZPC representatives, indicates the contribution that news media texts make to their argument gaining validity and prominence. This is evidence of the ability to dictate who is an acceptable sex worker moving from the courts to the media: the media framing assists with dictating how street sex work is understood, and in lieu of reporting on police activity relating to sex workers, instead reports on policing from other members of the community. The repetition of their arguments assists in establishing a norm within the texts that the proponents of the bill are legitimate residents. The formation of street sex workers as existing outside of a community functions in two ways to undermine their ability to dispute the bill. By presenting them as excluded from the

Papatoetoe community they are situated as a group who have no legitimate claim to engage in the conversation, and are not permitted a stake in the discussion which ultimately affects them most significantly. Additionally, the production of them as non-resident or not community members also functions to contribute to establishing them as disposable or less than human, with their own access to safer working environments side-lined in discussions that prioritize the economic productivity of the city centre and the fear of non-sex working residents as most important.

THE 'PROBLEM' OF DEHUMANISING: NON-RESIDENTS, CLEAN STREETS

Among the tactics used to establish street sex workers as a group who are not residents or part of what PRROS refer to as the 'local community' was situating sex work and workers as a problem in need of 'cleaning up'. The persistent use of dehumanising language further serves to remove street sex workers from the discourse as active subjects: rather than permitting them to be speaking subjects they are instead objectified and vilified as vectors of contagion, both moral and literal, mirroring one of the categories of news media about sex workers as identified by Hallgrimsdottir, Phillips, and Benoit, specifically the "storyline" they identified as "vectors of disease, criminality and moral malaise" (2006, pp. 269–271). The problem with street sex workers, as it is conveyed in the media texts, is not purely or even largely the alleged disruption of the workers to non-sex worker residents, it is their existing visibly as sex workers. The sex worker, in the words of Grant, is "always available, always working", and the construction of street sex workers in media texts makes this so, refusing to permit them to occupy any category other than sex worker, then rendering them silent in this role (2014, p. 11).

Edelman also expands on this, considering the ways in which street sex worker bodies are banished from 'capitally valuable' spaces. He writes that street sex workers are discursively constructed into a position of being "[t]he ideological other, here as the "brazen" prostitute, who pollutes with disregard the neighbourhood with their mere presence" (2011, p. 857). Later, when writing about official responses to sex working bodies, Edelman summarises the pathologizing as:

“He [the police chief] situates these prostitute bodies as dangerous, dirty and a threat to safety of the public; within this paradigm, sex workers are placeless entities, embodying illegality, always corrupting the moral landscapes of the good and incapable of community and residence.” (2011, p. 857).

One of the media texts that most succinctly demonstrates the way in which street sex workers are systematically dehumanised, coded as a dangerous problem in need of solution, and situated within the “vector of contagion” trope identified by Hallgrimsdottir et al (2006, pp. 271-272), is “Community to Tackle Prostitution With CCTV” (Stuff.co.nz, 2011). The text also displays some of the ways in which the arguments put forth by opponents of street sex work appear to create situations in which there is no acceptable way for street sex workers to work, and in which behaviours are concerning or disruptive when carried out by sex workers, and acceptable and reasonable when carried out by others. The text deals with a proposal to install a CCTV control room in the Hunters Corner town centre, with the intention to set up a system similar to that at Otahuhu, where reportedly, “security staff can zoom in on problems and deal with them directly, call in police or issue warnings over a PA system”. John McCracken is again quoted in the text, this time calling the combination of CCTV monitoring and a PA system “a practical solution”. McCracken also claimed that the CCTV was not intended to target street sex workers directly, but rather anti-social offences which “unfortunately seem to revolve around the street prostitutes”.

In “Foucault, Femininity and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power” Bartky writes about how surveillance, specifically of women, aims to create “docile bodies” that display an acceptable and unthreatening performance of femininity (1998, pp. 26-27). She writes with specific emphasis on Foucault in *Discipline and Punish*, speaking of the presence of visible power and control as a mechanism to enforce this acceptable femininity, which a threat of constant CCTV monitoring and a loudspeaker system surely fulfils (1979, p. 200 cited in Bartky, 1998). She additionally notes that women are expected to occupy less space than men, with acceptable and unacceptable modes of femininity enforced through surveillance and coercion (p. 29). Within the context of street sex work in South Auckland the punishment for transgressing acceptable norms of femininity – through engaging in sex work, or through being trans – is punitive surveillance (in this case via CCTV and PA systems, but also through

the use of night-time patrols by PRROS). The surveillance, nominally proposed in order to ensure safety, is instead an attempt to control and manage behaviour and women's use of public spaces. It intends to punish a failure to properly adhere to the expectation that women will be "docile bodies", productive and adhering to disciplined regimes of appropriate spaces and times to be present.

The proposal outlined in the news media text was, essentially, to constantly monitor all street sex workers, under the guise that they are the only source of anti-social offences in the South Auckland area. In "Prostitute Pamphlet Riles Academic", Lexie Matheson comments that the litter and rubbish left around Hunters Corner is "not a mess made by half a dozen people", reflecting that street sex workers are scapegoated as the cause of all littering and other anti-social behaviour in the area, a trope identified in other research on street sex work (Fletcher, 2012; Hubbard and Sanders, 2003, p. 81). There is a persistent disagreement between John McCracken, Pat Taylor, and others who object to the presence of street sex workers, and the NZPC and Ministry of Justice reports about how many street sex workers work in the area at any given time. Taylor puts the number at around 30 street sex workers around Hunters Corner alone in "Street Legal" (Taylor, 2013) while an official estimate published in a 2009 review by the Ministry of Justice reports:

"NZPC, local community members and Police agree the numbers of street-based sex workers in Hunters Corner and around the Northcrest car park are not large. Numbers range between four and eight most nights, while on a busy night a maximum of 20 sex workers may work in Hunters Corner, and from eight to ten sex workers work around the Northcrest car park." (Ministry of Justice, 2009).

From this information, it is apparent that the figure quoted by Taylor would be the maximum including both the Hunters Corner region and the Northcrest car park, and 50% higher than the maximum estimated for Hunters Corner. In "Not on the street where we live", Catherine Healy from the NZPC also comments that PRROS exaggerate the number of sex workers working in the area, evidence of some texts presenting a counterpoint to claims by members of PRROS (Wade, 2011).

The proposed CCTV system reported in the media text presumes the relatively small number of sex workers operating around Hunters Corner are such a threat to the security and safety of the area that the outlay and ongoing costs necessary to constantly monitor them is justified. The text includes reports from Otahuhu's mainstreet manager Graham Mullins commenting on the success of a similar system there, and mentioning two other town centres that installed similar CCTV and monitoring. While the journalist does not directly justify the installation of the cameras, the information about requests to Auckland Council to fund them is presented followed by evidence of their usefulness in other locations. At no point in the text are any workers interviewed, and the NZPC is mentioned in passing but not quoted. The phrasing of the article also refers to the workers as 'problems', reducing them to a menace rather than individuals who are conducting a job while being subjected to a campaign of harassment by other members of the community. Furthermore, the text includes the mention of a PA system to caution workers who are seen engaging in, or presumed to be engaging in, undesirable behaviours. Other media texts (specifically "Not on the Street Where we Live" and "\$1000-a-night Workers in Turf War") mention one of the perceived issues caused by street sex workers is the noise they generate. The suggestion that a loudspeaker system is a productive solution seems to be at odds with this complaint. The noise of street sex workers is considered to be, by this measure, more disruptive and unacceptable than the amplified voices of security officers chiding workers and their clients.

Even within texts that notionally oppose the bill proposed by the Auckland City Council, the language used frequently positions street sex work as an issue or problem. Rudman writes in "Don't Turn the Clock Back on Prostitution" that seeing sex workers in public is "pathetically sad", even while making the argument that attempting to ban street sex work from the areas where it is carried out will be harmful to the safety and security of workers (2011). He also comments that "[t]here's no doubt Hunters Corner neighbours have had a problem going back years" and characterises the proposed changes as an opportunity to 'cleanse' the area. In this he again situates sex workers as pitiable problems, rather than individuals, implying through his use of language that their presence in an area makes it dirty and removing them would make it cleaner.

Edelman identifies this kind of rhetoric as a “good citizen/bad citizen” dichotomy, in which (in an area where sex work is criminalised) police protect the “good” citizens from the “bad” (2011, p. 861). Within the context of South Auckland, citizens groups have put themselves forward to serve this purpose and define for themselves what a good use of public space is, and who requires protection from whom. Berlant and Warner, in “Sex in Public”, discuss the ways in which public spaces are assigned appropriate usages and the mechanisms by which an ‘appropriate’ usage is negotiated (1998). An inappropriate usage is one that transgresses boundaries between intimate (private) life and public spaces, and Berlant and Warner identify how this deliberate forcing out of explicitly or implicitly sexual sites or areas unevenly impacts on the public, removing resources from those who are already marginalised (p. 552). A transgression of the normative uses of public space is still framed as a problem in need of solution, as evidenced by comments like Rudman’s.

The ‘clean streets’ rhetoric is also part of the continued attempt to discursively create street sex workers as inherently dirty or dangerous, as well as vectors of disease. In “Not on the Street Where We Live”, this type of phrasing is used multiple times as a description of the attempts to undermine and damage the business of street sex workers. In “Street Legal” the attempts to pass the bills restricting street sex work are characterised as “[t]he campaign to clean up Hunter’s Corner” (Taylor, 2013).²²

Additionally, one of the frequent complaints by interviewees in the texts relates to the presence of used condoms, however the PRROS group sent letters to the houses of suspected clients warning of the STI risk that the clients were exposed to. While clearly the presence of used condoms is undesirable, they are mentioned with notable frequency and vehement disgust in media texts about street sex work, suggesting that, more than other items of litter or vectors of bodily fluids, condoms are a site of horror because of their inextricable link to sex. In Radio NZ’s “Are Legislative Curbs Needed on Street Prostitution?”, condoms are

²² While falling outside the 2010-2016 period for analysis, during the initial data collection period I also found evidence that this rhetoric was used prior to 2010, for example in “Prostitution Letter Sent to Wrong People”, the daughter of an elderly couple who were sent a threatening letter by PRROS says she is in favour of “cleaning up the streets”, despite the anxiety the letter caused her parents, adding that she supports “making the streets safer” (RNZ, 2009).

specifically mentioned by the host during her introduction, but not by any of the interviewees on the panel (Ryan, 2012). In “Cleaning up the streets”, condoms are used as a device in scene setting, with Morton mentioning them twice: once in regard to their being distributed by Annah Pickering from the NZPC, then two paragraphs later in discussing watching the owner of a local hair salon pick up used condoms while wearing gloves (2011). In both cases they are used as a kind of shorthand to draw attention back to the discomfort with evidence of sexuality in public space by the journalist, even if they are not mentioned explicitly by interviewees.

“Not on the Street Where we Live” mentions that critics of the bill sometimes compare the ways in which street sex work is framed and managed, and how other uses of public space are mediated and contested (Wade, 2011). The author notes critics have observed that intoxicated rugby fans vomiting and urinating around Eden Park is not identified as behaviour that requires a by-law to correct it, for example, despite also leaving bodily fluids to be cleaned up. This suggests that the evidence of workers using safer sex practices was demonised as evidence of sexual activity, while they were simultaneously purported to be vectors of literal (and moral) contagion despite this. There is no correct way for the street sex workers to behave in this case: the use of condoms is a signal of their apparent moral failing, but is then ignored for the purposes of a campaign of targeted harassment against their clients.

Characterising the presence of visible sex workers as dirty and dangerous indicates a tension in who is permitted to be visible within public spaces, and what is presumed to be public and what is presumed to be private. Berlant and Warner’s “Sex in Public” investigates the granting of acceptability within marginalised, or formerly marginalised groups, and the way in which the most visible portions of these groups are scapegoated and presumed to have contributed little to advocating for the presently held position (1998). Berlant and Warner comment on by-laws in New York City, introduced in 1995, which attempted to remove ‘adult establishments’ from being in proximity to organisations understood as family centred: the presence of overt or subtextual sex was understood and produced by these by-laws as inherently damaging. Additionally, the by-laws regulated what areas were understood geographically as public space, laying a specific physical delineation of ‘public’ over a space

and asserting it as a place suitable only for occupation by heteronormative persons and activities.

Although Berlant and Warner were talking specifically about the ways in which public spaces or gathering places for queer communities were being marginalised, many of their arguments hold for the marginalisation and desire to hide street sex workers. In particular, given the deliberate and persistent misgendering of trans workers outlined in the next subsection, the comparison may be particularly apt in this case. Specifically, Berlant and Warner comment that the attempts to ‘cleanse’ public spaces of evidence of queerness and particularly queer sex, resulted in communities being forced to travel and congregate in “small, inaccessible, little-trafficked, badly-lit areas remote from public transportation”, similar to the suggestion that street sex workers should relocate to poorly lit industrial areas, significantly reducing their safety and the accessibility of their workplaces from their homes (1998, p. 551). Furthermore, Berlant and Warner argue that “[t]he impact of the sexual purification of New York will fall unequally on those who already have the fewest publicly available resources”, an argument made by Lexie Matheson where she draws attention to the demographics of those who sought to remove street sex work from South Auckland (predominantly straight, white, middle-class men) and those most impacted by the proposed by-laws (women from lower socioeconomic groups, many of whom are Māori, Pasifika, and/or transgender, as outlined by Abel and Fitzgerald, (2012, p. 18)) (1998, p. 552).

A key argument against the Auckland City Council’s bid to pass a bill banning or restricting street sex work, mentioned in some texts, is that the issues they were nominally looking to prevent: anti-social behaviour, noise complaints, assaults, and public drinking in particular, were already covered by existing laws or by-laws, evidence of some representation of counter-discourses. This is most prominent in “Pros and Cons for New Law on Prostitutes” which covers the select committee process of the Manukau City Council (Restriction of Prostitution in Specified Places) Bill and a submission by Dean Knight, a senior law lecturer at Victoria University who called the proposed bill “lazy regulation” (Montgomery, 2012). Knight asked why Auckland City Council was not prepared to rely on its existing legislation and powers to manage specific behaviours, suggesting the intent behind the law was to recriminalise prostitution. Knight’s comments cut to one of the issues contained within much

of the discourse: specific behaviours are named as reasons to restrict the presence of street sex workers within South Auckland when their perceived crime is in fact being visible as sex workers and making it apparent that sex workers and their clients are part of the local community.

TRANSPHOBIA AND TRANSMISOGYNY IN STREET SEX WORK DISCOURSE: “BIG, STRONG PEOPLE”

A recurrent theme within media texts analysed is the overt use of transmisogynistic language about street sex workers, and the construction of transgender workers as being implicitly dangerous, offensive, and threatening purely because of their transgender status. Multiple texts discussing transgender sex workers misgender them and use inaccurate and outdated language, or slurs, against transgender workers.²³ In some cases this occurs within reported speech from interviewees, but in others it is included in the body of the media texts, or present in their headlines. Among the texts analysed in which this occurs are “Not on the Street Where we Live”, “Prostitute Pamphlet Riles Academic”, “\$1000-a-night Workers in Turf war”, “‘Obnoxious’ Transvestites Descend on Corner”, “Prostitutes Wrecking Public Property”, and “Street Legal” (Wane, 2011; Fletcher, 2012; Koubaridis, 2012; Maas, 2012; Auckland Now, 2012; Taylor, 2013).

Many of these texts focus explicitly on the physicality of trans bodies, and particularly on the visibility of trans women. Serano identifies this unwinnable situation in *Whipping Girl* as being the dichotomy of being either deceptive or pathetic: trans women are seen either as a threat to heterosexual masculinity (by being sexually desirable) or as a tragic parody of womanhood (2007/2016, p. 49). Both depictions deny the identity of the women described, and can be situated as different expressions of transmisogyny, placing a particular expectation of embodiment and gender expression on the women concerned. Serano describes the process of looking for information about the assigned sex of an individual once their trans status is known or suspected as “ungendering”, and this is present in many of the descriptions of trans

²³ An outline of terminology relating to transgender workers in this thesis can be found in Chapter Three, pp. 83- 84.

sex workers (pp. 171–172). Texts with evidence include an interviewee in “Not on the Street Where we Live” which describes workers as “menacing “six-foot-three trannies”” (Wade, 2011) and in “Prostitutes Wrecking Public Property” where Donna Lee comments on the physicality of trans workers, as discussed in detail later in this subsection (Auckland Now, 2012). Capuzza further discusses this trend within media discourses, noting that representations of trans women tend to reduce them to their genitals, or depict them as drag queens or criminals – the conflation of transfeminine people and drag queens is prominent in some of the analysed texts, again including “Not on the Street Where we Live” (2015, p. 116; Wade, 2011). Capuzza argues that the pathologizing of trans bodies is frequently a mechanism by which trans people are situated as the ‘other’ and made an object of pity, similar to Serano’s contention of the ‘pathetic’ identity assigned to non-passing trans women (p. 124).

Delineating some bodies as inherently ‘out of place’ on the basis of “appearance or conduct” (O’Neill et al, 2008, p. 81) has been documented previously in literature which considers tensions between street based sex workers and others in the community. Hubbard also notes this, arguing that with regard to the othering of street sex workers “the body acts as a major signifier” in determining who may be permitted to occupy and use public space (1998, p. 57). As I demonstrate, this is particularly so with regard to the othering of visibly trans bodies in public space.

The presumption that there is a fundamental difference in expressions of womanhood between cis and trans workers is also prominent. Gamson identifies in *Freaks Talk Back* that one of the markers of acceptable transfemininity is being demure and ‘appropriate’ – coded language for keeping one’s trans status hidden for the benefit of others (1998, p. 155). However, Gamson notes there is a double standard in which a trans woman is inevitably defined as deceptive in most media portrayals, creating an unwinnable situation: the correct performance of transfemininity is to be invisible, but to be invisible is to be deceptive (p. 98). Questions of appropriate performances of femininity in a New Zealand media context are also addressed by Farvid and Glass, who note that street sex work is frequently deplored in news media largely because it contravenes norms of female sexuality and femininity (2014). The confluence of transgressions of norms of femininity, and the sexualization applied to visibly

transgender bodies, creates a situation in which one of the key modes of attack upon street sex workers is transmisogyny.

This pathologizing of trans bodies is particularly prominent in “Not on the Street Where we Live” in which the journalist discusses Hunters Corner as being known as a location in which to find “streetwalkers of indeterminate gender” (Wane, 2011). The text also comments that one of the complaints about street sex work in the area is that sex workers cause a noise disturbance, followed by a claim that the noise levels outside a drag queen bar in Ponsonby were measured at 92dB. The text includes comments that dismiss and delegitimise the gender of trans women and includes a quote that highlights their height as a damning description of them: the transgender sex workers are intended to be understood as unwelcome and threatening because of the nature of their presumed bodily differences, and the linkages to a drag queen bar functions to imply their ‘true’ identity is as queer men (referring to Serano’s identification of homophobia being one of the contributors to transmisogyny). They are implicitly menacing in this phrasing. Later in the text the author speaks directly with a street sex worker, describing her as a “pretty transgender teenager”, giving a counterpoint to the language earlier in the text – however this occurs several paragraphs after the transmisogyny of the introductory paragraphs.

Additionally, the commentary about the noise levels outside a drag queen bar in another suburb of Auckland is presented as proof or support for the argument that street sex workers cause noise disturbances “louder than a lawnmower”. The text is suggesting a bar that likely has substantially more people present than the maximum number of workers, estimated at 20, and which benefits from electronic amplification of music is seen as an appropriate comparison point. The comparison made by the journalist here also presumes that drag queens are trans women and vice versa. This persistent comparison between drag queens and transgender sex workers occurs elsewhere in the texts analysed (usually by referring to “girls and queens”, as in “Street Legal” (Taylor, 2013)), and presumes that their gender is a performance or costume. This comparison also plays upon the “undergendering” described by Serano: the women in this case are identified as unfeminine, loud, and not appropriately meek and docile.

Transgender sex workers are routinely identified as a separate group to cisgender sex workers. In “Street Legal”, a sentence refers to “the girls and queens of the night”, while in “Not on the Street Where we Live” Wade discusses allegations from PRROS and notes that the workers being discussed are “not fragile under-age girls, but menacing “six-foot-three trannies”, high on drugs, who spit in your face”. This discursive delineation between cisgender and transgender workers intends to further marginalise street sex workers who are transgender by situating them in opposition to ‘girls’. The use of the word ‘girls’ to refer to cisgender workers here functions to set them as ‘fragile’ and less blameworthy, more deserving of pity than transgender workers, who are presented as being dangerous and menacing. Their belonging to a group further removed from the acceptable or pitiable sex worker leaves them in a position of being blamed for the perceived issues with street sex workers in South Auckland, although much of the commentary about them appears to indicate that the crime or transgression they have committed is in fact being visibly transgender in public. Namaste discusses non-passing trans women as a target of violence and vitriol in “Genderbashing: Sexuality, Gender and the Regulation of Public Space”, saying that the ability or inability of trans women to ‘pass’ (as cis) is a specific risk factor of their being targeted for harassment and violence (2006, pp. 590–593). This appears to be reflected by the point outlined earlier in this chapter, in which the rhetorical device of grouping together accusations about trans street sex workers being seen by children at bus stops alongside allegations of their soliciting during daytime: actively engaging in sex work is viewed as analogous, in terms of perceived threat, to being publicly visible.

In “\$1000-a-night Workers in Turf War”, a group of fa’afafine working in Hunters Corner are referred to as ‘five men’. In Schmidt’s “Migrating Genders: Westernisation, Migration and Samoan Fa’afafine” she discusses pronoun usage in fa’afafine populations, commenting that in the Samoan language pronouns are gender-neutral, and therefore in discussing particular research subjects she used pronouns that were aligned with the gender they were presenting as at the time of the interview being discussed (2010, p. 19). As such, the description of fa’afafine sex workers as men seems deliberately to ignore their identity and presentation. The commentary again positions them as being in opposition or comparison to the cisgender sex workers in the area, with a description of a dispute over soliciting areas describing as a fight between “the girls and the fa’afafine. Six men and four ladies were fighting.” Again,

cisgender workers are 'girls' or 'ladies', while transgender or gender non-conforming workers are deliberately misgendered in a way designed to present them as a threat not only to non-sex working residents of the area but also to other, cisgender, street sex workers who are produced as marginally more acceptable because of their being situated closer to the norms desired by anti-street sex work groups.

In one of the only descriptions of sex workers provided in the media texts which was not paraphrased from a group or individual attempting to remove street sex work, the author of "Not on the Street Where we Live" visits the Papatoetoe town centre at night and notes "[i]n their flat sandals and short dresses, you'd be hard pressed to tell them apart from any young girl out for a night on the town", indicating the divide between how street sex workers are produced as menacing within anti-worker rhetoric, and how they are interpreted by others not invested in removing them from the area. Within the analysed texts it frequently becomes difficult or impossible to disentangle how much of the transphobic rhetoric is a function of direct reportage of interviewees' comments, or strongly informed by that, and what is indicative of norms of media reportage about trans women more generally. This sentence gives an indication of a more sympathetic position from a journalist; however, it still carries the implication that being unable to tell who is or is not a sex worker (or is or is not trans) is an indicator of deception. Again, the inability to distinguish between trans and cis women, and the attendant presumption that all trans women are sex workers (and always working) is cited as a cause for concern. John McCracken, in "Are Legislative Curbs Needed on Street Prostitution?" says:

"[W]ould you want your child walking to school being approached by a client because they can't find a sex worker, working on the street. This is the reality we have on our streets, when the prostitutes can't be found and again when the clients are looking, and again women sitting at bus stops they are being approached by the clients." (Ryan, 2012)

The concern being expressed by McCracken is that sex workers are not visible enough, while simultaneously being too visible (or, more specifically, that their presence in the area is enough to generate a suspicion that other non-sex working women could be taken for sex

workers). Gamson again identifies this in *Freaks Talk Back* as both “the cultural game of seeing and interpreting sexual differences” and an obsession with identifying and discerning between cis and trans women (1998, pp. 150, 156-158). Within these texts there are two simultaneous concerns about visibility and invisibility, which are frequently conflated or presented interchangeably: the first concerns the ability to identify who is a sex worker, and the second concerns transmisogynistic portrayals of trans women as deceptive or dangerous if they are cis-passing. It is not always clear within the texts where the delineation between these two occurs: the description from “Not on the Street Where we Live” quoted above comes between a comment about a young trans worker and a paragraph that mentions that brothels do not hire trans women, making it unclear whether the author means the workers looked no different from “any young girl” despite being sex workers, or trans women, or both (Wade, 2011).

The imprecise nature of the language used here collapses the two identity categories into one, with trans sex workers presenting multiple dangers to normative bodies. The primary threat alleged within these texts is the contagion they present to non-sex working, cis women: the dehumanisation of the workers is so complete that the specifics of their identity become immaterial. The concern expressed here is that the workers, through being visible, cast suspicion on other members of the community, with the precise nature of that suspicion being unimportant. The threat, as it is understood, is that the miasma of otherness might affect women used to being protected from such suspicion through adhering to more heteronormative expectations. The hostile attitudes to which the workers are subjected become terrifying when it is possible they could be mis-aimed.

The implied threat of trans women’s bodies being visible is further produced in “Prostitutes Wrecking Public Property”, in which Donna Lee, manager of the Hunters Corner and central Papatoetoe business districts comments that “some of the prostitutes are big, strong people” (Auckland Now, 2012). This statement is clearly intended to reference transgender sex workers and position them as a threat because of the sex they were assigned at birth, implying that their assigned sex is inescapable, and that they must always be framed in terms of presumed lurking signs of masculinity. In ““Brain Says You're a Girl, But I Think You're a Sissy Boy”: Cultural Origins of Transphobia” Norton discusses the ways in which trans women are

prevented from being viewed as having “effective humanity”, including through erasure of their bodies or being treated as a theoretical or fantastical class of person (1997, p. 140). Norton also identifies the ways in which trans women are frequently constructed as either hiding or falsifying their ‘true’ gender through an essentialist view that insists upon a synchronicity between the sex assigned at birth and gender identity: failing to adhere to this is seen as implicitly sickening and repulsive (p. 154). Considering the pervasiveness of this culturally ingrained transphobia reveals why news media texts so often report or suggest that one of the problems caused by street sex work is that non-sex working women may be mistaken for sex workers: the notion of who is a street sex worker implies that person is likely transfeminine; and when being transfeminine is seen as horrifying, it is easily constructed as an insult.

Norton’s explanation of trans women being denied full humanity and being expected to exist as a theoretical class partially explains the virulent transmisogyny evident in much of the media coverage about street sex workers. The complaints about the visibility of street sex workers are frequently directed only or primarily at transgender workers, with their bodies being produced as more offensive simply by existing (waiting at a bus stop, for example) than those of their cisgender colleagues. Transgender sex workers are targeted as an unacceptable class, transgressing norms of femininity both by being sex workers and by failing to adhere to cisnormative bodily standards. They are repeatedly identified as not belonging to the class of ‘residents’ as it is discursively produced. Both “‘Obnoxious’ Transvestites Descend on Corner” and “\$1000-a-night Workers in Turf War” identify transgender workers as allegedly having arrived in South Auckland from outside the region, further situating them as people who do not belong, positioning them as the ‘other’ literally as well as figuratively. Capuzza, Norton, and Serano all investigate the various ways in which gender nonconforming people are othered and ostracized, and from the way these groups are discussed within news media texts, both by reporters and in direct quotes, it appears that street sex workers frequently become a hypervisible (to use Serano’s phrasing) target for this active stigmatization (Capuzza, 2015; Norton, 1997; Serano, 2007/2016).

OFF THE STREETS: A DEMAND FOR WORK CONDITIONS THAT ARE UNATTAINABLE

Finally, another tactic often used by anti-street sex work commentators within the analysed media texts is suggesting the street sex workers would be safer or more acceptable if they worked indoors: in brothels (Shuttleworth, 2012; Montgomery, 2012; Morton, 2011; Taylor, 2013). This argument is deployed in two key ways. First, by suggesting that sex work is not a problem if it is out of sight, and out of mind, taking place in a brothel; and second by suggesting that street sex workers are somehow exploiting a loophole by not paying brothel fees or room rental, by using the street as a workplace. Within some texts the journalists themselves, or quotes from NZPC representatives, acknowledge the reasons why street sex workers choose not to or are unable to work in brothels or parlours, but this reality is not discussed or, evidently, understood by those opposing their presence.

In “Street Prostitution Bill Doesn’t go far Enough – NZ First”, John Key, then the New Zealand Prime Minister, commented that he thought the PRA had not worked, saying the intent behind the Act was to “eliminate all the street workers” (Shuttleworth, 2012). The optimum way in which sex work can exist, under this viewpoint, is for it to be conducted completely indoors, with the intention behind decriminalisation presented as being the elimination of street sex work. “Pros and Cons for New Law on Prostitutes” makes a similar argument to that played out in “Street Prostitution Bill Doesn’t go far Enough – NZ First”, saying in the opening paragraph that the intention behind the Manukau City Council (Regulation of Prostitution in Specified Places) Bill was to give Auckland City Council the power to remove street sex work across Auckland. However, the article concludes by noting a blanket ban on street sex work would not be allowed (Montgomery, 2012).

The comment from Key in “Street Prostitution Bill Doesn’t go far Enough – NZ First” also indicates an apparently common (based on its frequency in the analysed texts) but incorrect view of the intention behind the PRA. Upon reviewing Hansard transcripts relating to the passing of the PRA in 2003 it is apparent removing street sex work was not a primary motivation behind passing the Act, with an emphasis instead placed on improving the safety of workers. Sue Bradford, a Green Party MP, on March 26th in an Instruction to Committee debate commented that she hoped the passing of the PRA would improve outcomes and

safety for street sex workers, while in the third and final reading Luamanuvao Winnie Laban, a Labour MP, said she had been swayed to support the bill by some conversations with fa'afafine sex workers in her electorate who believed the pre-decriminalisation system was untenable. One comment in support of the PRA at the Second Reading by Steve Chadwick, Labour, suggested that the legislation might encourage some street sex workers to move into managed indoor workplaces (Chadwick, 2003).

The argument from supporters of the bill is that the optimum way for the sex industry to operate is for it to be invisible. In "A Decade of Decriminalisation: Sex Work 'down under', but not Underground", Abel writes "[s]ex workers who work in indoor venues are relatively invisible and are able to fly under the radar of moral indignation", identifying that sex work is merely tolerated when it is secluded (p. 587), while Hubbard and Sanders argue that the marginalization of sex workers results in a "moral geography" in which their work is acceptable only in certain locations (2003, p. 79). In "Don't Turn the Clock Back on Prostitution" Rudman writes about a proposal in Auckland to ban brothels at street level around the time of the PRA, supporting this reading of the texts (2011). The desire to keep sex work and workers invisible, whether that means off the streets in terms of barring street sex workers, or off the streets by forcing brothels to be hidden up staircases, indicates an uneasy acceptance that is based on the ability of sex workers to disappear and adhere as strictly as possible to other social norms when in public. They are simultaneously produced as being always and obviously sex workers, marked and viewed as such even when not actively working, and therefore needing to be cloistered away for the moral safety of the non-sex working community, and also facing demands to hide their departure from accepted norms.

In practice, the effect of banning sex workers from well-lit central business areas would have been forcing them to choose between working in poorly lit industrial areas with little traffic or risking the proposed fines by working in the areas that they would have been banned from. While the commentary from supporters of the proposed bill presumed that banning street sex work would have resulted in workers moving to brothels, some of the texts quote sources, including the NZPC, outlining why this was unlikely to be the result, saying instead that the proposed bill would force street sex workers into unsafe situations, restricting their ability to enact protocols to manage their work and wellbeing effectively. Commentary on this specific

issue is one of the only areas in which sex workers are quoted more consistently and allowed to give an insight into their own experiences. This occurs most notably in “Cleaning Up the Streets”, which gives three street sex workers an opportunity to speak on their own experiences (Morton, 2011), and to a lesser extent in “Not on the Street Where We Live” (Wade, 2011). In “Cleaning Up the Streets”, one worker (Riia) cites safety and greater earning capacity as her reasons for working on the streets, which also indicates that, from the perspective of street sex workers, brothels do not necessarily afford them any greater measure of safety, a finding reiterated in the work of Armstrong (2011, pp. 87-89). A minder and former worker is also quoted in “Cleaning Up the Streets”, but there is no further investigation into the safety of workers while they engage in street work around Hunters Corner in the text beyond the two reported comments, only reported commentary from interviewees who would strongly prefer them to work in brothels under the guise of a concern for safety.

In “Pros and Cons for New Law on Prostitutes”, an NZPC representative is quoted as saying that banning street sex workers from “specified areas” may force them into “unsafe industrial areas”, while in “Don’t Turn the Clock Back on Prostitution” Rudman echoes the NZPC’s statement, saying that “the proposed law won’t abolish street prostitution, it will just drive it into the less well-lit streets behind”. Both statements make it clear that the proposed bill would not have had the desired effect of reducing or removing street sex work from South Auckland. Arguably, the supporters of the proposed bill did not, in fact, particularly care where the street sex workers would work if they were barred from some areas of South Auckland. The systematic and total dehumanisation of street sex workers in much of the commentary about them allowed them to consider the workers only a “problem” in need of a solution (as they are described in “Community to Tackle Prostitution with CCTV” (2011)), and for journalists to comment on a desire to “cleanse” the area (Rudman, 2011). The cost to workers’ safety and business was not considered, because they had been constructed so completely as not workers, and to a degree, not people.

In the few comments that do suggest workers should move to brothels, the commentary is often peppered with comments that workers who choose not to work in brothels (or who cannot work in brothels) were doing so deliberately for financial gain, as though that were an

unreasonable justification to make what is, ultimately, a business decision. The erasure of street sex work as work within this discourse allows a paragraph in "Street Legal" to paraphrase Pat Taylor commenting that street sex workers are getting "a free ride, able to work where they wish, untroubled by insurance, tax, rates, brothel fees." (Taylor, 2013) This is one of the only media texts analysed that explicitly mentions brothel fees or the loss of some income, which occurs within parlours or brothels, and reveals why for some workers street sex work may be partly a financial choice, or a decision that allows them a greater freedom to dictate when and where they work. Later in "Street Legal", one of G. Abel's papers is quoted, and the journalist paraphrases her work:

"The most marginalised prefer the streets for what to them are very good reasons," Abel wrote. "The money and autonomy made sense to them." Those on the streets were more likely than those working from brothels or home to have some Māori blood, be transgender and under the age of 18. Many had drug habits to support. They could attract more clients on the street and spend less time with them."

Abel's comments paraphrased here neatly sum up the reasons why the expectation that all street sex workers could or should move to brothel work is fundamentally untenable. Their agency and right to make decisions about their work is undermined and disregarded. In "Cleaning up the Streets", Len Brown, Auckland Mayor, is quoted as saying that he hoped the result of the legislation would be to move more workers into brothels, where they would be "better protected by health and safety regulations and are better protected from violence". The supercilious nature of these comments, given the regular complaints about condoms as an indicator of workers' presence (indicating that some workers were using safer sex practices) and the degree of harassment and violence incited by anti-street sex work groups, in particular PRROS, is not interrogated within the texts. Additionally, the presumption that local government is better placed to make decisions about the most appropriate and safest place for workers, without consulting with workers themselves, is paternalistic at best and at worst it treats workers, again, as lacking in agency and humanity. The content of the comments reveals these attitudes, and they are reinforced through their repetition and the comparatively small number of times workers themselves are permitted to be speaking subjects. In one of the few examples of a worker discussing her own decisions with regard to

engaging in street sex work Riia, a street sex worker, explains why she opts to work on the street, not in a brothel: “She prefers dictating her own business, and keeping the money she makes. “I’d rather do it in the streets,” she says. “It’s safer, easier, you get more clients”” (Morton, 2011). Riia’s comments indicate that street sex work is work and that decisions made about how and where to carry out the work, where such decisions are available, are business decisions impacted by the working conditions in parlours and the costs and economic limitations that make other forms of work less advantageous or out of reach.

Beyond the desire to not work set shifts, keep more of the money earned, or to spend less time with individual clients the demographic of those who engage in street sex work is such that working in brothels may not be an option for some. As Abel (quoted above) explains, street sex workers are more likely than other workers to be transgender (Abel and Fitzgerald, 2012, p. 18). The singular media text that mentions the impact this has on workers’ ability to be hired by parlours, should they want that, is “Not on the Street Where we Live” (Wane, 2011). In it, Wane writes “[n]ot even brothels hire trans-gender prostitutes.” In fourteen articles this is the single mention of the limited modes of engaging in sex work for trans women. This indicates the degree to which media coverage of the lobbying to reduce or remove street sex work pays little attention to the realities and alternatives available to many of the workers. Even Wane’s wording suggests that being hired to be a sex worker is a low-skill or undesirable situation, simultaneously functioning to disrespect the work while also acknowledging the situation transgender workers are placed in.

This inability for trans women to work in parlours, should they want to, is explored in detail in Zangger’s 2016 text *For Better or Worse? Decriminalisation, Work Conditions and Indoor Sex Work in New Zealand/Aotearoa*, in which interviews with trans workers and managers, as well as cis managers of brothels confirms that they are unwilling to hire trans women (pp. 101–103). Scoular et al, in “What’s Anti-social About Sex Work?”, also cover the reasons why some workers may not have the option of being employed by indoor sex work businesses, and mentions that in some cases moving to indoor work may limit their access to valuable outreach support services (2007, p. 15). Ross discusses other under-recognised benefits of street sex work for some workers in “Outdoor Brothel Culture: The Un/Making of a Transsexual Stroll in Vancouver’s West End 1975–1984”, in which former workers are quoted

discussing the camaraderie and community that existed among trans sex workers during the period considered (2012, p. 129). Existing literature which discusses the reasons why street sex work may be preferable echoes the (few) comments from workers and the NZPC within the analysed texts, but the broader and more nuanced context in which these decisions are made is largely absent from news media representations of the work.

CONCLUSION

The desire to remove street sex workers from view, combined with the intense and repeated dehumanisation of them is clearly revealed within the argument that workers should relocate to brothels. The ignorance by interviewees of the realities of the sex industry, the hiring practices of brothels, and the working conditions in them, as well as the construction of sex work as illegitimate labour, are also embedded within their reported comments. Those opposing street sex work want the workers gone from their daily line of sight. The assumption is that doing sex work in one place is functionally identical to doing it somewhere else (whether the somewhere else is another street, far from the complainants, or in a brothel) and furthermore, that workers should not have the right to determine their own working conditions and hours.

The construction of street sex work as not a job is utilised when convenient: when arguing against workers travelling from out of the region in order to work in busier areas, which would be called 'commuting' in other industries. Then sex work is constructed as a job when that is most appropriate for the argument being made against workers: comparisons are drawn between other street-based industries and business ventures like sausage sizzles. The arguments made vary depending on what will most efficiently allow anti-street sex work groups to further their demand that workers be invisible. The unacceptability of street sex workers is produced to such a degree that the nature and reality of their lives and work is erased wholly. They are seldom interviewed in texts dealing with their right to exist and work in a legal manner. They are minimally consulted regarding laws that would directly affect their livelihoods and safety. In many cases their gender identity is completely ignored, resulting in their being misgendered and referred to using transphobic slurs, or produced as monstrous and dangerous simply through existing and being visible in others.

Although much of the most violently transmisogynistic and whorephobic language occurs in reported speech from the sources who are frequently and prominently quoted, the impact of this must be considered when it is allowed to shape the discourse about street sex workers. While I have discussed examples of more sympathetic points of view from the journalists themselves, the reliance on these quotes and interviewees to dictate the terms of the discussion significantly informs the representation of street sex workers in these texts. Throughout the analysed texts only three trans women are directly quoted, in comparison with the multiple quotations from cis non-sex working interviewees. As previously discussed, the sex workers are spoken *about*, and the structural reasons why their representation is permitted to occur in ways so utterly dehumanising and disparaging of their identity and dignity is not explored within news media texts. They have been assessed as ‘unacceptable’, with this judgement now taking place within news media, rather than courtrooms.

Within the media texts about street sex workers, the workers are produced as objects or as a problem to be solved, removed, or ‘cleaned up’. They are infrequently and minimally permitted to be speaking subjects and rarely considered to be experts on their own work. Their work is not produced as work: it is a threat to public spaces which they are not seen to have a right to. Street sex workers are not permitted to be visible, and when they are it is a threat to the communities that they are a part of but are discursively situated outside of. Street sex workers are not permitted to be included in the class of ‘residents’, and their work is seen as an invitation to harassment and ridicule. The repeated attempts by PRROS to disrupt their work and lives by photographing them, sending harassing letters to their clients, and attempting to force them out of public spaces is constructed as a ‘community response’, rather than a campaign of persecution by a small group of privileged (mostly) men. The way in which workers are identified, described, and spoken about situates them as the other, and frequently presumes that legislation which would place their safety and income at risk is a reasonable response to a discomfort with their existence from more normative groups.

CHAPTER FIVE: MIGRANT AND STUDENT SEX WORKERS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines news media coverage of migrant workers within New Zealand. Under New Zealand's Prostitution Reform Act²⁴ (PRA), migrant sex workers are one of the few groups who are not granted the right to have their work decriminalised. Two key themes that emerged as specific foci within the analysed texts are international student sex workers, and a perceived boom in the sex industry around the time of the 2011 Rugby World Cup, which some news outlets and immigration staff forecast would lead to an influx of visiting sex workers. The perception of an increase in the numbers of workers led, in turn, to a cluster of texts about the interrelation between the Rugby World Cup and criminalised sex workers in New Zealand being published. Under the present legislative structure, workers on student visas (which permit them to work a certain number of hours per week) are not allowed to work as independent contractors, be self-employed, or work in the adult entertainment industry, while migrants on visitor, working holiday, or work visas are not permitted to work in the sex industry (Prostitution Reform Act 2003, s19).

In this chapter I analyse fifteen texts, including twelve written texts, two radio items, and one television broadcast. Of these texts eleven were published by the *New Zealand Herald* (plus one further article published on the *New Zealand Herald* website but written for, and also published in, the *Bay of Plenty Times*), with many of the texts written by Lincoln Tan, the *New Zealand Herald's* diversity, ethnic affairs, and immigration reporter (NZHerald, 2016). The apparent overrepresentation of the *New Zealand Herald* in the texts for analysis is due to migrant sex workers being a topic Tan wrote about very frequently, with some texts occurring within days of each other: it indicates perhaps a preoccupation with this subject, or an editorial or journalistic decision that the topic was the most salient item related to Tan's

²⁴ In "Sex work a no go, student visitors told" (Tan, 2013) a website run by Immigration New Zealand says that those visiting New Zealand on a student visa are not allowed to provide commercial sexual services, and goes on to clarify that sex work was illegal for anyone in New Zealand on a temporary visa. Functionally this means sex work is not legal for anyone whose visa status is anything other than a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident.

portfolio during the period leading up to the Rugby World Cup. Gould has argued that in many cases a discourse about human trafficking, “particularly around large international sporting events” bears a resemblance to a “moral panic”, and many of the texts authored by Tan bear the hallmarks which Gould identifies; including presenting sex workers as helpless and exploited (2010, p. 34).

EXPERTS AND NAMES

As part of my initial analysis I collated a list of the words most frequently used to describe migrant sex workers, their work, and workplaces, as well as establishing who was most frequently interviewed in the analysed texts, and thus accorded expert status. Among the most commonly used words and phrases were: illegal prostitutes, foreign sex workers, sex industry, foreign prostitutes, prostitutes, illegal foreign prostitutes, prostitution, overseas prostitutes, illegal workers, sex work, migrant prostitutes, migrant sex workers, illegal sex worker and one text which referred to a worker as a “petite Chinese girl”. It is evident from this list that descriptors of the work and workers focus primarily on their immigration status, and are also more likely to refer to them as prostitutes than sex workers. The language used not only highlights the migrant or immigration status of the workers, but also frequently uses the term ‘illegal’ to identify them: a choice of phrasing that indicates coded language intended to indicate not only that it is illegal for the women to work in the sex industry, but potentially carries more violent significance to recall the use of the slur ‘illegal’ to attack non-white migrants. It should also be noted that with such a high proportion of the texts analysed being written by a single person, there must be some consideration given to the possibility that some of the recurrence of particular terms is due to Tan’s preference for some phrases over others, or his particular focus as an immigration reporter.

Within the fifteen articles analysed, the speakers most frequently interviewed were Catherine Healy from the New Zealand Prostitutes Collective (NZPC), various immigration spokespeople, and migrant sex workers.²⁵ Healy was interviewed in six of the fifteen articles, migrant

²⁵ A table of texts analysed in this chapter can be found on p. 209.

workers or former workers were interviewed in four of the articles, and an immigration spokesperson – most frequently Steve Stuart or Peter Elms – was interviewed in twelve of the fifteen articles. There were a few instances of brothel owners being interviewed, but no obvious pattern of domination of the discourse by one or a few owners in this specific set of texts for analysis.

When migrant sex workers are discussed in news media texts, those discussed are almost uniformly Asian women, with discussion of migrants from other regions either non-existent or framed markedly differently (discussions of how Asian female sexuality is handled and used as a rhetorical device within the analysed texts occurs primarily within the subsection “Vulnerable Victims or Devious Women” in this chapter). In one instance, a British sex worker employed by the agency Bon Ton, was interviewed, but this text is so completely different in tone, structure, and focus that it is discussed separately, as it has more in common with the media objects dealing with agency and independent workers, in order to highlight the differences between these two coverage styles (Olds, 2016).

Among the themes that were most prominent in coverage of migrant sex workers are the production of migrant workers as being naive, manipulated victims in some instances, or in others as being cunning and deliberately planning to manipulate the New Zealand visa system, and how these descriptions and constructions feed into particular racial stereotypes about Asian women in New Zealand. Secondary to this, I will also look at the minor theme of attempting to construct migrant workers as less cautious or knowledgeable about safer sexual practices and therefore a vector of disease. I will also examine the reasons given for migrant workers deciding to work in New Zealand (when their work is understood as a decision), as well as the way in which the Rugby World Cup became a focus for a kind of immigration panic regarding migrant sex workers, including threats to eject them from motel rooms if they used them to see clients. Furthermore, I will examine the ways in which brothel owners frequently admit to attempting to manipulate workers or place them in a position of taking on all the risk through their use of independent contractor arrangements.

Hallgrimsdottir, Phillips, and Benoit in “Fallen Women and Rescued Girls” (2006), identify recurrent narrative categories evident in news media representations of sex work, and among

those relevant to this particular sector of coverage are: sexual slavery, predatory pimps, vectors of contagion, and criminal culpability (moral failings). In keeping with Hallgrímsdóttir et al's analysis of news media texts, as will be demonstrated, news media reports frequently focus extensively on abusive or violent situations whereas, when asked directly about their work, sex workers typically focus on more mundane and routine aspects of their job; indeed, this is emphasised by Catherine Healy in "No Evidence of Forced Prostitution in New Zealand" (RNZ, 2011). Within my analysis, this delineation between what workers consider important (according to prior research on the subject) and what news texts present as key issues is clear: the texts are written from a perspective that uses existing stereotypes to shape the narrative.

VULNERABLE VICTIMS OR DEVIANT WORKERS?

Texts that produced or contributed to the production of predominantly Asian migrant workers as vulnerable, naïve, or victimised included: "No Evidence of Forced Prostitution in New Zealand" (Radio NZ, 2011), "Brothel Checks Stepped up for Rugby World Cup" (Tan, 2011b), "Chinese Prostitutes Worry Sex Industry" (Tan, 2011a), "Chinese Students Lured to Become Sex Workers" (Tan, 2010), "'Money, not Traffickers,' Lures Migrant Sex Staff" (Tan, 2012b), and "Sex Trade to Boom as Cup Fans Arrive" (Nash, 2010). In contrast, texts that produced migrant workers as deliberately abusing the immigration system or as behaving maliciously included "Deportation Bill Hits \$1.7m" (Tan, 2013), "Sex Work no go, Student Visitors Told" (Tan, 2013b), and "Inside Tauranga's Sex Industry" (Gibbs, 2011).

In "Sex Trade to Boom as Cup Fans Arrive" (Nash, 2010) an unnamed brothel owner, cited as "the insider", commented that many migrant workers would be travelling to New Zealand to take advantage of a perceived growth in business during the Rugby World Cup. He claims "illegal sex workers" are "a major problem", and that more would "flood New Zealand" during the cup. This kind of panic about a forecast influx of workers and clients around major sporting events is identified by Agustín in *Sex at the Margins* as occurring elsewhere (she cites Germany as a specific example) without any substance to support the figures supplied (2007, p. 4). Following this claim, the brothel owner also suggested the migrant workers, identified as "girls", would come to New Zealand and have their passports held, then given back when they left at which point they would be "supplied to other places", adding that they get a living

allowance while in New Zealand and were paid on departure. His concern and anger is expressed in two manners: first, that migrant workers may reduce his potential earnings, and secondarily, through an attempt to construct the women as lacking agency. In this way, migrant sex workers are simultaneously produced and understood as a problem and as a class of victim.

The presence of migrant workers, described within this text as 'illegal workers', is inherently described as a negative, and the use of 'girls' within quoted speech to describe the workers is also infantilising, further producing them as a class of people in need of protection and paternalistic concern. Research into the profiling of travellers as sex workers at international borders (with the cited articles focusing predominantly on Australia, which has a mixture of partial legalisation and decriminalisation in most states) indicates that customs officials frequently profile Asian women as potential trafficking victims if they are suspected of crossing borders to engage in sex work (Pickering and Ham, 2014, p. 6; Ham, Segrave and Pickering, 2013, p. 56). Within the analysed news media texts the description of the workers being 'supplied' dehumanises them, producing a further discursive situation in which workers are both victims and lacking in agency. Agustín discusses this, observing that rhetoric about migrant sex workers frequently strips them completely of agency: "[m]igrants working in the informal sector are treated as passive subjects rather than as normal people looking for conventional opportunities, conditions and pleasures, who may prefer to sell sex to their other options" (2007, p. 8). The workers do not travel under their own steam in this phrasing: they are cargo or resources, moved from one place to another. The desires or motivations of the workers, and their thoughts on the alleged working conditions, are not sought. Nor is the allegation that their passports are withheld and their money paid only at the end of a period of work understood as a failure of working conditions; instead the conditions are presumed to be an implicit part of work in the sex industry, and not as a negotiable element separate from the nature of the work carried out. Doezema refers to this extensively in "Loose Women or Lost Women?", noting in most cases the dissatisfaction migrant workers report is due to poor or misrepresented working conditions or pay rates, not because they are undertaking sex work specifically (1999, p. 32).

In the radio interview “No Evidence of Forced Prostitution in New Zealand” (Radio NZ, 2011) Catherine Healy comments on a US State Department report that claimed that Asian women were being forced into prostitution in New Zealand. Healy clarifies that New Zealand’s definition of trafficking differs from the American definition, and in response to the interviewer asking “[b]ut you said that there are instances of prostitutes being exploited?” explains these are “standard mundane” situations reflecting labour issues. Following this the interviewer responds “...to the best of your knowledge then there aren’t Asian sex workers here that are being held against their will with their passports confiscated?”, to which Healy confirms that they have not come across workers being forced or coerced into sex work. Throughout the questioning it is clear that the interviewer is dubious about Healy’s claims, and furthermore focuses exclusively on Asian workers. Again, the overarching conception of Asian sex workers is as lacking in agency, and engaging in sex work against their will or under duress. This mirrors one of the ways in which Asian women are represented in New Zealand news media in particular, and migrant women are represented in news media more generally, as well as touching on the “moral panic” discourse about sex trafficking around sporting events identified by Gould (2010).

Nemoto discusses the overarching racist stereotypes that exist about Asian women: that they are controlling and alluring, but simultaneously passive and vulnerable (2006, p. 28), which reflects the narrative being put forth by the interviewer in this text. Moon, in *Sex Among Allies*, also mentions the presumption (historically) among American troops that Asian sex workers would be both hypersexual and subservient (1997, pp. 33–34). Questions about vulnerable Asian sex workers speak to a specific stereotypical trope of Asian women, and situates them as being in need of paternalistic protection. The use of women’s bodies and migrant women’s sexuality as a proxy for anxiety about national identity and borders is extensively discussed by both Agustín and Doezema (2007; 1999), and this is also exhibited here, with the focus on passports and freedom of passage acting as a coded reminder of the presumed recent arrival of migrant workers. Additionally, the implication that workers lack agency and the inherent doubt that engaging in sex work is a choice closely resembles the discourses of anti-trafficking campaigns which conflate sex work and human trafficking (Gould, 2010, p. 38).

In Shah's "Brothels and Big Screen Rescues" she discusses the ways in which non-white sex workers are produced as exploited and in need of a 'saviour' (2013). This saviour complex is evident in the way in which particular terminology is used and images are evoked to describe attempts by workers or employers to subvert the visa system. Notably, the repeated mentions of passports being held or retained (in both "No Evidence of Forced Prostitution in New Zealand" and "Sex Trade to Boom as Cup Fans Arrive" (Radio NZ, 2011; Nash, 2010)) suggests the idea that non-white sex workers are literally without a means of escape, and therefore in need of saving.

A narrative illustrative of the tension between legal definitions and commonly understood definitions of trafficking or smuggling occurs in "Brothel Checks Stepped up for Rugby World Cup" (Tan, 2011b). The text deals with the perceived increase in migrant sex workers travelling to New Zealand for the Rugby World Cup and the associated expectation of an increase in business, as well as reports of a brothel owner in Auckland, Gordon Dong, who was found guilty of aiding and abetting the unlawful entry of a person into New Zealand. Tan reports this charge as Dong "attempting to smuggle a prostitute into the country", then clarifies that Dong had lied about the reason for the woman's visit, saying she was intending to take a holiday, not to work. The separation here indicates that any attempt to aid a migrant worker to subvert their visa conditions is a choice that is understood as a form of violence and coercion: hence Tan's use of the more emphatic and emotive word 'smuggling', rather than something more accurate but less steeped in existing ideas about sex work and workers, such as 'visa fraud' or similar. A further quote from Steve Stuart on behalf of Immigration New Zealand emphasizes the position of the worker as being viewed as inherently and implicitly precarious and one of victimisation: "...an attempt at people smuggling which exploits the vulnerable for personal financial greed." Such a comment indicates the worker is viewed as an innocent and guileless victim, rather than as a worker making a decision for her own financial betterment as well as Dong's. Additionally, the worker is spoken about in a manner that diminishes both her personhood and agency: Dong is accused of "smuggling a prostitute", a sentence structure which speaks of the woman involved as though she is an object.

Later in the text another brothel owner is interviewed anonymously, commenting that he has already been contacted by workers from Asia interested in working for him and says: “these girls come on their own accord, willingly, and we just give them a place to do their work.” This comment is in marked contrast to the illustration by Tan and Stuart of how migrant workers interact with brothel owners and understand their position. The commentary here positions the workers as making a financially motivated choice, albeit one that is limited by their lack of access to legal and visa protections while working in New Zealand. As Hallgrimsdottir et al explain (2006, p. 276), the mundanity of sex work is less commonly explored in media representations: while some counternarratives do exist in the analysed texts they receive less coverage comparatively than narratives that adhere more closely to existing stereotypes. A further text from Tan, “Chinese prostitutes worry sex industry” indirectly reveals many of the ways in which limited legal protections negatively impact migrant workers, while also reproducing the same kinds of discourses about migrant workers being inherently victimised by their participation in the sex industry (2011a). The text opens with what purports to be an observation of a Chinese sex worker interacting with a client including “pouring him a cup of oolong tea”, in which the worker is described as “a petite Chinese girl...wearing nothing more than a see-through blood-red coloured camisole and knee-high fake leather boots” who is on edge “behind her smile”. This introductory commentary both suggests that Tan was permitted to observe her interactions with a client, and also appeals to racialized narratives about Asian women: the kind of tea being served is specified in a way to place Candice, the worker, as the ‘other’ and describing her as serving the client tea and being physically petite also functions to emphasise her as being both delicate and subservient. This specific kind of exotification of non-white sex working bodies is examined extensively by Rivers-Moore in “Affective Sex: Beauty, Race and Nation in the Sex Industry” as a way in which people of colour are produced as hyper-sexualised, more willing to please, or less demanding than white sex workers (2013). Furthermore, the description of Candice being anxious behind the professional façade speaks to existing narratives about the sex industry always being damaging and stressful to workers, despite outward appearances.

Later in the text, however, Candice discusses the actual source of her anxiety: a concern that she could be subject to an immigration check or that her client could be an undercover immigration officer. Another sex worker interviewed comments that despite the relatively

low pay she earns in comparison with the general charges for services within the New Zealand sex industry, it is more than she could earn in China, while another commented the New Zealand model made her feel safer:

““Even when I charge \$80, it is more than I ever earn back in China,” said a 21-year-old from Hunan, here on a student visa.

Despite her illegal immigration status, she felt "safe" working here because the only offence she was committing is with immigration and not the police.” (Tan, 2011a)

The comments from sex workers then emphasise that their primary source of stress comes from their limited protection under the intersection of the PRA and their immigration status, not from the kind of work they are carrying out. This is at odds with the framing from the author in the introductory paragraphs: Candice is described by the author in ways that emphasise her vulnerability and fragility, while the quoted sources challenge this narrative by pointing out the actual sites of stress.

Catherine Healy from the NZPC also comments in the text, saying the situation which migrant workers find themselves in represents a division of the sex industry, with migrant workers forced to work “underground”. An anonymous comment from a client who visits a Chinese-run brothel said his primary reason for choosing Chinese sex workers was their lower prices (referring to the workers as ‘girls’, again using infantilising language), and a comment from Annah Pickering, from the Auckland branch of the NZPC, indicated that the NZPC were encouraging Chinese sex workers to charge more for their services. The framing of the text, from the headline onwards, also positions a united ‘sex industry’ as being concerned about migrant workers, which indicates there is legitimacy accorded to (some) sex workers in New Zealand by news media texts. The text functions to reinforce stereotypes about migrant workers as being at risk, subservient, and manipulated (seen through the inclusion of two sources discussing their lower prices), and it achieves this by positioning them in relation to New Zealand citizen and permanent resident workers, who are protected by the PRA. This text then provides evidence of some of the ways in which news media texts produce an acceptable sex worker, frequently by establishing other workers as unacceptable in comparison.

“Chinese prostitutes worry sex industry” also mentions the work of the NZPC to provide migrant sex workers with information in multiple languages in order to improve the access to their services for populations who need support. This is expanded upon in “Chinese Students Lured to Become Sex Workers” (Tan, 2010), which contends that “older, more experienced prostitutes” are “recruit[ing]” young Chinese women including international students with an informational leaflet. In this the workers are produced both as naïve victims (as new workers) and as manipulators (once they reach an indeterminate point at which they are “experienced prostitutes”), fulfilling the role of “predatory pimps” outlined by Hallgrimsdottir et al (2006), in which they “lure” young women into the sex industry. Ham et al also identify this binaristic view of Asian migrant sex workers, saying that in their interviews with airport immigration officers it was indicated that those most likely to be “identified as potential victims are those perceived by the authorities to be closest to the ‘ideal’ image of innocent and passive victims” while other workers who were “fairly organised ... know what they’re getting into” (2013, pp. 61-62). Within Tan’s text the use of the word “lure” connotes a deceitful mode of behaviour and establishes a clear framing following on from the headline of the text, in which the two tropes of migrant sex workers can be seen: the manipulative and more experienced worker, and the innocent and manipulated victim (Ham et al, 2013).

Furthermore, the narrative within this text also carries associations with existing fears of manipulative Asian gangs involved in sex trafficking, as discussed by Doezema (1999, p. 38). The presence of these established narratives within news media texts gives them more visibility, and alludes to underlying racist narratives about Asian migrants. This kind of reporting specifically pertaining to Asian sex workers in New Zealand also mirrors findings from Sibley et al in “Ethnic Group Stereotypes in New Zealand”, which found that the general perception of Asian people in New Zealand was that they were highly competent (successful financially and in education) but low in warmth/likeability (2011). Sibley et al’s work indicates that texts like this are mirroring established racial stereotypes about Asian communities as being insular and competing with white New Zealanders for material resources. Furthermore, the positioning of older workers as manipulative and dangerous plays into an existing stereotype within New Zealand broadcast media, which “typically depicts Asians in New Zealand as a mysterious Other, often involved in crime” (Hannis, 2009, p. 117), with this stereotyping previously identified in the work of Baker and Benson (2008). This positioning of

the older Chinese workers then is a call back to an already established xenophobic trope within a New Zealand context.

A 20 year old international student working in the sex industry commented that it was difficult for international students to find employment in New Zealand. This indicates one of the possible reasons why international students enter the sex industry: racist employment practices that act as a barrier to other forms of work for migrants. The text says that the interviewee knows three other workers who read the booklet and began sex work, using the terminology “turned to sex work” when paraphrasing her, again using a turn of phrase which positions sex work as a last resort or unpleasant choice, and indicates a specific viewpoint from the author. While Nigel Bickle from Immigration New Zealand confirmed that working in the sex industry was illegal for those on a temporary permit, Inspector Andrew Coster from the Auckland City Police is paraphrased, then quoted as saying:

“there was no evidence to suggest international students were "being pressured" into the sex industry.

"We have been receiving very positive feedback from our international students who say they feel safe in our city,"" (Tan, 2010)

The indication here is that the presence of informational booklets that provide sex workers, including migrant sex workers, with health and safety information, is being construed by the reporter as an attempt to coerce or influence people on student visas into sex work. The commentary from Coster occurs around halfway through the text, after the discussion that heavily implies that the booklets are used to “lure” migrant workers into the industry.

The early portion of the text also misrepresents the content of the booklet: Tan alleges that the booklet instructs workers on how to perform “sex tricks”, while in the closing paragraph a quote from the booklet indicates it actually gives advice on “trick sex”, commonly used to reduce the risk of exposure to bodily fluids in interactions with clients who cannot maintain an erection. The conflation of these two very different terms could be interpreted as evidence of an attempt within the text to make the presence of multi-language resources suspicious by suggesting that they contain information far more salacious than they actually do.

Alternatively, it is possible that this misrepresentation is a misunderstanding of a common industry term and a failure to conduct research to confirm whether an assumption was correct. Regardless of the root of the error, this further discursively produces a notion of young migrant workers as “innocent, sexless, ‘non-adults’” (Doezema, 1999, p. 47) who are lured into a dangerous and seedy job, and also appears to be evidence of another stereotype that Nemoto identifies, that of Asian women as inherently “exotic, and sexual” (2006, p. 28). The mention of “sex tricks” by Tan again draws on these existing racist narratives and assumptions about Asian female sexuality, producing them as the fascinating other and exotifying them into unsubtle stereotypes by suggesting they participate in sex acts foreign to the general public.

In a text from 2012, “‘Money, not traffickers’, lures migrant sex staff” (Tan) a report compiled by the NZPC is discussed, which concluded that migrant sex workers in New Zealand are not victims of people trafficking and “many are in the sex trade for the money”. While the text reports the findings of the research relatively directly it makes little effort to consider the nuance of the report. The text uses scare quotes in the summary of research at the end of the article, saying that “26%: came to New Zealand “to study””, without considering the difficulty which international students such as those interviewed in “Chinese Students Lured to Become Sex Workers” (Tan, 2010) discuss in finding other forms of work. It simultaneously produces the notion of Asian sex workers in New Zealand (and Auckland particularly, as that is where the research was carried out) as being deceptive and manipulating the immigration system, while also being at risk of victimisation themselves. The ontological production of migrant workers here is as both manipulated and manipulator: this text focuses both on the proportion of migrant workers who are working on a temporary visa, and on the five percent of workers who do not have easy access to their passport and cannot refuse clients. This specific delineation reflects what Woolgar and Pawluch refer to as “ontological gerrymandering”, in which a group or category of concern is defined by arbitrary bounds to enable a speaker to further their pre-determined conclusions (1985). In this case, the category of “migrant worker” is defined in a way that allows the text to focus on narratives evident in other texts by Tan, specifically manipulation of workers and workers’ manipulation of their visa conditions.

The text closes with a comment from Danae Anderson, an AUT researcher who said that she is aware of cases where workers were told by their employers that they would be reported to immigration if they complained about their working conditions. Despite this the linkage between working conditions, coercion, and the legal status that migrant workers hold is not explored further: the victimisation of workers is constructed as a by-product of the sex industry, not of the legal constraints which migrant sex workers find themselves working under. Crenshaw, in “Mapping the Margins”, comments that progressive political movements frequently fail to understand the specific pressures that a group suffers because of their belonging to multiple oppressed subject categories, or through attempting to collapse the experiences of one group into another (1991). In this case, it appears the particular set of difficulties experienced by new migrants or international students, who are often young and in the case of sex workers, predominantly women, are not considered.

In *Sex at the Margins*, Agustín explores the methods by which sex work is produced as fundamentally different from other forms of work, particularly for migrant workers. She notes that work, particularly work carried out by women that involves emotional or affective labour, is frequently defined as “non-productive” as a way of dismissing its legitimacy (2007, p. 54). The economic contribution of a form of work is critical to it being considered a legitimate choice, and the adherence to tax laws and visa conditions is a key marker by which this is assessed in discussions of migrant workers. An additional discursive function of this is to erase any skill involved in carrying out sex work. As in the previous chapter discussing how street sex work is constructed as not a job, or not work, and placed in contrast to other kinds of legitimised businesses, migrant sex work is also erased as a form of labour through a focus on the specific bodily mediated forms it takes. Agustín writes:

“it is only possible to isolate sexual services from other services if sexual communication and touching are accepted as utterly different from all other contact. This isolation also requires us to accept that the only thing that happens in a sexual service is ‘sex’, reducing the relationship to physical contact between specific points of the body and pretending that nothing else happens. And this is patently not true” (2007, p. 65).

The recurrent production of sex work as unproductive and illegitimate labour is inherent in much of the analysed news media that denies or doubts the validity of migrant women's purpose in New Zealand. A prime example would be the doubt cast on the legitimacy of international student sex workers' study plans in "'Money, not Traffickers,' Lures Migrant Sex Staff" (Tan, 2012b). The focus on sex work as being purely a physical act, devoid of other skill sets, is discussed by Hubbard, Matthews and Scoular in "Regulating Sex Work in the EU", where they write that the "violation of the body of the trafficked sex worker has become emblematic of the violation of the state's boundaries" (2008, p. 140). The focus on the physical aspect of the work then is not coincidental: it functions to produce the migrant sex worker as engaging in acts of abjection, deceit, and violation.

The production of migrant sex workers as manipulative and malicious is evident in several other analysed texts. In "Sex Work no go, Student Visitors Told" (Tan, 2013b) the text is based primarily on a page from a New Zealand Government website that provides advice to international students investigating work opportunities in New Zealand, which notes that people in New Zealand on student visas cannot legally be self-employed, work as an independent contractor, or work in the sex industry. The text is brief but closes with a comment from Immigration New Zealand representative Stephen Dunstan saying that the legislation did not preclude those on student visas from working as massage therapists. It also notes that Immigration New Zealand could not confirm how many visas were issued for people to work in massage clinics. Without directly saying so, the text heavily implies that migrants and international students who apply to work as massage therapists are actually intending to work in the sex industry, producing them as deceitful. It also conflates migrant workers on temporary visas with international students, further emphasising the discursive mechanism already outlined which doubts the validity of international student sex workers as being genuinely engaged in study. This construction within the texts carries the suggestion that obtaining a student visa was primarily a mode of gaining entry to New Zealand without the intention to complete a qualification. This conflation of migrant workers with international students does not permit workers to occupy two discrete identity categories simultaneously: they cannot be both students and sex workers at the same time; rather, they must be one or the other, reminiscent of Grant's comment that a sex worker is viewed as always working (2014, p. 11).

“Deportation Bill hits \$1.7m” opens by discussing the cost of deporting 671 migrants from New Zealand in the 12 months prior to July 4th, 2013 (Tan, 2013). The text then covers a specific case in which a man was liable for the costs relating to the deportation of his former girlfriend, an international student who he had agreed to act as a sponsor for. He discovered she was working in the sex industry and reported her to Immigration New Zealand, and is quoted as saying that the situation of being held responsible after reporting her was “disgusting and unfair”. Nowhere in the text is a specific number, or percentage of total deportations related to people engaging in sex work specified; however, the function of the opening sentence discussing the cost to “New Zealand taxpayers”, followed directly by only one case study that deals with the sex industry is to draw an implied linkage between the two situations. Additionally, the text uses the ‘dog whistle’ rhetoric of “taxpayers” bearing the cost of the deportations, harking back to an implied othering of migrants as a burden and cost on New Zealand citizens, despite the rest of the article discussing how, in cases where a migrant worker had a sponsor, it is the sponsor who bears the costs associated with deporting the person they sponsored.

The man’s former girlfriend’s ethnicity is mentioned early in the text (she is Chinese) and her former sponsor claimed he did not know she was working in the sex industry until he became suspicious about her receiving phone calls from strangers. Hannis (2009) discusses the production of Chinese migrants in New Zealand, with specific reference to a controversial text from 2006 that sparked substantial discussion of an alleged Chinese crime wave in New Zealand. With this in mind the mention of her ethnicity again seems intended to draw on established negative stereotypes about Chinese migrants. There is no commentary from the NZPC, and the only version of events available is from her former partner and sponsor. While this may be an accurate representation of events, his commentary casts his former partner as deceptive and having manipulated him for her own ends. He also says that he agreed to sponsor her before they became a couple, after meeting her in a local café. Her only presence in the text is as a non-speaking character, who allegedly both lied to her boyfriend, and, through her behaviour, left him financially vulnerable. There is a brief mention in the text of her initial need for a sponsor being related to a lack of money, but there is no exploration of sex work as a financial solution or as a job; it is considered explicitly as a legal failing (a breach of visa conditions) and a moral failing (a betrayal of her boyfriend). Shah, in “Brothels and Big

Screen Rescues” (2013) explores narrative themes that are predominant in white western texts about sex work in India. Some of these themes appear to have some utility when considering narratives about migrant workers in New Zealand, in particular Shah’s comment that sex work is never conceived of as a job (similar to Agustín’s comments, outlined earlier). As with Hallgrímsdóttir et al’s findings, work is not one of the predominant narrative categories which sex work and workers may exist in, and as a result financial considerations (for the worker) are seldom discussed.

A further way in which migrant sex workers are constructed as the other, and as inherently untrustworthy, is evident in “Inside Tauranga’s Sex Industry” in which a Tauranga brothel owner discusses the changes to prostitution law that occurred with decriminalisation, which mean that workers no longer have to register with the police (Gibbs, 2011). Despite the obvious privacy concerns under the previous legal model, the brothel owner, Coombes, says he thinks mandatory police registration for workers was useful because it prevented “illegal immigrants” from “get[ting] out of hand”. In this, migrant workers are both labelled as “illegal” and also as a problem to be managed, the clearly aggressive use of the terminology in “get out of hand”, in a paraphrased but not directly quoted comment, making this clear. His mode of describing them again shows evidence of the “ontological gerrymandering” used to delineate groups or concepts being produced as social problems (Woolgar and Pawluch, 1985). The language is inherently dehumanising, as it does not speak about the workers as individuals, but rather refers to them collectively as a menace or danger to be minimised. He also says that he will not employ “Asian ladies”, publicly stating that he applies racist hiring practices in his brothel, apparently without any fear of reprisal. The casual way in which Coombes speaks about migrant workers indicates he is not concerned that statements like this will have any impact on his business: the status of migrant workers has been so effectively produced as ‘other’ that a confirmation of discriminatory hiring goes unchallenged – there is no counterpoint to his comments about migrant workers in the text, and at no point during the text are any migrant workers spoken to.

Finally, in conducting a search for media objects I found one reference to a non-Asian migrant worker profiled in “The Rules of the Game” (Olds, 2016), in which Bella, a UK resident, discusses moving to New Zealand and undertaking sex work. The ways in which Bella is

profiled and discussed are in marked contrast to how Asian migrant workers are discussed. Bella is described as being “smart, empowered, a feminist”, and the name of her workplace (Bon Ton) is freely given – apparently without fear of legal repercussion. Ham, Segrave, and Pickering identify that those most likely to be profiled as “problem women travellers” (2013, p.56), seen as at risk of breaching the conditions of their Visa to work illegally, are women who fit specific risk profiles, including race based profiles. Bella, as a non-Asian migrant, does not fit this risk profile, and the manner in which she is presented within the text demonstrates this: unlike in other texts which quote migrant workers who are acutely aware of the risk of being identified by Immigration officials (Tan, 2011a), Bella is not quoted discussing Immigration New Zealand at all.

In discussing how she began sex work in New Zealand, Bella mentions that she migrated because another job required her to relocate, then started sex work as an additional opportunity to earn money. Her comments suggest her situation is not significantly different from students or other migrants who utilise the system of decriminalisation as an opportunity to enter the sex industry with less risk than in other locations. However, in contrast to the representations of non-white migrants within the sex industry she is given the opportunity to speak about her own experiences, and is not portrayed or identified as taking advantage of New Zealand’s immigration laws or sex work legislation. The way Bella is discussed within the media text has more in common with the discourse around agency and independent sex workers discussed in the Chapter Six, than with other migrant workers. The marked difference in how Bella is positioned and permitted to be a speaking subject illustrates clearly the ways in which much news media coverage of migrant sex workers is overtly racist, made clearer still by the comparison between the two distinct kinds of text.

VECTORS OF MORAL AND LITERAL CONTAGION

A further way in which the status of migrant workers is negatively represented is in media texts that accuse migrant sex workers of being vectors of disease, one of the dominant narrative categories outlined in “Fallen Women and Rescued Girls” (Hallgrimsdottir, Phillips and Benoit, 2006). While Hallgrimsdottir et al note the threat of contagion which sex workers may be accused of is, at times, a moral contagion (2006, pp. 271–272), within the analysed

texts, migrant sex workers in New Zealand are predominantly accused of being a vector of literal disease. Constructing non-white or migrant sex workers as vectors of disease is a theme that has been explored extensively within existing literature. Moon discusses the requirements for South Korean sex workers to carry “VD cards” in order to be permitted to see American GIs as clients (1997, pp. 18–19, 131–137). Doezema also discusses the construction of migrant workers as a vector of contagion, and the frequent motivation behind such rhetoric:

“...the real concern for public and policy-makers is not with protecting women in the sex industry, but with preventing “innocent” women from becoming prostitutes and keeping “dirty” foreign prostitutes from infecting the nation.” (1999, pp. 36–37)

Agustín also addressed the question of policing the sexuality of migrant women as a proxy for other forms of bodily control. She identifies how the production of migrant workers as vectors of disease relates to more general xenophobic and anti-immigration attitudes, specifically related to women who travel to seek work: “[w]omen who cross borders have long been viewed as deviant, so perhaps the present day panic about the sexuality of travelling women is not surprising” (2007, pp. 40-41).

One text that deals extensively with this theme is “Rise in Foreign Sex Workers in NZ”, which opens with the line: “[m]ore foreign prostitutes are coming to New Zealand and offering unprotected sexual services.” (Tan, 2015) The text goes on to discuss a specific case in which two sex workers from South Korea and a person identified as their “pimp” were facing charges relating to a failure to adopt appropriate safe sex practices, after offering unprotected oral sex to clients. Later in the text, figures are quoted which indicate that the number of people stopped from entering New Zealand on suspicion of intention to work in the sex industry increased between 2013 and 2014. Tuariki Delamere, an immigration advisor who represented migrant workers, commented that migrant workers were negatively impacted by the present legal situation in New Zealand which limited their ability to access condoms and information. He is quoted as saying: “[t]he big worry, of course, is that many of them start offering unprotected sex and put Kiwis at risk of sexually transmitted infections”. The phrasing here is directly in keeping with the kind of discourse outlined by Doezema: the risk is to

“Kiwis”, with the safety of the workers not mentioned at all. They are only a vector; not conceived of as workers whose health and safety should also be considered within this commentary. Additionally, the choice of language reveals nationalistic anxieties about the threat posed by migrant sex workers: the use of the more colloquial “Kiwis” in the comment from an interviewee draws on an image of a particular kind of New Zealander, with the term harking back to historic notions of a form of nationhood (Sturm and Lealand, 2012, pp. 48–49). The decision to use this quote from the interviewee not only situates New Zealanders as being at risk, but speaks to a particular group of New Zealanders being at risk: those who adhere and represent a specific conception of nationhood, predominantly Pākehā (white) New Zealanders.

Tan’s argument that migrant workers are a vector of disease, and that increasing numbers of migrant workers are coming to New Zealand to offer unprotected sexual services, is constructed then from two disparate pieces of information: one specific case relating to migrant workers, and a figure indicating that more workers were stopped from entering New Zealand. This is further bolstered by conjecture from an immigration advisor (not a representative from Immigration New Zealand) that many migrant workers offer unprotected services. Again, the reason for this is given as counterproductive immigration legislation that limits the ability of migrant workers to access support services, but the fault is placed on the workers, not identified as the unintended consequences of the legislative structure. Catherine Healy also comments on the issue, saying it is “upsetting” to see condoms used as evidence against sex workers, as carrying a quantity of condoms considered to be suspicious may be used as evidence to stop workers entering New Zealand, furthering the argument that the alleged proliferation of unsafe sexual services being provided is directly linked to the legal status of migrant workers.

In “Brothel Watch Over Big Influx of Sex Workers” (Tan, 2011c), a sex worker from Seoul, South Korea, explains that her primary reason for working in New Zealand is the comparatively low risk, with the worst penalty being deported as opposed to a penalty of a year in prison and a fine of \$4,000 if caught as a sex worker in South Korea. Immediately following this commentary an unnamed health worker is paraphrased as saying “the potential spread of sexually transmitted infections and HIV by foreign prostitutes [is] a worry”. This is

allegedly because workers on temporary visas are not subject to the same health screening as those on work visas, and because sex workers overseas, particularly in Asia, are more likely not to practice safe sex. The text goes on to cite a study carried out in China that found condoms were only used in 40% of commercial sex transactions. Again, migrant workers are constructed as a vector of disease: there is also an attempt to conflate the condom usage in China, a very different legislative and cultural environment, with that by Chinese workers in New Zealand. Additionally, one of the key critiques levelled by the anonymous health worker is that migrant workers on temporary visas (she specifies “tourists”, so it is unclear whether she is also including students in this commentary) are not subject to the same health screening as those on work visas, which again presents the supposed problem she is identifying as being linked to the legislative structure under which migrant sex workers are forced to operate. This commentary either produces migrant workers as being a higher inherent risk of contagion or displays a lack of knowledge about the legal situation for resident sex workers in New Zealand: the New Zealand legislative structure does not require mandatory health testing, only the usage of appropriate barriers during commercial sexual services. Within this discursive framing of migrant sex workers as a source of disease, as in “Rise in Foreign Sex Workers in NZ”, the sex worker is viewed only as a vector. Again, her safety is minimally considered, if at all, and she is positioned solely as a risk to clients, presumed to be New Zealand citizens and residents, produced as the intended reader of the text.

THE RUGBY WORLD CUP AND MIGRANT WORKERS

The vector of moral contagion is present to a degree in some texts: primarily relating to the renting of motel rooms to sex workers around the Rugby World Cup. The Rugby World Cup became a particular site for anxiety about immigration for the purposes of engaging in sex work, allegedly because workers expected an increase in the number of clients due to a surge in tourists. The *New Zealand Herald*, and Lincoln Tan in particular, focused on this, frequently interviewing representatives from Immigration New Zealand who reiterated their focus on this as a matter of intense concern. Another avenue that may be explored here is the focus on the location in which migrant sex workers work: the commentary about this reveals both the ways in which they are made vulnerable by brothel owners who exploit the usual

employment set-up in the sex industry within New Zealand (through independent contractor status) and the precarious nature of other working arrangements (through attempts at further marginalisation by motel owners).

Speculation that large sporting events will lead to a growth in the number of clients and sex workers in a specific location is well documented. Research has indicated that in the case of the 2010 Soccer World Cup held in South Africa there was no discernible increase in the total number of either sex workers or clients (Richter et al, 2012), as with Agustín's reports about the World Cup in 2006 (2007, p. 4). Gould also identified this in relation to the 2010 Soccer World Cup, noting that many anti-trafficking campaigns suggested there was a heightened risk of women and children being trafficked to meet presumed demand for more sex workers during the Cup (2010, pp. 34-36). There is a history, then, of this concern being voiced, but a lack of evidence that the events themselves result in the foreshadowed increase in the number of sex workers. The Rugby World Cup in New Zealand also functions as a site at which extensive nationalistic pride is played out, and a sense of 'the nation' is produced for international consumption (Sturm and Lealand, 2012; Pringle, 2004). Much of the coverage about migrant sex workers, as explored above, plays into a phobia of migrants and a concern that they are undercutting or otherwise taking work away from permanent resident or citizen workers (as seen in "Chinese Prostitutes Worry Sex Industry" (Tan, 2011a)).

Doezema writes that attempting to enact sexual control is one of the key ways in which a nation responds to perceived cultural changes due to migration (1999, pp. 43–44), while Enloe argues that in many cases tourism is historically and persistently understood as masculine (2014, pp. 58–60), and that in such cases women are often understood as functioning largely as "patriarchally sculptured symbols" of a nation (pp. 100–101). Keeping their arguments in mind, it seems this could be a potential explanation for why much of the highly emotionally charged discussion of migrant sex workers comes from Auckland and media centred in Auckland, in addition to the fact that the games that attracted the most spectators (including the final) were played in Auckland.²⁶ The most recent census as at the 2011 Rugby World Cup,

²⁶ The venue with the largest capacity throughout the tournament was Eden Park in Auckland.

from 2006, put the average proportion of New Zealand's population who identified themselves as Asian at around 9.2%, and in Auckland at 18.9% (Statistics New Zealand, accessed 2016). Much of the commentary, particularly around the time of the Rugby World Cup, presents migrant sex workers as being exclusively Asian or focuses extensively on the ethnic make-up of migrant workers (statistically the greatest proportion of migrant workers are those from China.) The concerns that are most prominent in this discourse centre around the ethnicity of the workers, and it is not uncommon for them to use terms like "surge" or "influx" when referring to a growth in the number of workers, again discursively constructing the workers travelling here as being an overwhelming number and, to draw on Enloe, potentially threatening the ability of New Zealand citizen or resident workers to occupy a position of representation (2014, pp. 100–101).

The linkage to the Rugby World Cup may again be relevant: as well as the existing traditional notion that a large sporting event results in increased demand in the sex industry, there is also the consideration that rugby is a traditional site at which notions of New Zealand national identity are played out. Sturm and Lealand, in "Evoking 'New Zealandness': Representations of nationalism during the 2011 (New Zealand) Rugby World Cup", discuss how the 2011 Rugby World Cup functioned as a site at which ideas of New Zealand's nationhood were explored and reinforced (2012). They comment that rugby historically holds a place in a collectivised notion of New Zealand identity, and served a function to perpetuate "mythologies pertaining to New Zealand's character and masculinity" (p. 49), a point agreed upon by Pringle, who notes that historically rugby was constituted as "'our' national game" (2004, p. 113). While Sturm and Lealand acknowledge a reduction in the role that rugby held as a site of nation building from the 1980s onwards they propose that the 2011 Rugby World Cup and surrounding coverage showed a resurgence of sorts for this type of meaning being placed on the sport, in part owing to New Zealand's host nation status and associated news media coverage which stressed being good hosts, or "putting on a good show" (pp. 50, 52, 54). I use Doezema's theory situating sexual control as an attempt to mitigate xenophobic anxiety about population demographics changing along lines of race when examining the frequency with which the Rugby World Cup is mentioned in narratives of migrant sex workers, considering its relationship to New Zealand's national identity. Additionally, large sporting events are themselves often constructed as being a place in which women only exist as

sexualised: either as fans only because of their sexual attraction to athletes, or as sexualised victims (Gould, 2010, pp. 38-39). Layered over the specifics of New Zealand's own relationship to rugby and national identity then, are more general understandings of masculinity as it is expressed during international sporting competitions.

The contention that the Rugby World Cup would mean a huge increase in clientele for sex workers, or that it would attract more migrant workers, is played out in several of the analysed texts. Specifically, it occurs in: "Sex Work Bonanza Expected" (The Nelson Mail, 2011), "Brothels Told no Foreign Workers Over World Cup" (3 News, 2011), "Immigration Alert on Motel Sex" (Tan, 2011d), "Immigration Raids Catch 21 Illegal Sex Workers" (Tan, 2012), "Brothel Watch Over Big Influx of Sex Workers" (Tan, 2011c), "Sex Trade to Boom as Cup Fans Arrive" (Nash, 2010), and "Brothel Checks Stepped up for Rugby World Cup" (Tan, 2011b). As established, this linkage may occur in part because of the specific nationalistic importance attached to the event within New Zealand, but may also be due to the ability to link a story about sex to a large event, fulfilling two of Galtung and Ruge's news values (the amplitude of an event and the ability to make a story 'culturally intelligible to readers') at once (1965/1981, pp. 52-63).

In "Brothels Told no Foreign Workers Over World Cup" Peter Elms, from Immigration New Zealand, is interviewed in video footage, with the introduction to the segment showing headless women in short dresses and fishnet stockings, as well as women on city streets at night (3 News, 2011). The news item features Elms warning that brothel owners intending to rent rooms to overseas workers instead of employing them directly are liable to be charged with aiding and abetting, due to their deliberate attempt to circumvent the law. Despite the discussion in the text being specifically about renting rooms, and therefore dealing with indoor workers the images shown include street sex workers: conflating two different ways of doing sex work. Additionally, despite Elms' comments, the predominant model in New Zealand sex industry workplaces is for sex workers to be independent contractors. While this receives particular attention as it pertains to the perceived influx of workers around the Rugby World Cup, it is not necessarily an unusual working arrangement.

In “Brothel Checks Stepped up for Rugby World Cup” the text mentions the expected 85,000 visitors to arrive in New Zealand from August 2011, and the expected associated increase in demand for commercial sexual services (Tan, 2011b). An unnamed brothel owner again says he plans to take on migrant sex workers as ‘tenants’ rather than contractors or employees to limit his liability for their immigration status. This exposes the precarious nature of sex work for migrant workers: the brothel owner also comments “of course we’ll be charging them a premium to rent a bed”. Migrant workers within this arrangement are forced into a situation where their immigration status both forces them to take all risk and responsibility for working, while also paying a premium for a place to work. Hubbard et al discuss how the creation of regulated and unregulated spaces and modes of carrying out sex work frequently result in people who have little choice but to work in unregulated spaces being less safe and being inadvertently placed in a position where they are “more vulnerable” (2008, pp. 146–147). Agustín also expands on the ways in which marginalised working conditions impact negatively on workers but less so on employers. When migrant sex workers have complaints about their work, they are typically expressed as frustration with the working conditions, pay rates, or ability to negotiate (2007, pp. 35–36). Their reduced ability to argue for different conditions or report poor treatment is a function of their lacking legal protections other workers have.

Earlier in the text is a report of a brothel owner charged with aiding the unlawful entry of a woman intending to work as a sex worker: the structure of the text here indicates the ways in which brothel owners may be penalised for attempting to assist workers to enter New Zealand, followed by listing strategies that they use in an attempt to avoid being held responsible. The charge the brothel owner was convicted of is typified as “people smuggling”, despite later comments by another owner confirming that the workers “come of their own accord”. The apparent concern about workers being ‘smuggled’ therefore seems to reflect concern about their wellbeing, while also being immediately followed by comments labelling such attempts to enter New Zealand to work as “wilful abuse of the immigration system” and saying the case “serves as a warning to those who may be tempted to take advantage of the Rugby World Cup”. Simultaneously the workers are produced as victims in need of concern and protection, and as wilfully attempting to manipulate the immigration system, as well as separated into their own distinct class of workers (or, delegitimised as workers). The commentary about “taking advantage” of the Rugby World Cup seems inconsistent, given so

many other businesses in New Zealand acknowledged using it as an opportunity to increase profits. The apparent concern then seems insincere: an anxiety about immigration appears to be the true root of the concern.

This is even more evident in “Immigration Raids Catch 21 Illegal Sex Workers”, which discusses immigration raids conducted since the Rugby World Cup (Tan, 2012a). Despite the World Cup having passed by the article’s publication in 2012, it is still identified in this text as a key marker relating to migrant sex worker numbers and movements into New Zealand. The language used to refer to the migrant workers found to be working in ways contrary to their visa conditions is explicitly othering and dehumanising. At one point the author refers to “one Malaysian who was on a student visa”, then writes of “a 28-year-old Vietnamese on a student visa”, denying the workers being discussed any identification other than their nationality. The workers are not a Malaysian woman or a Vietnamese student in this language: they are constructed and conveyed solely as their ethnicity. The function of this type of reportage is to strip the workers of humanising identities; they are rendered anonymous and faceless in these descriptions, reminiscent of the language which situated migrant workers as cargo or objects explored earlier in this chapter.

Later in the text, a staff member at one of the brothels subjected to the raids alleges that mobile phones belonging to a worker and a manager had been confiscated, and that continued police visits to the brothel were negatively impacting business. Again, the business and earning of sex workers is disrupted – as with the disruption to the work of street sex workers – while the intimidation and inconvenience of working in a precarious situation, operating under an ongoing fear of immigration censure is revealed. This is evidence of a broader trend of deprofessionalising and delegitimising sex work by workers deemed unacceptable within news media texts. The linkage to the Rugby World Cup is also unusual: aside from its usage as a specific temporal marker, it seems completely unconnected to the rest of the news text. Its predominant function in this then appears to be as a further attempt to link migrating to engage in sex work to the World Cup, and thereby makes such migration seem impulsive and exploitative by the workers, if not by the brothel owners as well.

In “Immigration Alert on Motel Sex”, attempts by a brothel owner on Auckland’s North Shore to market themselves as a ‘love motel’ to avoid legal repercussions for renting rooms to migrant sex workers is discussed (Tan, 2011d). The motel had originally applied for a brothel licence, which was declined following what the journalist identifies as a “public uproar”, indicating again the ways in which the acceptability of sex work is reliant upon it being functionally invisible. Ham and Gerard refer to “strategic invisibility”, in which sex workers carefully manage their own visibility as a mechanism to reduce the stigma they are subjected to, from institutions and from individuals (2014, pp. 303, 310). The visibility or invisibility of sexuality in public, or in semi-public spaces, here is reminiscent of the demand that street sex workers in South Auckland could not be a part of their community, and should strive to be invisible. As with the production of street sex workers as existing outside of their community, the migrant workers discussed in these texts are constructed as being others, removed from the community and not welcome within it.

This text is one of the few which contains commentary about the racial aspect of concern about migrant workers, although in this occurs in quotes from interviewees and not from the journalist. Fred Ronnau, owner of the Desire Love Motel says that “[i]t’s just totally absurd and against privacy law to be asking people who come here if they have a visa to be in New Zealand”, while Michael Baines from the Motel Association is paraphrased as saying that “it would be against the law for moteliers to check someone’s immigration status or not let rooms based on their ethnicity”. These comments follow commentary from Immigration New Zealand about the aiding and abetting charge that could be laid with anyone who rented a room to a migrant sex worker without the correct visa status to be carrying out sex work, implicitly suggesting that motel owners should be policing the visa status of sex workers in New Zealand. As Ronnau and Baines point out, this amounts to a request that motel owners racially profile customers to decide whether they appear to be legally working or not. The anxiety about immigration, particularly of Asian women, is laid clear in this request: the visibility of the workers and their work is how migrant sex workers are problematized.

This is further played out in “Brothel Watch Over Big Influx of Sex Workers” which re-reports items already outlined in earlier texts about the conviction of an Auckland brothel owner for assisting a worker to travel to New Zealand (Tan, 2011b). It also contains further speculation

that “a surge in foreign sex workers” will arrive due to the Rugby World Cup. A comment from Immigration New Zealand indicates that they are “monitoring this sector closely”, and the text concludes with comments, already analysed earlier in this chapter, suggesting that migrant sex workers are vectors of literal contagion to resident New Zealanders (see the comments in “Rise in Foreign Sex Workers in NZ” which allege migrant workers are putting “Kiwis” at risk by offering unprotected services (Tan, 2015)). The text explores, again, the attempts by some brothel owners to minimise their own responsibility by attempting to place sex workers as ‘tenants’. The discursive function here is to situate migrant workers as a threat that requires close attention from Immigration New Zealand, while also indicating that they are subject to very little legal protection or assistance from brothel owners or from the present legislative system in New Zealand. Furthermore, the text does not contain any information not already reported in earlier articles by Tan that were also published in the *New Zealand Herald*: this text was published on May 17th, 2011, and contains functionally the same information with slightly different quotes from Immigration New Zealand as “Brothel Checks Stepped up for Rugby World Cup”, published May 13th, 2011. The concern about migrant workers as they relate to the World Cup does appear to be at least partially manufactured: the reiteration of these reports is not due to new facts or events arising; it instead appears to reveal a specific desire to publicise these concerns. This possibly relates to the ease with which news texts about sex work and workers may be pitched to an audience, particularly when it is (however tenuously) linked to an established event such as the Rugby World Cup. This is reinforced by Galtung and Ruge’s argument about the selection of newsworthy events; specifically, that once an event (in this case the Rugby World Cup) has occurred and been established as newsworthy, it will continue to be viewed as news for some time afterwards. Later, Harcup and O’Neill identified multiple sources who argued that the presence or linkage to sex in a story heightened its news value or ability to capture interest. The question of why texts such as this continued to be produced in such quantity may be partially answered by the confluence of these two factors (Galtung and Ruge, 1965/1981, pp. 52-63; Harcup and O’Neill, 2001).

Finally, “Sex Trade to Boom as Cup Fans Arrive” is a further example of the ways in which alleged concern for the wellbeing of sex workers is revealed to be hollow at best and functionally a way in which nationalistic concerns about immigration may be expressed (Nash,

2010). The text includes comments from a brothel owner who is paraphrased as saying that “he expected dozens, and potentially hundreds of overseas prostitutes to flood New Zealand. Illegal sex workers were a major problem already”. Immediately following this the owner expresses concern that some workers have their passports taken from them when they arrive in New Zealand, then comments that the money earned by the workers would be taken out of New Zealand. He concludes by saying that being part of a human-trafficking chain would be bad for New Zealand's reputation. The astonishing combination of commentary here makes it obvious what the true concerns are: while the owner makes a brief reference to being concerned for the wellbeing of the workers, he also identifies them as a “major problem” and uses alarmist language, saying they will “flood” New Zealand. The presence of migrant sex workers is constructed as inherently negative and worthy of concern. Then, immediately following a brief expression of concern about the working conditions of migrant sex workers in New Zealand, he comments about their not paying tax in New Zealand, and closes with a comment about the harm to New Zealand's reputation if it is implicated in a human trafficking chain. The use of the term “trafficking” immediately after a comment about concerns that tax revenue will be taken away from New Zealand is further evidence of the ways in which concern about workers is used in an attempt to mask the true motivations for such commentary. The concern here is for a specifically nationalistic set of impacts: revenue for New Zealand (constructing migrant workers as being outside the community), and the reputation of New Zealand. The production of a national identity and economy that could suffer because of migrant sex workers functions discursively to remove them from the impacted group. Further, the use of the term “trafficking” indicates a brief attempt to reframe the conversation as having some concern or worry for the wellbeing of the workers, suggesting they have been coerced, but is used interlinked with an expression of concern primarily for the economic impacts for New Zealand. It is made abundantly clear that any appearance of concern for the wellbeing of migrant sex workers is in fact a mechanism by which economic anxieties about immigration may be expressed.

CONCLUSION

As discussed in the previous chapter, the production of “proper social subjects” as described by Irving in “Normalized Transgressions”, is largely determined by their ability to engage with

labour seen as economically productive (2007). Sex work is, inevitably, understood as economically unproductive, and this ultimately becomes one of the key points by which migrant sex workers are refused the right to be viewed as legitimate subjects with agency. Discourses within news media texts about migrant sex workers in New Zealand then can be seen to primarily respond to specific racialized anxieties about Asian immigration to New Zealand. While many of the texts attempt to produce the workers as vulnerable and in need of protection, this is most often accomplished by stripping the workers of their agency and attempting to construct a situation in which their concerns and discomforts are due to being in the sex industry, not due to working under limited legal protections.

When workers are not being constructed as vulnerable and victimised, they are portrayed as manipulative and devious, attempting to circumvent immigration controls. These portrayals occur with minimal or no exploration of the reasons why migrants, particularly international students, may decide to engage in sex work. Sometimes workers are constructed as simultaneously victimised and manipulative, a discursive situation in which their position is unwinnable. The construction attempts to situate migrant sex workers as being subject to raids by Immigration New Zealand for their own protection. Much of the discourse about migrant sex workers in New Zealand also identifies an explicitly economic concern about their work: either that they are taking their earnings out of New Zealand, undercutting resident (or more accurately, white) sex workers in their pricing, or that they are not paying tax. This is particularly evident in texts which link migrant sex workers' presence in New Zealand to the Rugby World Cup, already a site on which conceptions of nationhood and national identity are played out. The linkage of migrant workers as a threat to an undefined sense of New Zealand's 'way of life' is achieved more easily when placed next to an event through which so much nationalism is expressed.

The migrant sex worker in this construction cannot be trusted to make her own decisions, and, simultaneously is devious and dangerous (both morally and as a disease vector). Additionally, within discussions specifically about migrant sex workers an economic danger is produced: a variation on the already observed narratives about sex workers which exist within media representations. The instances when migrant workers are allowed to speak for themselves reveal pragmatic reasons for working in New Zealand, and comments from the

NZPC repeatedly express concern about the functional situation that migrant workers find themselves in: able to access only limited legal protection. However, this commentary is only engaged with in a very limited manner, and the rhetoric of migrant workers as trafficking victims persists, along with stern quotes from Immigration officials about monitoring “the situation” closely.

CHAPTER SIX: MEDIA TEXTS DEALING WITH INDEPENDENT AND AGENCY SEX WORKERS

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I examine and discuss the nature of media texts that deal primarily or largely with sex workers working independently indoors or in agencies. I discuss the specific words used in these texts, followed by an examination of the interviewees most frequently cited as experts and their roles within the sex industry, as well as an examination of recurring themes and how they function to discursively produce sex work and workers who work in these ways. Among the key themes apparent in these texts are an emphasis on the low volume of clients seen by this group of sex workers, the earnings of these sex workers, the quasi-advertorial nature of many of these texts, and the production of low-volume work as a desirable and acceptable way of working, with little examination of who this option is available to. I begin by giving an overview of the descriptors used for these workers, and establishing who is most frequently quoted as an expert in them.

EXPERTS AND NAMES

My analysis of the recurring human interest or soft news coverage of low-volume²⁷ and generally high-priced agencies and independent sex workers covered fourteen texts in total, including two television/visual texts, one radio interview, and eleven written texts from both print and online sources.²⁸ While further texts were available for analysis, I limited my study to these fourteen as it became apparent that there were diminishing returns in expanding my search for related texts further; additional texts revealed very similar themes and phrasing to

²⁷ Within this thesis 'low-volume' and 'high-volume' are used to distinguish between the number of clients an individual worker could potentially see during a day or week. Many higher priced agencies emphasise the low-volume nature of their business, as explored later in this chapter; meanwhile the terminology high-volume refers more to brothel or parlour-style environments where there is the potential for a worker to see more clients during a shift, although, depending on the relative busyness of an establishment, this may not always be the reality.

²⁸ A table of texts analysed in this chapter can be found on p. 211.

the texts already analysed here, adding little to the ability to examine and understand the discursive construction of independent and agency sex work and workers. The recurring themes in texts discussing agency and independent workers could be clearly discerned in the chosen fourteen.

In analysing these texts, I noted down both the words used to refer to sex work and workers, as well as who was spoken to within them, and whether these speakers were quoted directly, paraphrased, or had comments attributed to them, in keeping with Fairclough's work on "discourse representation" (1992, pp. 271-272). As with the analysis of migrant workers and street sex workers, the words used to describe sex workers and their labour are key for framing the stories told about them, and are a method of signalling how these narratives should be interpreted. The words used for agency and independent sex workers are markedly different from those used for other sex workers: their work is more frequently referred to as 'sex work' rather than 'prostitution', and the modifiers used to describe independent workers are more commonly positive.

Among the words and phrases used most often to refer to workers in agencies or working independently were 'sex workers', 'sex work', 'sex industry', as well as 'girls', or 'escorts'. Many of the analysed texts also use positive modifiers in labelling workers, with "High-fliers Who Turn to Escorting" (Dominion Post, 2012) using "lovely women", "beautiful attentive women", and "highly educated escorts" all in a single article. It was also common for these texts to use the descriptors that appear in agencies' own advertising copy to describe the workers or workplaces. In speaking about agencies, they were often referred to as 'high end', 'upmarket', 'high class', or 'elite'. Examples of this language can be found most readily in "The Working Girls Class" (Bones, 2015), "Mary Brennan: Domination and Submission" (McCarthy, 2015) and "High-fliers Who Turn to Escorting". Agencies were also more likely to be referred to as establishments, or sometimes 'boudoirs', than brothels. A frequent trope in the texts I analysed was to compare agency or independent workers favourably against workers in high-volume parlours, which operate typically on a shift-based model rather than on an on-call basis. The language used to describe these two modes of working indicates the production of agency and independent work as more acceptable, and will be explored in greater detail later in this chapter.

This initial analysis of the articles occurred before a closer consideration of the ways agency and independent workers are represented and produced, but already provides an insight into the ways in which agency and independent sex workers are constructed within the media. The production of agency sex workers mirrors the “noisy regulatory space” noted by Maher et al, in which the primary areas of focus and concern when discussing sex work and workers are questions of public morality and public health, not working rights (2012, p. 655). There is a reassurance built into descriptions of this group of sex workers that they are both ‘lovely’ and highly (formally) educated, the kind of clarification that speaks to the stigma that news outlets both expect and perpetuate: the education or loveliness of workers is remarked upon only because it is presumed to be remarkable. The secondary function here is the beginning of a construction of workers as worthy of respect based on characteristics other than their work, or other than their personhood.

The workplaces of agency and independent workers are also described in such a way as to set them apart from higher volume brothels: they are variously high end, high class, upmarket, or elite, all words that appear distinctly advertorial. As I will discuss later in this chapter, the use of these words is part of a wider theme within these texts to function at least partially as an advertisement for some agencies.

In the texts analysed, the most frequently quoted sources, situating themselves as experts, were primarily agency owners. Of the fourteen texts analysed one included no interviewees, five interviewed a representative from the New Zealand Prostitutes’ Collective (NZPC), ten interviewed at least one agency owner, while eight interviewed a sex worker. Workers did not appear on any radio or television broadcasts and were slightly more likely to have their comments paraphrased, or quoted briefly. As Fairclough explains, indirect reportage leaves doubt about whose “voice” is present in a text, and may indicate a text is designed to be understood differently by different readerships (1992, p. 272). As evidence of this in practice, I suggest that the number of owners and managers of agencies interviewed may contribute to the advertorial nature of the words used to refer to these workplaces. Among those who are frequently quoted are Mary Brennan, the owner and manager of Wellington-based Funhouse (a full-service brothel) and The MM Club (a BDSM-focused agency), who was interviewed in six of the 14 texts analysed. Brennan says, in a page on the Funhouse website

that lists news coverage she features in, that she refuses to speak with journalists or news outlets who have misquoted her in the past, which may account for many media texts using terminology identical or very similar to that used on her businesses' websites (Funhouse, 2016) for fear of being denied access in future. Among the others most frequently quoted in texts about agencies or independent workers are Catherine Healy, the National Coordinator of the NZPC; Jennifer Souness, the owner and manager of Bon Ton, an agency in Auckland and Wellington; and the owner and manager of The Bedroom, a Wellington agency, named in some texts as Sarah, and as Jane* in an anonymised article. Workers would often be quoted or paraphrased in the analysed texts, but the use of pseudonyms makes it impossible to determine whether any workers were quoted more than once.

Those most able to construct and define the discourse around agency and independent sex work in New Zealand post-decriminalisation appear to be primarily owners and managers, not all of whom have actively engaged in full-service sex work themselves, or any sex work. In part, this may be because running or owning a brothel is a less stigmatised occupation than actively participating in sex work, as it does not involve direct sexual contact with clients or overt sexual labour. As a result, there is a lesser social penalty for owners who are publicly identified using photographs, real names, and video footage, making them a more accessible source of information for media outlets. Despite this, the owner of Bon Ton is quoted in "Behind the Red Lights of New Zealand's Brothels" saying that "people prefer a drug dealer over a slut dealer" (McAllen, 2015), indicating that she feels her work is still heavily stigmatised. While the owner's intention here is clearly to indicate that the degree of acceptance of brothel owners is still low, she is also using a gendered slur against her workers in order to get her point across, effectively positioning herself as morally superior to them, and suggesting the services they provide are 'dealt' by her. The reliance on a few sources in these articles suggests they have positioned themselves as available and reliable sources and experts for major news outlets in New Zealand. This would align with the time constraints and organisational pressures outlined by S. Abel in "All the News You Need to Know?" (2004), which are identified as key contributors to bias and selective framing. S. Abel argues that journalists typically agree the biggest constraint they face is time pressures, and specifically highlights the increased difficulty of trying to establish the correct people to speak to in an unfamiliar situation (pp. 188–189). Given the dominance of a few voices it seems plausible

that time pressures make contacting already known sources appealing. Abel also observes that “sources are key gatekeepers in the process of news production”, and adds that the selection of sources has “ideological implications” (p. 190), which is considered when discussing the possibility of news media taking an advertorial role later in this chapter.

The repetition of a few select sources, all of whom, with the exception of Catherine Healy from the NZPC, are managers or owners, also moves the ability to determine the direction of discourse about sex work away from current sex workers whose concerns may be different to those of owners. Furthermore, owners and managers of agencies may also speak to news organisations with a specific desire to advertise or elevate the standing of their own businesses. In correspondence with Seek.co.nz and Trademe Jobs, and from quotes given by Student Job Search, I have determined that none of these job-listing agencies allow job listings for sex workers: therefore, managers and owners wishing to recruit new sex workers must appeal to potential employees in other ways (Personal correspondence, 2016; Choi, 2008). Additionally, the PRA restricts the modes of advertising to clients that are available to the sex industry; the wording of section 11 in the Act specifically restricts commercial sexual services from being advertised in newspapers and on radio or television.²⁹ In the next section of this chapter I will further outline and provide examples of advertorial language and functions evident within these texts, as well as examining the reasons why owners and managers of agencies may choose to use media coverage as a supplementary form of advertising. Later in this chapter I will also examine the impacts and additional requirements for emotional labour that this advertorial function has upon the few current sex workers who are interviewed in these texts.

²⁹ The full wording of this section is:

“11 Restrictions on advertising commercial sexual services

(1) Advertisements for commercial sexual services may not be—

(a) broadcast on radio or television; or

(b) published in a newspaper or periodical, except in the classified advertisements section of the newspaper or periodical; or

(c) screened at a public cinema.” (Prostitution Reform Act 2003).

THE ADVERTORIAL FUNCTION OF MEDIA TEXTS: A FOCUS ON EARNINGS

From my analysis of these media texts it becomes clear that language and coverage that is close to advertorial in nature is common in news media discourses about agency and independent sex work in New Zealand. This is achieved in a few key ways. One is through the direct discussion of earnings, or potential earnings, for workers at agencies. The second is through favourable comparisons to shift-work or high-volume brothel work. The third is through using the agencies' own advertising terms, and positive descriptions of the workplaces and the kind of workers they attract (encouraging identification with potential staff). The other function of this kind of advertorial coverage is to increase the appeal and interest in the agencies for potential clients, although there are additional tropes at work to appeal to and hail clients.

The discussion of earnings or potential earnings is present in many of the texts analysed. In "High Fliers Who Turn to Escorting", Sarah, the owner and manager of The Bedroom (described in the article as "Wellington's newest brothel", providing further evidence of the advertorial language common in these texts) says workers keep 60% of the fee paid by clients. Later in the text the journalist describes the following scene:

"It's late on a Tuesday evening. Jessica sits in front of a mirror removing her makeup while finishing a glass of wine. Her best friend has just called to say the twins are in bed, asleep. She's looking forward to being with her children after school for the rest of the week without having to worry about money." (Dominion Post, 2012).

In this brief paragraph the author has constructed the worker as someone who has earned enough by Tuesday to not worry about money for herself or her family for the rest of the week. While the rest of the article only mentions rates of pay once (a comment paraphrases Catherine Healy as saying 'escorts' earn between \$60 and \$300 for an hour of work), this construction implies that sex workers in agencies make a comfortable living in a short space of time. In Hewitson's interview with Mary Brennan, Hewitson describes Brennan as "the highest paid dominatrix in the country", charging \$450 an hour, alongside a discussion in which Brennan talks about her work owning and managing Funhouse (2015). Again, the

implication here is that sex workers contracted through agencies such as Funhouse make substantial sums of money.

In some discussions of the earnings of sex workers employed with agencies, there is an emphasis from owners that workers have few costs and little outlay to begin working for them as independent contractors, further suggesting the earnings reported are representative. In “Sex Industry Doing It Tough” (Meadows, 2014), Brennan is again paraphrased saying that her staff made half of the hourly fee of \$320 – \$380, saying “the girls have no outgoings apart from tax and ACC³⁰” and “if you broke it down, actually the girls are probably getting 70%”. Brennan’s comments here also ignore the other outgoings associated with being an independently contracted sex worker: clothing, make up, grooming expenses (and the associated time this requires), maintaining a work phone, and in some cases paying for an accountant. Her comment disguises the effortful labour required to present oneself as a professional and successful sex worker: the clothing and grooming required in order to deliver the correct impression of heteronormative femininity, and the literal and emotional labour involved in performing beauty (Rivers-Moore, 2013, p. 154). The article also mentions that allegedly some of her clientele book for multiple hours, overnight, or “whisk a girl away to Europe for two weeks”, boosting their potential earnings. In the following paragraph, Eva, an independent worker, is paraphrased as saying that walk-in brothels charge \$160-\$220 per hour, of which the worker gets “about half”.

The ordering of the discussion within this text positions the two options, agencies and walk-in brothels, as to elevate agency work as being the most profitable for prospective employees. Brennan’s contention that her workers stand to be booked for multiple hours or even weeks at a time is not questioned, nor is her suggestion that workers have no outgoings aside from tax and ACC bills. Brennan’s claims about earning capacity are in direct opposition to comments earlier in the text from Healy. Healy notes: “the common complaint from every sex worker is that they’re not making enough money.” Managers and owners of agencies are

³⁰ ACC is the Accident Compensation Commission, a Government owned workers’ compensation body. Employees pay a percentage of their earnings to ACC in exchange for cover in the case of accident or injury either at work or outside of work.

permitted to make unquestioned claims about the earning potential of their workers: at no point in this article is any worker from Funhouse interviewed about their actual weekly or monthly earnings. Dunn, in “It’s Not Just Sex, it’s a Profession”, considers how sex work at brothels in Nevada is represented and contends that a focus on the “sensational, sexual” aspects of the work, as well as on specific sums of money often serves to obscure the more mundane aspects of the job (2012, p. 359). Within the context of coverage of New Zealand agency work, the sensationalism angle often appears to be fulfilled with a focus on earning potential.

In “School’s Cash Went on sex and High Living”, a text discussing the misappropriated funds spent by the executive officer of a Wellington college, Jennifer Souness, the owner of Bon Ton, is reported as saying that spending \$400 per week would not have made the man one of their “big spenders”, who allegedly spend up to \$2,500 a night. Again, the implication here is that Bon Ton’s clientele spend significant amounts of money and their workers, by extension, stand to earn a great deal (Dominion Post, 2011). Despite Souness being interviewed only briefly in this text, her comments in just a few sentences successfully present the idea that Bon Ton has so many clients who qualify as “big spenders” that the man in question was unremarkable, and that he would have needed to spend significantly more in order to be memorable. Souness’ efficient use of language implies to potential staff that clients spending up to \$2,500 a night are commonplace.

Two texts from *Salient*, the Victoria University of Wellington student magazine, also discuss the earnings of workers, again using the potential earning capacity of sex work as a method by which the acceptability of some workers is discursively produced. A worker from Brennan’s Funhouse, Ava, is interviewed and says that many of her colleagues are tertiary students, who undertake sex work in order to avoid taking on student loan debt (Tren Grove, 2014). In “The Working Girls Class”, published in 2015, The Bedroom is mentioned again, with the comment that a worker can expect to earn “around \$240, not including tips” for an hour’s work. The publication of these comments in student media is also noteworthy because of the demographic of the workers at Funhouse and The Bedroom. As of February 2016, nine of the eleven workers at The Bedroom were listed as being aged between 20 and 27, while all but three of Funhouse’s sixteen sex workers were listed as being between the ages of 19 and 23.

Even taking into account the possibility that some of the listed ages are not wholly accurate for reasons of privacy or marketing, it suggests the group that these agencies primarily recruit from is women in their early twenties seeking part-time work, making universities a prudent place to target this advertorial discourse. Brennan and her staff recur again and again in this trope of coverage: in “Sex, Conditions Safer but Prostitute Stigma Remains”, one of her staff is introduced as “a 22 year old university student...she earns up to \$1500 a day working in the industry” (Cooke, 2012). An effect of Brennan’s repeated appearances in student media publications is that she is provided with coverage in a medium widely read by people who are in the age demographic from which she primarily recruits.

The emphasis on both the hourly earnings and the overall earning capacity of workers functions discursively to position agencies as appealing places to work, in the absence of other venues in which to advertise for staff, with the restrictions from major job listing sites outlined earlier. Notably, while the owners and managers of The Bedroom, Bon Ton, and Funhouse all emphasise the hourly earnings of their workers and allude to the possibility of multiple-hour bookings, and clients willing to spend thousands of dollars, or to fly workers overseas, there is minimal evidence in any of the analysed texts of them outlining how many hours’ work per week a worker could reasonably expect. The framing of earning potential is constructed to appeal to a sense of possibility, drawing on the implied glamour of this area of sex work. The sole exception to this absence of specific client numbers is a brief comment from Brennan in “Sex Industry Doing it Tough”, where she says her workers would see one to two clients a day, but this is followed by her comment about clients booking for multiple hours (Meadows, 2014).

In “The Worst Part is the Screwing”, Brewis and Linstead discuss commentary from a sex worker who commented that one of the primary sources of stress for them was feeling they were never ‘off duty’, always needing to be ready to attend an appointment when one was available (2000a, p. 92). The potential stress of inconsistent income or feeling the need to be constantly available is also not discussed within these texts. The descriptions of the money earned presume that the work carried out begins and ends with contact with a client; there is no acknowledgement of the work implicit in being on call and unable to have truly free time.

This implication of glamour and luxury is also achieved through descriptive means in the media texts analysed for this chapter. While direct mentions of earnings are one obvious way in which managers and owners can elevate the brands of their own businesses, the phrases and descriptions used to speak about the workplaces also function to create an impression of luxury and wealth. This is in keeping with the work of Hochschild, who identified the ways in which the emotional labour of creating an aura of success and ease can be assisted through physical surroundings that support the mood or attitude which is desired (*The Managed Heart*, 1979/2012, pp. 51–52). The physical environment within sex industry premises is a key prop to assist workers to produce the correct emotional response in clients, and to create a sense of value and exclusivity in the service provided.

The dichotomous representations of the sex industry as either being populated with glamorous “high class call girls” or sensationalised as an inherently dangerous industry (or both) is well documented in McLaughlin’s “Discourses of Prostitution/Discourses of Sexuality” (1991). McLaughlin demonstrates that the representations of sex workers often have an element of a saviour narrative in them: the sex worker in need of rescue. I identify how this saviour discourse, in a different form, frequently occurs in discussions of agencies in New Zealand, taking the form of emphasising the cleanliness of the premises as ‘saving’ workers from other employers or workplaces.

Examples of how the physical environment of sex industry workplaces is emphasised occur in some texts that interview agency owners. In coverage dealing with Funhouse, Brennan is seen showing a journalist around her premises and commenting on how they provide clean linen, clean towels, and “immaculate” bathrooms (Cooke, 2012), and in a *Seven Sharp* feature she comments on the ironed pillowcases in their bedrooms, and a journalist is heard to comment the room looks like an expensive hotel (TVNZ, 2015). Additionally, in “High-fliers who Turn to Escorting”, The Bedroom is described as “Wellington’s newest escort agency” and the journalist opens the text with a description of the workplace:

“Late afternoon sunshine streams into The Bedroom. The furniture looks antique, beautiful artworks line the walls and French music plays quietly. A silk dressing gown

hangs from a stand. From luxurious bed linen to ornate mirrors and gilded tissue boxes, the attention to detail is exquisite.” (Dominion Post, 2012).

Later in the same text, Sarah, the owner and manager of The Bedroom is interviewed, and she discusses the intent behind much of the décor in the agency:

“Sarah says she opened The Bedroom because she wanted to offer men the opportunity to be intimate with a lovely woman in an upmarket boudoir setting.

"Men don't want to be reminded they are paying for an escort. I wanted a place that wouldn't feel like a brothel or hotel room but would feel more like their mistress's bedroom.”” (Dominion Post, 2012).

This language and phrasing furthers the image of agencies as being both expensive and luxurious: the repeated emphasis by Brennan, in particular, in media coverage dealing with her agency on the cleanliness suggests she is making a favourable comparison between her agency and other workplaces. Her comments function to construct Funhouse as both different and better than other sex industry workplaces in New Zealand, while using the cleanliness of the workplace as a proxy for the ‘cleanliness’ of the work and workers.

CLEANLINESS AS CODED LANGUAGE: CLASS, EXCLUSIVITY, AND SEX WORK

The commentary within news media texts about the workplaces looking like an expensive hotel or a bedroom also serves to remove them from associations as workplaces. The physical environment and the emphasis placed on it is a further attempt to coax the correct emotional response from clients, and to obscure the fact that the service being provided by the sex workers is effortful and skilled work. This echoes Bernstein’s argument in *Temporarily Yours* that one of the ways in which higher priced sex work services are given a sense of greater monetary value is through effort by the worker to establish a sense of authenticity, and by association, of exclusivity (2007, p. 103). The emphasis on cleanliness and the rooms appearing untouched and fresh for each client again is a discursive linkage between the environment and the workers that prioritises the impression of exclusivity.

Scoular, in “The “Subject” of Prostitution”, writes that an issue with many representations of sex workers is, in the process of attempting to represent the worker as an acceptable subject, theorists may go to significant lengths to emphasise the normative aspects of their lives (2004). The consequence of this is to inadvertently reinforce normative ideas about sexuality and desire. Even within a discourse about sex work that aims to normalise it and make it more acceptable, there is still a strong presumption that a form of sex work which results in workers seeing fewer clients or having less actual sexual contact with them is preferable. Disguising the nature and frequency of the work is critical to producing the acceptability of agency and independent sex workers, by attempting to make their work invisible as work.

In *Temporarily Yours*, Bernstein writes about the ways in which some indoor sex workers talk about their work in order to emphasise their class position and differences between their work and other forms of sex work (mostly street sex work) (2007). She specifically notes that the petite bourgeoisie experience of sex work is heavily mediated by producing it as ‘fun’, reflecting a movement of class identity as bourgeoisie moving from one of work ethic and work as a virtuous undertaking, to one in which petite bourgeoisie identity can be held through having the privilege to work in an enjoyable manner (pp. 82–86). She further argues that one of the mechanisms by which this class distinction is made by some workers is through attempting to establish themselves as ‘professionals’, and to work in a way that eventually allows them to work with no or minimal management (pp. 86–88). The establishment of class distinctions within news media discourse about agency workers is also largely premised on making comparisons between agency sex workers and brothel or street sex workers, as a means of elevating the agency workers as inherently more valuable.

In “The Working Girls Class” as it was originally published in the print edition of *Salient*, Bones wrote:

“In most high-end agencies, women who have previously worked as escorts in “low class” establishments or on the street will be turned away. The aim in doing this is to ensure the safety of everyone involved by further removing the risk of STI.”

The article also comments (in text that was retained after the article was edited on August 17th, 2015):³¹

“Agencies also tend to turn away women who are virgins, and women who confess to having a large amount of unsafe sex. Of course, this is not the same for all agencies; lower-class agencies tend to accept anyone who wants to become a sex worker.”

In these two statements the author simultaneously implies that workers who have undertaken street sex work or high-volume work are more likely to be infected with an STI (sexually transmitted infection), and that agencies are more selective than high-volume workplaces. The author also uncritically refers to high-volume workplaces as ‘low class’ after the initial use of quotes, without attributing this descriptor to any of the interviewees in the text. Through the phrase “lower-class agencies tend to accept anyone” the author makes a clear value judgement about acceptable modes of being a sex worker. Working for an agency, it is suggested, puts a worker in a position of having been selected, and therefore less likely to have an STI. This also positions a worker’s STI status as a moral judgement about their character and value, further stigmatizing STI infection. This is reflective of Hallgrimsdottir et al’s work which identifies sex workers as frequently being portrayed as a vector of literal or moral contagion (2006, pp. 271–272), although in this case there is evidence that the moral and literal senses are collapsed together, with each standing in for the other in discourse.

While “The Working Girls Class” is the most obvious example within the analysed texts of attempting to align low-volume work and seeing fewer clients with acceptability and ‘cleanliness’ (undoubtedly linked to notions of female purity and value) this theme occurs throughout coverage of agency and independent workers. In “Behind the Red Lights of New Zealand’s Brothels” the owner of Bon Ton comments that one of the things that sets them apart from other brothels is that all clients must book an appointment, unlike brothels where

³¹ The article as originally published attracted some criticism: I should state that I was among the people who emailed the editor to complain about the coverage, and it was subsequently edited. Through personal correspondence I am aware of other complaints laid about the piece. In discussing “The Working Girls Class” I will note whether the passages I am referring to occurred in the original or edited version: the editing removed two short passages from the text.

“anyone can just walk in off the streets”. Furthermore, a comment is attributed to her that clients used to “lower-end brothels” are more likely to make “specific, coarse demands” (McAllen, 2015). Here the owner both situates her business as one that is selective both about who they hire and about what clients they allow: “lower-end” brothels are constructed as focusing exclusively on sex, whereas low-volume and higher priced sex industry workplaces frequently emphasise the emotional and mental ‘connection’ that workers construct with clients to differentiate themselves.

LOW-VOLUME WORK AND OBSCURED EMOTIONAL LABOUR

In “Sex Industry Doing It Tough”, Brennan is quoted as saying her workers would see only one or two clients per day, again focusing on the low volume of the work, albeit in a less explicit way than “The Working Girls Class”. She adds that she only hires 5% of the people who apply to work for her, saying potential workers must be “well educated, personable and genuinely keen to work” (Meadows, 2014). Brennan’s comments here appear to be reiterating the construction of acceptability evident throughout discourse about agency and independent workers, mentioning both the exceptionalism of her workers (a focus on hiring only a small percentage of those who apply) and the exclusivity of their services (seeing only one to two clients per day), in what Scoular describes as a process of normalising the sexualities and desires of sex workers (2004). Her choice of words when describing a successful applicant is also revealing: as with the Bon Ton owner, she does not focus specifically on appearance or actual sexual contact as a focus for workers, instead referring to mental and emotional labour in the form of workers appearing “genuinely keen to work”.

Maher et al note that indoor sex workers in a regulated environment (their research related to workers in Australia) repeatedly emphasised that the sex they had at work was unrelated to their personal sexual desires and wants (2012.) They additionally noted that within regulatory spaces, an excessive focus on intimacy and heterosexual sex serves to diminish the ability to discuss working rights and conditions. McRobbie in *The Aftermath of Feminism* discusses how, in a neoliberal framework, women’s earning potential and success is presented as though it is based on a meritocracy: pushing the ideal of individual exceptionalism, rather than considering the structural inequalities that feminism sought to

change (2009, p. 16). She also notes that “the girl who has benefited from the equal opportunities now available to her, can be mobilised as the embodiment of the values of the new meritocracy... Now days the young woman’s success seems to promise economic prosperity on the basis of her enthusiasm for work...” (pp. 57-58). This is exemplified in the presentation of agency sex workers as somehow unique among sex workers and fundamentally different to those engaged in other modes of work, in tandem with the focus on their earning potential. This repeated focus on workers being “keen to work”, taking pleasure in their work, enjoying their work, or getting pleasure from work sex is also consistent throughout the news media coverage of agency workers. Brennan’s comments above are one example; in an interview with Noelle McCarthy on *Radio New Zealand* Brennan says, while discussing the people she employs, that they all work for her because it is a choice they have made, and that they have other choices as well. She says, in part, that her staff:

“really, really enjoy it. And it’s not obviously just about the sex but they all enjoy sex. If someone comes to me and says ‘I’m desperate for money. I don’t particularly want to do this, but I really need some money to get me out of a financial bind’ I will try and talk that person out of being a sex worker because they will regret it. If you’re going to be a sex worker it should be something that you actually want to do. And that’s one of the big differences with Funhouse....” (McCarthy, 2015).

In this statement Brennan presents her business in a way that seems intended to appeal to potential clients, as well as making enjoyment of the work a key component of being an acceptable sex worker in her eyes. Her statement about her workers “all enjoying sex” also appears to ask that not only do they perform an appropriate impression of enjoyment, a form of emotional labour, but that they genuinely inhabit the enjoyment. Presenting the work in this way does not allow for any acknowledgement that giving an appearance of enjoyment is a specific skillset which requires effortful work; instead, it is presumed to be, and presented as, an implicit part of a worker’s personality. In doing this, Brennan raises the appeal of her own business to clients or potential clients, by implying that if they make an appointment with one of her workers, the worker engaged in the appointment will be genuinely enjoying the encounter, instead of discreetly managing it using well-developed and carefully deployed emotional labour and interpersonal skills.

Brennan's comments effectively reduce the skill needed to be a successful sex worker to simply enjoying sex. In other areas of the interview with McCarthy she defends the rights of sex workers to be respected as doing real work, but commentary like this undermines the skillsets required, in favour of an understanding that being a 'good' sex worker is an inherent quality, not the continued and deliberate development of a set of skills. This echoes Dunn's comments that the sensational and sexualised elements of sex work are frequently emphasised over other skills needed to do the job within media coverage – in this case the sexualised aspect is the presumed genuine enjoyment of the worker (2012). As with the comments about the environment in which workers carry out their jobs revealing the intention to make the agencies look as little like a 'typical brothel' as possible (or like a stereotype of a brothel – Bernstein notes that trappings associated with street sex work tend to be used as visual shorthand for sex work regardless of where the work is carried out (2007, p. 30)), this is yet another way in which the discourse about agency-based sex workers functions to minimise the actual labour they carry out. The skill of presenting an apparently genuine enjoyment of the sex they have at work is an example of what Hochschild calls "deep acting", and demonstrates a high degree of skill and commitment to professionally carrying out the job (1979/2012, pp. 33-48). Appearing to enjoy sex is part of the job, but doing so convincingly and with the appearance of effortlessness is in fact what Brennan is valuing, although to say so would undermine the preservation of fantasy and choice critical to maintaining her agency's brand.

Furthermore, by emphasising the ability of her workers to give an impression of genuine enjoyment and engagement with their clients, and emphasising that her staff see only a few clients per day or per week, Brennan continues the linkage between low volume work and 'choice' by implying both that her workers are intimately and authentically engaged with each client and that this creates a better situation for both the worker and the client, without regard for the effort and energy which this emotional labour requires the worker to expend. Brennan states in her interview with McCarthy that she expects clients paying "top dollar" to receive a "top dollar service" which, based on her commentary, implies an experience in which the worker or workers they book give the impression of genuine enjoyment in the experience. To borrow from the phrasing of Hochschild (1979/2012) the way in which the work is carried out becomes an inherent part of the work.

This distinction between high-volume work (characterised as occurring primarily within parlours) and low-volume work, where Brennan situates her own agency, is prevalent in much of the news media coverage featuring Brennan as an expert or authority on the sex industry. In speaking about her own agency, and by implication comparing it to alternative working situations within New Zealand (in response to a comment from McCarthy that her agency, Funhouse, is in the minority in the industry), Brennan says:

“Funhouse, due to the fact that’s how I’ve always operated even before decriminalisation... New Zealand is leading the world in a wonderful working model of decriminalisation, making it more possible for more sex workers to be able to work in much less exploitative situations.”

Brennan’s commentary here functions in two ways: first, it is complimentary of the rights that sex workers are entitled to under decriminalisation, and, in the first part of the statement, suggests she offered workers these rights even before she was required to by law.

In the above quote, Brennan implies that the model that she operates is “less exploitative” (although, crucially, she does not comment that the model she champions is free from exploitation, but does not expand on this point.) She also emphasises later in the interview that workers are free to “pick and choose” how they work, and “do one booking a night”. These comments in particular are reminiscent of Grant’s observation that: “[s]ex workers, more than any other, are expected to justify their labor as a choice, as if the choice to engage in a form of labor is what makes that labor legitimate” (2014, pp. 93–94).

In another interview, “Sex, Conditions Safer but Prostitute Stigma Remains”, the journalist writes:

“Ms Brennan is proud of how she runs her brothel, but says other brothel managers aren't so nice.

"They're like mushrooms, they're kept in the dark and fed bullshit. They're told 'You'll get more money with us and more work with us than you will anywhere else. If you leave us, you're literally out on the street'." (Cooke, 2012).

In this commentary, Brennan situates the conditions that she provides as superior to other brothel managers. Throughout her comments three key points are evident: first, that she is more ethical or otherwise better than other brothel managers because of the way she treats her staff; second, that her staff see a minimal number of clients; and third, that her staff derive authentic pleasure from their work. I contend that these three arguments cannot be disentangled from one another in the discourse that Brennan helps to shape and create. Brennan's argument hinges largely on her repeated comment that workers in her agency only see a minimal number of clients, and she repeatedly compares the working conditions in her agency to those in parlours where workers may see many more clients a day. She (and the manager of Bon Ton in "Behind the Red Lights of New Zealand's Brothels") makes the argument that having workers (or 'girls' in their preferred parlance) sitting in a lounge where clients can meet them before booking is degrading – the Bon Ton owner describes the lounge set-up as a "goldfish bowl", saying they do not operate like a "zoo". Additionally, Brennan presents an ultimatum delivered to parlour workers, that they will be "out on the street" in such a way as to allude to street work as being even less desirable than brothel work. As explained within Chapter Four, there are reasons why some workers may select street sex work over brothel work, but Brennan's construction leaves no room for nuance or negotiation of working preferences. The implication here is that the most dignified and acceptable way in which to carry out sex work is to see as few clients as possible, and to disguise the nature of the encounter as a financial and professional transaction.

Brennan and Souness' contention about their workers is that they hold an implicit understanding of and connection to their clients, which translates to a greater monetary value being placed on their services: the attempt at rendering sexualities and desires among sex workers as normalised and intelligible described by Scoular (2004). Their representation of sex work is that the impression of a connection which skilled workers create with their clients is a limited commodity that relies on their workers seeing only a few clients, with the way they speak about high-volume workers implying that the service they provide is manifestly

different. It is worth noting that the distinction between high- and low-volume made here is solely about how many clients are seen, not the time spent with them – Brennan in particular comments extensively about her workers seeing individual clients for extended periods of time.

However, in the few interviews conducted with current workers at agencies and parlours, workers in each arrangement express very similar attitudes both to their relations with clients and in their reasons for working. Ava in “On the Job” (working at Brennan’s agency) and Renee in “Behind the Red Lights of New Zealand’s Brothels” express that their work is a means to provide for their children. Dorothy (also working for Brennan) in “Sex, Conditions Safer, but Prostitute Stigma Remains” and Pippa (working at the Pelican Club, a brothel discussed in “Behind the Red Lights of New Zealand’s Brothels”) both mention feeling anxious before their first job, and both discuss managing clients’ expectations and relationships. It is notable therefore that the apparent distinction between the styles of work manifests primarily through the comments from owners and managers, and even more specifically from the owners and managers of self-styled ‘upmarket’ or ‘high end’ agencies who presumably feel a need to justify in the advertorial opportunity available to them the reason for the difference in the prices they charge. The differences between the styles of work in terms of the particular skills, stresses, and relationships with their jobs and with clients all but vanish when sex workers themselves are permitted to speak about their own attitudes and experiences. The modes of working are mostly represented by owner as being vastly different, but are discussed in very similar ways by active workers.

While Brennan and Souness describe their workers as ‘intelligent’ or ‘educated’, suggesting an effortless connection with clients, the manager of Pelican Club is more direct in their approach to creating opportunities for the impression of emotional or mental engagement between clients and workers. In “Behind the Red Lights of New Zealand’s Brothels” the managers explicitly acknowledge that the personal and experiential overlap between a worker in their twenties and a client who might be many decades older may be limited, and explain they run through the top news items from local newspapers every day to provide talking points for workers. It is clear from this example, which generates obvious surprise from the journalist covering the story, that high-volume establishments such as Pelican Club also

appreciate the role that emotional labour plays in creating a positive experience for the client. Additionally, they take a more pragmatic approach to it than agencies such as Brennan's and Souness' which attempt to give the impression that such engagement occurs organically and authentically.

Within the analysed texts Brennan emphasises the idea that the emotional connection which her workers create with clients is authentic, rather than deliberately manufactured. She emphasises that clients do not meet the workers before booking them, and that she is selective in which applicants she accepts, repeatedly saying she accepts only a small number of those who express interest in working for her. The Bon Ton manager quoted in "Behind the Red Lights of New Zealand's Brothels" discusses being selective with which clients are allowed, saying that at 'lower-end' brothels "anyone can walk in off the streets". The effect of the two comments is to give the impression to clients, or potential clients, both that the workers at Bon Ton and Funhouse are carefully vetted, and also that the workers will only see carefully selected clients – that being permitted to book (and having the disposable income to do so) places them in rarefied company, and that they are insulated from having to 'share' sex workers with clients who do not have the luxury of being able to afford the rates.

As outlined earlier, the discourse produced relies on the contention that working conditions at more expensive agencies are better, in part because of the lower number of clients workers see, as well as the inextricably linked expectation that seeing fewer clients makes the work more pleasurable for workers. Or that, equally troublesome, only workers who want to and can enjoy their work, or can produce an adequate performance of authentic pleasure, deserve to work under conditions that would see them being paid more per client and seeing fewer clients. Due to owners being given more precedence and credence in news media texts than workers, the question of what constitutes desirable or good working conditions is defined exclusively by them. There is no questioning of a difference between what managers and workers view as 'good' conditions.

Additionally, the phrasing and language used by managers about clients who book the workers at these agencies (the Bon Ton manager mentions she can tell which "coarse" clients usually visit high-volume establishments) carries with it an implication that workers' value is

intrinsically linked to how many clients and what kind of clients they see. This is expressed most clearly in the original version of “The Working Girls Class” (Bones, 2015) in which the journalist claimed ‘high-end agencies’ refused women who had worked in ‘low class’ establishments to reduce the risk of their having STIs.

While, as previously mentioned, the sentences in question were removed following feedback, they do encapsulate the constructs of female sexual purity that lie beneath the surface of the conflation of low-volume work and authentic pleasure which occurs in much coverage of agency and independent workers. The concern is not wholly or even mostly for the working preferences of the sex workers; it is largely based on a phobia of sex workers as a vector of disease. The message being put forth in these discourses is clear: the correct way to be a sex worker is to be a sex worker who limits the amount of sex they have, both at work and outside of work.

REPRODUCING NORMATIVITY AND WHO IS GRANTED ACCEPTABILITY.

The repeated emphasis in media coverage of agency and independent workers on their personal sex lives and behaviours as normative, monogamous, or non-existent is further evidence of this desire to produce ‘acceptable’ sex workers as those who adhere to as many norms as possible (Scoular, 2004). In “Michele Hewitson Interview: Mary Brennan” the author describes Brennan’s monogamous marriage, and mentions that she does not engage in BDSM in her private life, and this is also mentioned in TVNZ’s “Meet the Pro Dominatrix” (2015). In “High-fliers Who Turn to Escorting” (2012), one worker, Savannah, explains that she found maintaining a relationship while working in the sex industry too difficult so has chosen to remain single, and in “Sex, Conditions Safer but Prostitute Stigma Remains”, another worker, Dorothy, discusses telling her parents about her work, shortly after being described by the journalist as “studying towards her second degree”, and being “vivacious, confident and articulate”. The intention here is to construct these workers as adhering to normative behaviours outside of their transgression from the norm by deciding to undertake sex work. It serves to reduce their otherness, reiterating that their engaging in sex work is their sole deviation. The emphasis on the workers’ adherence to firmly middle-class modes of

behaviour is also a method by which their value is implied, arguably beginning to produce a 'normalised' mode of sex work as well.

Furthermore, the implication in comments from Brennan and Souness, and from the news media coverage of these more expensive low-volume agencies, is that workers who seek to be employed (or contracted) by them are making a more informed choice. An analysis of the websites of Funhouse, Bon Ton, and The Bedroom (the agencies who feature most prominently in coverage of low-volume work) indicates that their staff have a very specific demographic make-up, based primarily around an archetype constructed as both most desirable and most marketable. As of February 2016, by inspecting the descriptions of workers listed on each website, the average age bracket of workers at all three agencies was 20-30. Workers listed as being between a size 4 and 10, with the most commonly listed size at Funhouse and Bon Ton being size 8, and at The Bedroom size 7 (Funhouse, 2016; Bonton, 2016; The Bedroom, 2016). At each agency most workers were white – the proportion of workers described as being white, NZ European, or in other terms that heavily implied their whiteness (or their ability to be marketed as white³²) ranged from 82% to 94%. All the workers at these three agencies at this time were cisgender. Given this evidence, the suggestion these agencies represent an 'informed choice' is at best optimistic and at worst actively racist, classist, ageist, sizeist and cissexist.

From this breakdown it is clear what Brennan's repeated comments about only accepting a small proportion of applicants means in practice. Only a small proportion of people interested in working in the sex industry fit into this model of being young, white, slim, cisgender and (from the emphasis on agency workers being 'intelligent and well educated') of a middle- or upper-class background. By emphasising their working conditions and the perceived quality of the service their workers provide, the agency owners implicitly tie belonging to these groups to the 'quality' of their workers and their monetary value. McRobbie, in *The Aftermath of Feminism*, identifies the uninterrogated valuing of white bodies in popular culture sexual entertainment, and the mechanisms by which feminist or anti-racist critique is

³² Brooks discusses the ability of "white passing" exotic dancers to access higher paying clubs or market themselves more diversely if they are light skinned in *Unequal Desires* (2010, pp. 60, 79, 90).

“disarticulated” through situating the consumers of these entertainments as “informed, discerning” and able to make their own decisions about what they consume (2009, p. 43). Although speaking about popular culture entertainment, not the sex industry specifically, McRobbie’s observation about this entertainment seems to identify one of the issues with the very limited group able to access workplaces like these agencies: “contemporary popular culture re-instates racial hierarchies within the field of femininity by invoking, across the visual field, a norm of nostalgic whiteness” (2009, p. 43). The largely homogenous make-up of their staff is minimally remarked on in texts featuring these agencies as being unusual or deliberate. The demographic split was only directly addressed in one of the texts I analysed: in Brennan’s interview with McCarthy, McCarthy discusses Brennan’s autobiography and says Brennan mentions writing rejection letters to girls who do not meet her standards to be employed at Funhouse because they “don’t look the part”, then adds “your girls are a particular size as well aren’t they? They fit a media ideal, size 6-8.” Brennan does not respond directly to this question, and instead says she suggests the applicants seek employment at other brothels, while maintaining that much of her definition of a ‘Funhouse girl’ is to do with their ‘presence’: a piece of coded language that encapsulates their belonging to already privileged groups.

A recurring motif in articles about agency and independent sex work, as demonstrated, is the presumption that these modes of work are preferable for sex workers. Additionally, this is often delivered with the suggestion that the solution to poor working conditions is to move to independent work, or agencies, a false production of ‘choice’ that is not in fact available to many workers (as seen in Chapter Four, with the suggestion that street sex workers should simply work in brothels). Dorothy, a sex worker quoted in “Sex, Conditions Safer but Prostitute Stigma Remains”, moved from a high-volume brothel to Funhouse, while in “Behind the Red Lights of New Zealand’s Brothels” an independent worker is quoted and paraphrased, discussing working both in parlours and as an independent worker.

“Jacky is surprised private escorts don't already outnumber brothel workers.

She had previously worked in brothels Femme Fatale and the famed Flora's, an Auckland red-light institution which closed in 2008...

"The only problem with working privately is you have to organise your own advertising, you have to be reasonably business-minded and strict on your hours. You have to provide your own premises, but it's not hard to hire an apartment. It's much more beneficial to work privately – the parlours don't take half your income."" (McAllen, 2015).

While in this quote Jacky is trying to establish the benefits of working independently she also succinctly points out the barriers to working in this way for many sex workers. The responsibilities, including advertising, establishing and maintaining regular hours, are greater, and despite her statement that "it's not hard to hire an apartment", doing so would be unattainable for workers who do not have the money to pay the bond required to rent a work space, or a living situation that would allow them to host clients: a shared house, security concerns, living with family.

The argument evident through much of the discourse about agency and independent work that sex workers who desire better working conditions and pay should move to being independent workers or working for agencies, fails to acknowledge or address the limitations of who is able to be contracted by these agencies, and who has the means to work independently. This construction states, effectively, that only some workers deserve good working conditions and labour protections. The argument being made therefore becomes that workers who do not fit into all or most of the categories of white, young, slim, cisgender, an NZ citizen or permanent resident, and middle or upper class, are not deserving of the same working conditions as those who are. The inherent intersecting axis of oppression that play out within the sex industry go unexamined in the fervour to utilise the sex industry as a soft news story or trend piece on the part of the news media, and as an opportunity to gain advertorial style coverage on the part of agency owners and managers, and, to a lesser extent, independent workers.

Many texts analysed for this chapter repeatedly suggest that the number of sex workers who are actively engaged in tertiary education, or who also maintain another career while undertaking sex work, has increased since decriminalisation. This emphasis is strongly linked to the reiteration that workers at particular agencies enjoy their work, or are making a

deliberate and informed financial decision to obtain the trappings of middle class commodity driven success. This is seen in “The Working Girls Class” (Bones, 2015), “High-fliers Who Turn to Escorting” (Dominion Post, 2012), “Sex, Conditions Safer, but Prostitute Stigma Remains” (Cooke, 2012), “On the Job” (Tren Grove, 2014), and “Mary Brennan: Domination and Submission” (McCarthy, 2015). I argue that this coverage functions to create a perception that the money earned in sex work is due to workers’ enjoyment of work, further dismantling the understanding of sex work as a legitimate form of effortful and skilled labour. This discursive linkage functions by constructing a situation in which the most acceptable way to engage in sex work is to not only fit into already privileged categories, but also appear to be adhering to a simplistic understanding of consent and sex-positivity, as outlined by Ray (2012), which fails to comprehend the nuanced ways in which consent can be given and negotiated without the requirement for authentic pleasure as part of the agreement.

In coverage of agency workers, where the specific agency that a worker is employed at is named, I argue that the requirement to speak about their experiences and clients in a manner intended to attract or retain a clientele for the agency, although frequently not in a way that is beneficial to them as individuals, constitutes an additional form of emotional labour. Brewis and Linstead address this in “The worst part is the screwing”, in which they discuss the skill required in delineating boundaries between public (or work) and private personas for sex workers, and in keeping this work hidden or private from clients (2000a, pp. 89–90).

Furthermore, the repeated emphasis on the money earned by sex workers is another example of discourse that attempts to justify sex work as acceptable only in some circumstances. It demonstrates a desire to situate forms of sex work viewed as well paid as inherently more acceptable, with the associated implication that doing sex work for “too little” money is still a negative or morally questionable decision. The job has been constructed as a negative choice whose moral shortfalls can only be mitigated by significant financial gain. This is similar to attitudes reported by Rivers-Moore, who reports that in the Costa Rican sex industry there was an opinion held by some workers (typically by workers who conducted longer bookings, seeing fewer overall clients) that there was a significant moral gap between what they did and the “quick exchange of sex for money” (2013, pp. 161–162).

The repeated assertion that the face of the sex industry has changed, with regard to what kind of people participate in it, since decriminalisation is not supported by research into the make-up of the industry within New Zealand. Research conducted by Abel, Fitzgerald and Brunton in “The Impact of the Prostitution Reform Act on the Health and Safety Practices of Sex Workers” (2007) contains demographic information about the number of sex workers actively working in New Zealand at various points between 1999 and 2006/2007. They conclude that the total number of workers in New Zealand post-decriminalisation has either stayed the same or slightly decreased, with a small shift in workers opting for private work (independent work) from managed work (pp. 28–40). The kind of changes that some agency owners (Sarah, manager of The Bedroom, is notable for the kind of comment being discussed here), claim have occurred since decriminalisation are not present in this research. If there had indeed been an influx of workers who were in tertiary education, or undertaking sex work in addition to a second job, then it could reasonably be expected that there would have been an increase in the total number of workers, even if small.

As previously demonstrated, the discourse about agency and independent sex workers in news media serves a partially advertorial function, particularly because the primary experts identified and interviewed by journalists are the owners and managers of agencies who have a vested interest in promoting their business, above any desire to alter the working conditions in the sex industry. Additionally, owners are usually interviewed and quoted with a consistent name, or at the least an association with their workplace, while current sex workers are more usually quoted or interviewed under pseudonyms, presumably for reasons of privacy, and do not have the same allegiance to a specific agency. They therefore stand to gain less personally from an advertorial stance. The sex workers are not identifiable to potential clients, and cannot gain financially from the recruitment of new workers, while owners and managers can.

It seems possible or even probable that the alleged increase in tertiary educated or studying workers from a middle-class background, as promoted by agency owners, is in fact either an advertorial response to the ability to utilise media coverage more gainfully post-decriminalisation, a response to the freedom to discuss sex work openly, without fear of legal reprisal post-decriminalisation, or a combination of the two. The new freedom to discuss sex work and its specifics, often in an attempt to lessen the stigma about it, is one possible and

largely noble possibility for this trend in the coverage. It is possible there is also a trend by agency owners to utilise media coverage as a form of free advertising, particularly in the absence of easy mediums through which to advertise for more workers, and the limited advertising mediums for clients. In the context of the research by Abel et al, it seems unlikely that there has been a sudden surge in workers belonging to these demographics; rather it is possible that under decriminalisation they are more able to speak freely, and assist with creating the discourse about sex work, providing a counterpoint to existing stereotypes.

Embedded in this trend, though, is the additional emotional labour required of workers who speak to media outlets about their work, aware that their comments will be seen both as a representation of sex workers generally, and of their agency specifically. Agency workers, to a greater degree than owners and managers, are required to balance a delicate tightrope of discussing their work in such a way that it can be understood both as work, and therefore worthy of respect as a form of labour, and also as a pleasurable activity so that any clients or potential clients reading the text are not dissuaded from using their services. The repeated linkage of workers to particular agencies, even when they assume names different to their working names, means any comments they make are likely to be linked to them as an employee, if not as an individual. I contend that this constitutes an additional form of emotional labour: both the performance of enjoyment of sex work for the benefit of a journalist (even taking into account the enjoyment that some sex workers genuinely derive from some of their work, there is an element of emotion work required in presenting a performance of this enjoyment for the benefit of a third, not financially beneficial, party) and the continuation of the emotion work required in face to face interactions with clients in glossing over any labour issues present in the sex industry. In *Playing the Whore*, Grant discussed the falsehood of expecting primarily advertorial coverage of sex work and workers to serve as an accurate portrayal, while accepting it is the form of information most available to the general population:

“...this media is meant for customers. It would be a mistake to read such advertisements and other marketing as complete representations of sex workers. They are not meant to convey life off the clock.” (2014, p. 21).

The information presented by workers, owners, and managers, who are aware it is likely to be seen by current and potential clients is necessarily edited and censored for their perusal, suggests Grant.

In *The Managed Heart* (1979/2012) Hochschild discusses customer-facing roles thus: “[t]he emotional style of offering the service is part of the service itself...Seeming to “love the job” becomes part of the job; and actually trying to love it, and to enjoy the customers, helps the worker in this effort” (p. 5). I wish to be clear that in critiquing this continuation of the emotional labour required to interact in a way that gives an impression of authentic pleasure with clients, my argument is not that the workers in question are being disingenuous or false; rather that their comments must be seen as both an additional, uncompensated form of emotional labour, and that such comments must be considered contextually. It becomes difficult to disentangle workers’ authentic and sincere thoughts on their job when the context in which they are speaking is as a representative of their employer (and often in a precarious employment situation: most sex workers with agencies are independent contractors, with no notice period or guarantee of continued work if they make a comment which their employer disputes or disagrees with.)

Hochschild also comments on this situation in *The Managed Heart*: she is speaking specifically about flight attendants, but her comments can equally be applied to agency-based sex workers. She comments that workers, in their interactions with clients, are instructed to both sell themselves as a product and keep in mind their actions as reflective of the whole company: an analogue can be seen here with agency based workers who are discursively produced by managers as being both ‘self-employed’ and having minimal costs aside from their own tax, produced as being able to make their own decisions about their work, but also as being reflective of the company as a whole (pp. 107, 109). Brennan’s comments about the “Funhouse girl” are an example of this. The duality here is that workers are expected to take responsibility for their own work and business, but are also restricted by being expected to ‘toe the company line’.

Hochschild further comments on this, adding that the work of cultivating and presenting an ‘appropriate’ emotional state is part of a form of gift exchange. In this commentary she notes

that the context and expected audience must be considered when emotion work is being performed (pp. 17–18). Within the context of news media texts analysed here, the expected audience and the ideal outcomes would be for the discourses to be consumed by clients and potential clients, as well as a possible outcome being to change a public perception of who is a sex worker, and what sex work entails. It is therefore not unreasonable for workers to carry out the kind of deep acting Hochschild describes as a protective front (and again, it is crucial to mention this is a semi-deliberate act: it does not imply or suggest false consciousness on the part of sex workers) in order to present a more palatable version of sex work to reporters. Given the lack of nuance present in most news media texts, it is arguably prudent for workers to be cautious when discussing any negative aspects of their job or working conditions, for fear that such comments will be quoted out of context, or used as an argument against sex work, rather than as evidence that there is still more to be done to improve working conditions.

Throughout Chapter Four of *The Managed Heart* Hochschild also discusses the ways in which workers adjust their emotional presentation depending on what they think is expected of them. In interviews with media outlets workers frequently discuss the pleasure they derive from their work, and news media texts also make frequent references to the money earned doing sex work. Yet the discussion of how the sexual consent negotiated between worker and client is dependent on both the worker's boundaries and the remuneration offered is notably absent. The possibilities here again present an unnuanced version of consent, in which consent is delivered in a manner that does not have subtleties of duration or act. There is neither any exploration of how consent may be offered just as legitimately on the basis of economic agreements as on desire or attraction. The effect of this omission is to use the language of choice and pleasure to suggest the consent given is identical in function and negotiation to that delivered in non-implicitly transactional sex.

Simultaneously, the texts both present the work of sex workers as being the provision of unrestricted access to their bodies and sexuality, with the prevalence of references to "selling their bodies" supporting this. This erases the economic consideration undertaken by workers in deciding what specific sexual acts or behaviours of physical or emotional closeness to provide or consent to, by presenting their interactions with clients as genuinely pleasurable,

and therefore unaffected by earning potential. The definitions of consent, therefore, are either absent or subtextual, presented in such a way as to obscure the many considerations that sex workers carry out as part of their job, in addition to the extra work required to carry out consent negotiations while appearing to genuinely enjoy a client's company and maintain a pleasant demeanour.

Among the most prominent focuses in the texts analysed in this chapter are the earning potential, and the minimal amount of actual sexual contact in workers' interactions with clients. The construction of agency and independent workers focuses extensively on how many sex workers employed in these specific ways fulfil specific modes of middle-class acceptability – specifically: pursuing tertiary study, using sex work in order to start a small business, or to save money. The production of sex workers working for agencies or independently therefore places the acceptability of their work not on the work but on the money they stand to earn, and on other aspects of their personhood. Sex work, by and large, is produced as acceptable in a small number of cases: when the 'correct' people do it and when they earn substantial sums of money doing so. The production of sex work as a job is achieved only minimally, and in such a way that the acceptability is largely dependent on workers seeing as few clients as possible for the maximum amount of money per client: the presumed moral shortfalls of sexual promiscuity are offset by financial gains.

Notably absent in discussions of sex work are conversations about working conditions led by sex workers. Agency owners and managers are quoted and interviewed at length speaking about how they treat their workers, but specifics of unpaid labour expected (laundry, cleaning, interactions with clients on review forums) are not discussed, nor are the particulars of how a worker is defined as an independent contractor. The comments from the managers and owners are also not interrogated or considered to be anything less than wholly representative of the operating of their agencies. Sex work as a job, then, is not discussed in the terms which other jobs are. The quoted rates of pay presume a worker's labour starts precisely when a client enters the room and stops when the client leaves; they are not discussed within the context of uncompensated work which would give a more accurate hourly rate. The real and taxing burden of carrying out emotion work as a key part of the service is unremarked upon, and in fact carried over to the news media texts.

Attempts to reduce stigma against sex workers by presenting their earnings, and other, non-sex worker, identities as justification in fact only serve to alter the stigma or shift it to workers who engage in sex work in other ways. Sex work in these terms is still a less than desirable occupation, however justified because of the perception of it as being immensely profitable: it is not understood and respected as a legitimate occupation. It is not discussed in terms of labour conditions and workers' rights to organise collectively, or as a site at which care work is expected to be performed free of charge, or as part of the implicit understanding of what constitutes the job. An acceptability of sex work is linked to who does it, and how discreet they are in doing it. The reduction of stigma spoken of in these news media texts is available only to a few, and only under specific conditions.

CONCLUSION

Texts dealing with agency and independent sex workers in New Zealand typically represent them as the most acceptable, when compared to representations of street sex workers, or migrant workers. However, as with the coverage that discusses migrant workers, workers are frequently denied agency and, as with street sex workers, the fact they are carrying out a job is obscured or ignored, albeit with a different intent.

Much of the discourse about agency sex workers relies heavily on commentary from the owners and managers of these agencies. The managers often position themselves as benevolently saving the workers, although not from sex work, but from what are presumed to be inherently dirty or unpleasant conditions at other sex work venues. The emphasis on the small number of clients, or the filtering of clients implies this, but it also serves an advertorial function. In particular, this type of commentary may appeal to potential clients who may be reassured that the worker they are seeing is only seeing 'nice' men, like him, reflective of McRobbie's point about sexual entertainment being made palatable for the consumers by emphasising the 'choice' and desire of the women who perform it (2009, p. 17). Furthermore, the language used to discuss the clients who are permitted to book agency workers also reassures that the workers are "clean", both in the sense of being free from STIs, and also morally untainted, only seeing (it is heavily implied) middle or upper-class clientele.

The emphasis on the amount of money spent by clients furthers this allusion, as do comments like those from Souness that clients who go to other brothels are “coarse”.

The function of these representations is to situate the workers as being as far removed as possible from the rest of the sex industry. The actual labour, both sexual and emotional, that is carried out is obscured in order to retain an impression of authentic desire on the part of the worker. The comments about the brothel rooms not looking ‘like a brothel’ serve this purpose too: the production of acceptability is reliant on distinguishing the agencies as much as possible from the rest of the sex industry. The acceptability that is created is predicated on emphasising the normativity of the workers, and repeatedly alluding to poor conditions elsewhere. The commentary from managers simultaneously suggests the conditions their workers experience are better and fundamentally different from other sex workplaces, and, particularly in the case of Brennan, positions agency work as the ideal or more intelligent way to engage in sex work. As in Chapter Four, where I examined the frequency with which a ‘solution’ to the presence of street sex workers was for them to move to indoor workplaces, a suggestion that ignores the material reality for trans workers in New Zealand; so too does suggesting workers at the profiled agencies made a more informed choice, when the demographics hired by the agencies indicates they are a choice for only a very small proportion of workers.

CHAPTER SEVEN: DISCUSSION

As previously outlined, the questions this thesis sought to answer relate to the representation of sex workers in New Zealand post-decriminalisation, analysed by examining news media texts from 2010 to 2016. Specifically, I considered if post-decriminalisation an ‘acceptable’ form of sex work had been discursively produced, who was permitted to be an acceptable sex worker, and what this production of acceptability meant for workers who both met, and did not meet the criteria. Further to this, I also attempted to discern whether post-decriminalisation the power to define acceptable sex work had moved in part from the courts to the media, reflective of Brunton et al’s claim that “the media have become a basis for authoritarian solutions” (2010, p. 199).

Previous work on the New Zealand sex industry has indicated a split between how indoor and outdoor sex work is conceptualised and represented. Farvid and Glass mention this explicitly with reference to media discourses, while also noting that because few members of the general public have contact with sex workers, the media play an important role in shaping public perceptions of the industry (2014). However, they also note that decriminalisation has not fully removed the stigma associated with the sex industry, a point also made by Brunton et al (2010, pp. 239–240). Prior to the passing of the Prostitution Reform Act New Zealand’s legal model did not make the exchange of sex for money illegal but criminalised related activities, giving some flexibility to how the law was enforced and situating some modes of work as more acceptable than others (or at least, less likely to result in prosecution or police attention). Post-decriminalisation this arbitration of who is acceptable and therefore unlikely to attract negative attention has become a role supplemented by the media, in a manner not dissimilar from that observed by Scoular in “What’s Law got to do With it?”, in which she noted that the legal status of sex work frequently had minimal bearing on which sex workers were permitted to work without legal or social censure (2010). Clear differences occur in how different forms of sex work are described, and this frequently takes the form of a delineation between indoor and outdoor workers, as Farvid and Glass observe. Media representations are frequently the proxy by which non-sex working populations understand the industry, and

the framing of outdoor workers as a menace and a nuisance who exist outside the community (as demonstrated in Chapter Four), and indoor agency workers as business owners and professionals, situates a discrete portion of the industry as being legitimate. The stigma against many sex workers is produced by the media discourse which shapes public perceptions of the industry, with this stigma being reinforced in a variety of ways. The specific methods by which it is produced include through the words used to identify workers and their profession, by limiting who is permitted to speak about sex work, and through the kind of justifications that workers are obliged to provide in response to questions about their job.

As demonstrated in Chapters Four through Six, there are significant and obvious differences in how particular groups of sex workers in New Zealand are discursively produced within news media texts, affected by both the identity categories that they belong to, and the specific mode of work they engage in. As outlined in my introduction, the broad area in which this thesis contributes to and expands upon existing knowledge relates to the productions of acceptability within New Zealand sex working populations, with possibilities for the findings to be applied to other locations. The questions that this thesis aimed to answer were:

1. Does New Zealand media coverage provide distinct representations of sex workers who carry out their work in various ways (street sex workers, parlour workers, agency workers, and independent workers)? Are these representations linked to the class, race, immigration status, and trans or cis status of the workers? If a link is created, how is it constructed within media discourse? Do the representations function to create a respectable or more acceptable way in which to be a sex worker?
2. Does the New Zealand news media coverage include the “advertorial” framing that has been identified in some overseas coverage of sex work? If so, does participating in interviews for media texts that feature this framing require additional emotional labour on the part of workers? Is there the expectation identified by Grant in *Playing the Whore* (2014) that workers give an impression of enjoying their work in order for it to be respected as labour?
3. Is there a link between being deemed a more acceptable sex worker and the performance of enjoyment? What specific behaviours or attitudes are associated with this acceptability?

In each analysis chapter I provided details of the key discursive themes identified for each media event or trend. When analysing texts that dealt with street sex workers in South Auckland and Papatoetoe these were:

- Street sex workers and constructions of community
- Dehumanising: non-residents and clean streets
- Transphobia and Transmisogyny
- Off the streets: a demand for work conditions that are unattainable

In considering texts that referred to migrant workers around the Rugby World Cup or migrant workers who were international students, the primary themes were:

- The vulnerable victim or devious worker dichotomy
- Vectors of moral and literal contagion
- The Rugby World Cup and anxiety about immigration

Finally, key themes identified in texts about agency sex workers were:

- The advertorial function of media texts and a focus on earnings
- Obscured emotional labour and low-volume sex work
- Reproducing normativity: what is granted acceptability?

Additionally, in each chapter I outlined who was given space to speak and which ‘experts’ were returned to more than once, referring to Fairclough’s notion of discourse representation (1992, pp. 272–274). A common theme across all three media trends was interviewing a representative from the New Zealand Prostitute’s Collective (NZPC) with this occurring in five of fourteen texts on street sex work, six of fifteen texts on migrant workers, and five of fourteen texts on agency workers. Sex workers or former workers were most likely to be allowed to speak for themselves if they were agency or independent workers, with eight of fourteen texts quoting them, compared to three out of fifteen (street sex workers), and four out of sixteen (migrant workers). In the texts referring to migrant and street sex workers there was also a strong presence from people not directly connected with the industry: Immigration

New Zealand representatives in the case of migrant workers, and representatives of Papatoetoe Residents Reclaiming Our Streets in the case of street sex workers.

From this initial analysis of the make-up of who is permitted to speak and who is spoken for, it already becomes apparent that there is a divide between how agency sex workers and other sex workers are represented or allowed to represent themselves. The workers granted agency to discuss their own work, rather than be spoken for, are predominantly those who are already reasonably privileged, more likely to be white, middle class, cisgender, and New Zealand citizens. Ignoring the personal experience and opinions of street sex workers and migrant workers (or granting them comparatively little space to speak) indicates a failure to acknowledge them as experts on their own lived experience.

A second area in which differences are immediately apparent is within the words used to describe each group of workers and the work they do. Street sex work and workers are more often described as 'prostitution' or 'prostitutes' than 'sex work' or 'sex workers', and words and phrases that are transphobic or misgender trans workers are also common. In many cases the most vitriolic transmisogynistic language occurs in reported speech, but as discussed, this is aided in its prevalence by using non-workers as sources with such frequency. Additionally, many of the terms used are presented with negative modifiers such as 'bullying' or 'obnoxious'. In coverage of migrant sex workers, again the word 'prostitute' is common, with an approximately equal split between that term and 'sex worker'. The modifiers most commonly used tend to be 'migrant', 'foreign' or 'illegal', indicating a focus in the texts on the immigration status of the workers. In contrast, the words used to refer to agency or independent sex workers tend to be sex workers, escorts, or 'girls'. When modifiers are used they tend to be positive: with workers and agencies described as 'upmarket', 'high class', 'lovely', or 'elite'.

These differences again make it clear that there is a marked distinction in how workers engaged in different modes of sex work are produced. The words used to describe street sex workers tend to focus on their trans status, and function to produce them as a public nuisance, or not belonging in public space. Additionally, the use of 'prostitute' rather than 'sex worker' functions to delegitimise their work as being genuine labour. Again, with migrant

workers, the limited use of 'sex worker' as a descriptor functions to position their work as unproductive labour, following Agustín's rendering of the term (2007). Furthermore, many of the descriptors highlight their migrant status as the most defining factor of their work and identity, to play upon xenophobic fears about Asian workers and migrants in New Zealand. These distinctions become especially obvious when compared to the descriptions and phrases used to discuss agency and independent workers. This group is described using 'sex worker' or in euphemistic terms, and with positive modifiers reinforcing the normative nature of their work and lives. From this initial textual analysis then, it becomes clear that there are substantial differences in how each group are represented, and that there is a significant difference in the discursive production within news texts of acceptable and unacceptable modes of engaging in sex work.

The distinctions in how each group are represented within news media texts reinforce existing axis of oppression and hierarchical structures. This is supported by previous literature on representations of non-white sex workers, with Rivers-Moore writing in "Affective Sex: Beauty, Race and Nation in the Sex Industry" that clients of Costa Rican sex workers were likely to consider them as the 'other', relating to their work in a different way to American sex workers, indicating an exotification of the workers (2013, pp. 156–157). Evidence of this is apparent in the ways in which Asian sex workers are discussed within the analysed news media texts, with many texts constructing them as adhering to stereotypes about Asian women, or emphasising their otherness through the use of descriptors. This creates a discursive delineation between white sex workers in New Zealand and migrant workers, in keeping with the observation that Harcup and O'Neill make in "What is News? Galtung and Ruge Revisited", that the news values that dictate what counts as news, and how it is framed, are reflective of existing social structures, rather than separate from them (Harcup and O'Neill, 2001).

From the news media descriptions of street sex workers, particularly trans women, it is apparent that they are constructed as a group separate from the wider South Auckland Papatoetoe community, with evidence to this effect contributing to existing work on the discursive expulsion of sex workers from their own communities, and suggesting that transmisogyny is one of the primary mechanisms utilised to support this exclusion (Sagar,

2005; O'Neill, 2008). The words used to describe these workers are explicitly transmisogynistic (Serano, 2007/2016, pp. 14–16). Again, this reinforces existing social hierarchies, situating street sex workers as carrying out an 'unacceptable' form of sex work, and positioning them as "the ideological other" (Edelman, 2011, p. 857). One of the primary ways in which street sex workers are identified as being unacceptable in comparison to agency based indoor workers is by emphasising their visibility (or presumed visibility). This provides evidence in accord with G. Abel's argument that a desirable outcome of prostitution law reform is frequently considered to be making sex work functionally invisible to the wider public (2014, pp. 587–588). Already from the initial analysis of each group of media texts it is apparent that there is a difference in how specific groups of sex workers are discussed, rendering one group acceptable and the others unacceptable within media discourses.

Within the key themes identified for each group of sex workers, one of the clearest distinctions is in who is permitted to have their work recognised as legitimate labour. The use of 'sex worker' as a descriptor versus 'prostitute' is an indication of this. Agency sex workers are most likely to have their work understood as a job, but only to a point: the job is legitimate on the condition that it is temporary and well paid. The focus for much of the coverage of agency workers is on their undertaking sex work to obtain specific financial goals, usually related to moving to other forms of work or economic stability. Examples may include funding tertiary study, saving to start a small business, or to buy property. The most marked contrast in terms of the representation of sex work as legitimate or illegitimate is between agency workers and street sex workers. Street sex workers in New Zealand news media are persistently represented as a nuisance, obstructing 'legitimate' businesses who are seen to have valid claims to public space.

Street sex work is persistently deprofessionalised, with recurring themes of complaints that the workers are disrupting other businesses, and rhetoric from PRROS indicating they take pride in disrupting the business of street sex workers and driving away their clients. A further indication of how street sex work is disrespected as skilled and effortful work is in who is quoted in speaking about it. Among those interviewed in the texts relating to it are Georgina Beyer, a former MP who at one point, some decades ago, was a sex worker. While Beyer's experiences obviously have some relevance to the experience of street sex workers in

general, choosing her as a point of contact does also indicate the ways in which street sex work is seen as unchanging – it is difficult to imagine other industries in which experience that occurred decades ago would warrant one being quoted as an expert. Furthermore, having been elected to Parliament likely gives Beyer an additional sense of authority, which current street sex workers are denied. This is part of the ongoing theme of deprofessionalising the work: situating it using tropes such as ‘the world’s oldest profession’ increase the impression that the work is unchanging and therefore less legitimate, and also indicates elements of what Scoular calls “rhetorical historicization” about the sex industry (2010, p. 349).

Representing street sex work as a nuisance or implicit source of harm, rather than as workers engaged in running a business, also functions to assist with removing them from a conception of ‘community’ in South Auckland. Irving discusses in depth how there is a persistent requirement under neo-liberalism for trans people to visibly engage in productive economic activity in order to be viewed as “proper trans social subjects” (2009, p. 39). The overt transmisogyny within coverage of street sex workers indicates that part of the manner in which these workers have transgressed acceptable norms is in failing to partake in an acceptable form of economic productivity. A similar question of acceptability, specifically pertaining to class and norms of sexuality and desire, is the way in which there is effortful social labour required of agency sex workers to perform convincing ‘authentic’ desire for their clients.

One of the ways in which agency based sex work is produced as acceptable is through emphasising (primarily via commentary from managers, not workers) the enjoyment that workers gain from their jobs. This is frequently framed in terms of enjoyment of the job, or a sincere affection for the sexual contact with clients, being necessary for workers to be hired by these workplaces, echoing McRobbie’s argument that an appearance of enthusiasm for being presented in a sexualised manner (for a presumed male gaze) is deliberately engineered in some media advertising to assuage any guilt by the viewer (2009, p. 17). This effort to present the enjoyment as natural and unconnected to the skills of the worker serves to normalise the work by trying to present the sexual contact as genuinely desired, not negotiated with a specific mind to the economic benefit that the worker stands to gain. The divorcing of the skill and energy required to convincingly perform the appropriate emotional

and affective responses for clients is a further example of deprofessionalising sex work. In the case of agency workers this deprofessionalising functions to increase their acceptability, however they are repeatedly produced as invisible, aside from the transgression of the job they do. They are not interrupting 'legitimate business' and the narratives around them emphasise the multiple ways in which they are adhering to normative economic structures. Their transgression then, is situated as a minor aberration which is short lived and in service of more acceptable economic pursuits. The invisibilising of the emotional labour speaks to this: emotion work, as Agustín (2007) and Hochschild (1979/2012) place it, is constructed as unproductive. Identifying the emotional effort and skill involved in managing client/worker relationships would serve to render the news coverage both less workable as an advertorial, and less acceptable within neoliberal economic frameworks. The evidence of this emotional labour occurring in media performances, intended for consumption by current or future clients, expands on the existing work of Bernstein (2007) and Grant (2014), demonstrating how emotional labour continues to be expected of workers outside of their face to face interactions with paying customers.

Within this normalising and invisibilising narrative applied to agency workers is a desire to have them explain and justify their reasons for engaging in sex work. Speaking about how sex work is understood within jurisdictions where sex work is still illegal, Grant refers to much of what is criminalised as a "talking crime" (2014, p. 9). Specifically, the criminal aspects tend to be things such as soliciting, which is frequently understood as 'looking like' a sex worker in public (Edelman, 2011) or discussing the explicit trade of particular services for specific sums of money. Speaking about the work in a way which emphasises how these acceptable workers do not look like workers, and in a manner which de-emphasises the physical aspect of the work, is a tactic that responds to this specific mode of stigmatization. The requirement that agency workers present their jobs in a manner which minimises discussions of the physicality of their jobs demands they obscure their labour in order to be permissible. It moves agency and independent work further from the aspects of sex work that were previously criminalised, and helps to position it as more acceptable and less intelligible within historic notions of what a sex worker looks like and does.

This desire for sex work to be functionally invisible in order to be acceptable also explains much of the backlash against street sex workers. Street sex work is widely understood to constitute the smallest portion of the industry (in terms of the number of workers presently engaged in it), but it is often discussed as the most visible sector of the industry (Abel et al, 2007, p. 28-35). Workers who engage in street sex work are proportionately more likely to be Māori or Pasifika, trans, or both (Abel and Fitzgerald, 2012, p. 18), and are thus also subject to transmisogynistic and racial abuse, and have heightened visibility to groups dominated by white cisgender people, such as PRROS. The difficulty of visibility here is in part due to the presumption that the sex worker is always working. Sex workers who 'look like' sex workers (to groups who hold a specific notion of who engages in sex work) are denied the right to be viewed as part of a community, and, as much of the analysis of news media texts indicates, they are often subject to abuse and alienation when trying to exist within their community to carry out day to day errands and chores.

The question of unacceptability here is inextricably entwined in the ways in which bodies of colour and trans bodies are sexualised and exotified. The ability to be invisible which exists for white, middle-class, indoor workers is less available to many street sex workers – or if it is available that, in itself, is turned against them. This can be seen in the duality of workers being accused of working (by being publicly visible) during daylight hours, and simultaneously in the way that street sex work is criticised as a nuisance to the community because of the possibility that non-sex working women could be mistaken for sex workers. These arguments indicate that there is no correct way for street sex workers to exist: their overt visibility is taken as an affront, and their blending in with other women is seen as a threat dispersed by their presence in a specific geographic location. The issue at stake in their production as unacceptable is their transgressing norms of public/private sexual spaces, largely as a result of their bodies being pathologized as always sexual and always available for public scrutiny.

Migrant workers are largely exempt from questions of visibility, as the migrant sex workers discussed in the analysed news media texts worked indoors. However, their unacceptability is frequently produced, again, in economic terms. Where it is politically advantageous the desire to work solely for economic benefit is turned against them, as though this were an unusual situation to be in, with the implicit suggestion here being that they are cheating a

system of acceptable economic motives by not declaring tax or not working according to their visa conditions. This links back to Agustín's discussions of attempts to situate sex work as inherently different to other forms of work: while some of the migrant workers do in fact hold work visas, they are not permitted to engage in sex work and the news media coverage relating to them does not query why sex work is an exception under these rules. On the surface, their unacceptability is due to their contravening legal questions about who may engage in sex work; however, beneath this is a question of 'cheating' or taking advantage of one's visa, which reflects specific racist attitudes about Asian migrants to New Zealand. This is particularly well reflected by considering the difference between the coverage of an English migrant worker at Bon Ton, and of Asian migrant workers in parlours or brothels. The English worker is permitted to speak for herself, and her visa status is not discussed; Asian workers, in contrast, are typically spoken about, with presumptions made about their motives and agency, and are repeatedly referred to as 'foreign' or 'illegal'. In part, this construction of migrant workers as unacceptable is due to their not performing 'authentic' pleasure within the work. Their motives are explicitly and strictly financial, forcing readers to confront the possibility of sexual consent being given and obtained based on economic imperatives rather than personal sexual desire.

A further theme by which workers are distinguished as either acceptable or unacceptable is through the ways in which they are produced (or excused) as vectors of literal and moral contagion. Again, the narratives associated with agency or independent workers absolve them of this while the narratives associated with migrant and street sex workers situate them as potential vectors of contagion. Agency and independent workers are situated as not posing a moral threat, with this achieved by positioning them in as normative a position as possible: they are not a threat to the clients they see, they are repeatedly and painstakingly produced as being genuinely concerned with their clients' wellbeing and as unthreatening to their moral lives. Additionally, they are excused from the position of literal vector of contagion in two ways. The first is through repeated emphasis on their seeing very few clients and these clients being carefully vetted, in a manner that associates sufficient disposable income to see a more expensive sex worker as a proxy for the absence of STIs. The second is a more direct approach, best exemplified in "The Working Girls Class" in which the author notes that workers who have worked at "low class" establishments (referring to higher volume parlours) were not

hired by a particular agency, because of the perceived risk of STIs (Bones, 2015). While these two mechanisms are obviously different in terms of their subtlety, they both create the same impression: specifically that the most acceptable way to do sex work, in order to present the lowest perceived public health risk (because acceptability, in this manner, refers to the impact of the sex worker on others, not the worker's own safety), is to see as few clients as possible.

In contrast, street sex workers are frequently discursively positioned as being a vector of literal and moral contagion. As previously discussed, the workers are presented as a threat to the community and to businesses by virtue of their being visible and present in public. Furthermore, their positioning as a vector of literal contagion is predicated on the persistent misgendering of trans sex workers: it is possible that much of the fear of contagion is based upon historic notions of queer men as vectors of HIV contagion, and this persists in the form of identifying transfeminine workers incorrectly as men and by extension as a threat to public health. As with the question of visibility street sex workers are placed in an unwinnable position. The presence of condoms or condom wrappers in the areas in which they work is taken as evidence of their transgressing acceptable norms of public behaviour, despite being evidence of safer sex practices.

Migrant sex workers are typically produced within this narrative as vectors of literal contagion, largely in a context where they are identified as a threat to New Zealand citizens in a manner that explicitly positions their racial identity as part of the threat. Among the ways in which this narrative is played out in texts describing migrant workers is through citing studies that discuss sex work in China, a manifestly different legal and cultural situation to that within the New Zealand sex industry. The presumption here is that migrant workers are unable to advocate for themselves and lack agency. This is also achieved through an inverse of the rhetoric which is applied to agency workers: agency workers are presented as seeing as few clients as possible, while much of the coverage that discusses migrant workers specifically refers to them seeing many clients, or as many clients as possible within a short frame of time, with this being particularly obvious in discussions relating to the Rugby World Cup and the perceived increase in clientele associated with it. Linked heavily to this is an assumption that a closer adherence to normative ideals of sexual behaviour is implicitly safer, and that seeing multiple clients in a shorter space of time constitutes an inherent risk.

Through these examples it becomes evident that there is a clear trend within New Zealand news media narratives which situates only one mode of carrying out sex work as acceptable. This furthers existing scholarship on sex work by investigating the ways in which production of stigma about sex work and workers functions and exists within a context of decriminalisation. Bernstein, in *Temporarily Yours*, discusses how sex work in a criminalised context is tolerated if it is functionally invisible, conducted indoors, and is not seen to impinge on gentrifying neighbourhoods, and a version of this can be seen to be playing out within the decriminalised context of New Zealand (2007). Additionally, the ways that multiple marginalisations impact upon the representation of sex workers working in different ways indicates the importance of considering their representations within media from an intersectional standpoint. The specific ways that transmisogyny is weaponised against street sex workers, and that anti-Asian xenophobia is prominent in commentary about migrant workers clearly demonstrates how these representations must be considered with respect to the plurality of stigmas which are attached to different sex workers.

I contend that in the absence of the ability to control socially problematised or ‘unacceptable’ forms of sex work through a legislative framework, the power to determine what is acceptable or tolerable has moved from law enforcement to the media. The attempts to pass bills restricting the areas in which street sex workers in South Auckland could work were supported by the proponents of the bills being quoted extensively in relevant news media coverage, providing them with a platform and a greater degree of public attention. Similarly, discussion of migrant sex workers as a social problem was promoted primarily by a single news outlet (*The New Zealand Herald*) and a single journalist within that outlet (Lincoln Tan). Despite many of the texts about migrant sex workers originating from a single journalist, they attracted sufficient attention to garner quotes from Immigration New Zealand, and assisted with producing migrant sex work as an issue that was present in the public consciousness.

The work of constructing an acceptable sex worker is heavily dependent on what Galtung and Ruge term making news “culturally intelligible” to readers (1965/1981). In the case of print media, whose target readership is presumed to be predominantly middle-class, this is achieved through presenting the workers in a maximally normative way. This normalising of sex work benefits a small subset of workers who are likely to have been accepted or

untroubled prior to the legislative change: it still situates workers who conduct sex work in other ways as a problem to be solved through making their work less visible. Additionally, while a small subset of workers are produced as acceptable they are not positioned in such a way as to be able to argue for improvements to their working conditions. Situating a singular acceptable way to do sex work as being one in which the work is invisible limits the possibilities of talking about the labour rights, or lack thereof, within the industry. Sex work within news media discourses is constructed as a pleasurable choice, creating a strong disincentive to discuss less appealing or palatable conditions or experiences for fear of losing either customers or the social cachet of being an acceptable, happy worker.

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION

The key findings of this thesis relate to the application of media studies frameworks, and queer and trans theory lenses, to examining depictions of sex workers, furthering existing intersections of these fields with sex work studies. This thesis examines representation within a more fluid regulatory regime, under which rhetorical appeals to the illegality of sex work can only be made in texts discussing migrant sex workers. Debates about the il/legality of the work have instead moved to constructing a different kind of binaristic structure within the work, one of visible and invisible workers. While the content of the argument no longer concerns legality, an implicit moralistic discourse still exists in conversations about the work. Decriminalisation then, is not a panacea: there is not an automatic resolution of sex work stigma, it instead moves the site of the stigma and distributes it unevenly, in a manner similar to that identified by Scoular (2010).

Building on work concerning New Zealand workers conducted by Farvid and Glass, and G. Abel, I have demonstrated that not only is there a difference in the representation of indoor and outdoor sex workers, but also that differences exist in representations of various modes of indoor work. These variations depend on how much workers charge, how many clients they see, and whether they occupy oppressed categories alongside being engaged in sex work. This thesis additionally contributes to existing scholarship on the regulatory role that the media plays in describing who is permissible as a worker. Scoular, and Hubbard, Matthews and Scoular (2010; 2008) have demonstrated that legal models under which sex work is carried out do not necessarily reflect who will be the target of enduring stigma and judicial attention (with the penalty identified as falling most heavily on street sex workers) and multiple theorists, notably Hallgrimsdottir, Phillips and Benoit (2006), Brunton et al (2010), and Grant (2014), have highlighted the role media forms in shaping public perceptions of sex work. In considering the representations produced in a decriminalised context, this thesis explores a gap between these two existing sites of enquiry: considering whether the punitive attention paid to specific groups of sex workers identified previously also occurs within news media representations in the absence of legal censure, concluding that it does. The use of the media as a regulatory actor in this instance indicates that, as I have suggested previously, the

ability to dictate who may be an acceptable sex worker has in large part moved from the courts to the media.

Furthermore, I demonstrate that much of the negative representation and stigmatizing language used against street sex workers is explicitly transmisogynistic, as well as frequently racist, suggesting an alternative lens through which to understand the production of stigma against this group of workers in a decriminalised environment. This builds on existing scholarship, which focuses primarily trans street sex workers' experiences in locations where street sex work is criminalised, indicating that in the absence of legislative modes of control and punishment other socially enacted methods of discipline may be used against these workers (Edelman, 2011; Ross, 2012). This presents a useful site for further enquiry, in addition to providing evidence and descriptions of the ongoing processes of inequality.

The evidence I present also indicates the production and propagation of transmisogynistic attitudes that resulted in many trans women (specifically trans women of colour) being arrested on suspicion of soliciting by police in the USA. This occurrence, dubbed "walking while trans" by many activists and advocates, has been widely informally described, and identified in a presently limited number of scholarly texts (Daum, 2015). Analysis in Chapter Four indicates that while New Zealand's legal model at least protects trans workers from being targeted by police the same demographic of women are subject to stigma and harassment from members of the public, while providing further documented evidence of the phenomenon. By referring to existing work that situates itself more within queer and trans theory, particularly Irving (2008), provides a valuable lens to examine New Zealand specific approaches to trans sex workers. This adds to existing research in this area such as that of Edelman (2011), and highlighting how conflating the categories of "sex worker" and "trans woman" rely on both being treated with suspicion and fear, limiting their ability to exist comfortably in public space.

Furthermore, the knowledge contributed by this thesis gives further insights into how decriminalisation may assist with reducing but not eradicating stigma against some sex workers. It suggests the areas that may not have been explored in detail in previous work. Among these is the requirement that acceptable workers distinguish their work as a choice,

limiting their ability to discuss negative aspects of the work or demand improved labour conditions. This is considered within Grant's *Playing the Whore*, but, as with street sex work, her text considers sex work's representation in a location where it is criminalised (2014). Although Scoular writes that the legal status of sex work is not the most significant contributor to how sex work is actually policed, the complete rather than partial absence of a concern about being subject to police attention due to publicly discussing sex work is a point of difference in my own contribution (2010). My thesis also contributes by building on established research about the role that emotional labour plays in carrying out sex work successfully or acceptably, and the diminished stigma that is based on a willingness to carry out this labour for free (Agustín, 2007; Rivers-Moore, 2013, Ray, 2012).

Despite the contribution to existing knowledge on representations of sex work and workers in New Zealand this thesis necessarily had limitations on the quantity of material that could be analysed. An obvious absence is the limited discussion of parlour workers in New Zealand: in part this is due to the smaller number of news media texts which discuss parlour workers in any detail, which would have made conducting a comprehensive analysis difficult. However, a comparative analysis of coverage of parlour (managed) and agency/independent (self-managed/on-call) indoor workers may serve to expand on and clarify some points explored within this thesis about the requirement that acceptable sex workers limit the number and type of clients they see.

In order to make the number of news media texts analysed manageable for a thesis of this length a limit of seven years was put on coverage considered for inclusion. Again, it is possible that further information could be gathered by exploring texts published outside the selected time range or by comparing thematic changes in the coverage across a longer period. An analysis conducted across a longer timeline might reveal changes in how stigma against workers is produced, or indicate whether it lessens over time.

With regard to street sex workers, the media event selected for this thesis centred around attempts to limit where street sex workers could work in South Auckland and Papatoetoe. During a similar time period there was also a cluster of articles about street sex work in Christchurch, with the texts following the February 2010 earthquake that damaged much of

the central city, including areas traditionally used by street sex workers for soliciting. The decision to include the material about Auckland street sex workers over Christchurch was made partially because the Auckland-based texts gave an example of how news media conveys information about legal challenges to the right of sex workers to work in public spaces post-decriminalisation. This specificity aided in answering my initial research question pertaining to the regulatory sites which exist under decriminalisation, and whether those sites had moved from the courts to the media. An exploration of the similarities and differences in how these two groups of street sex workers are represented and discussed could, again, represent an area for future study that might reveal further useful information about the manner in which street sex workers are produced and stigmatized.

The findings of this thesis also suggest areas of focus with regard to continuing to increase the safety and rights of sex workers, both through changes to media reporting of the industry and in terms of areas for policy changes. As indicated in my discussion, one of the key ways in which the representations of sex workers are limited mostly to presentations which adhere closely to existing narratives is through limiting sex worker voices as sources in news media texts. An obvious way to improve this would be through a greater focus on allowing sex workers to speak for themselves, instead of allowing their managers to stand in for them when discussing the industry. Additionally, many texts about sex work still employ the use of framing devices to presume a history of trauma, even if they later subvert this (as in Chapter Six). Such framing is clearly used to situate the stories in a way intelligible to readers, but functions to reinforce a discursive linkage between a past or present experience of trauma and coercion, and engaging in sex work.

The overarching finding from this thesis is the reliance on established but frequently unnuanced and inaccurate tropes when sex work is discussed within news media texts. While, again, this has been identified in past research, my analysis indicates this occurs in all the examined modes of work, even within a decriminalised context, and even when workers are notionally permitted to speak for themselves. Each is subject to a representation that insists upon either exaggerating the role of sex work in attributing an identity to an individual, or diminishing it through a process of normalization. Such an approach is ultimately unhelpful in any longer-term attempts at a reduction of stigma; it positions sex work either as an indelible

marker or as a transgression that may only be forgiven if the person committing it simultaneously holds a sufficient number of more privileged positions or identities. This thesis therefore contributes to a deeper understanding of stigma against sex work, and the ways in which this stigma evolves and changes, without disappearing.

APPENDIX 1. TABLE OF TEXTS ANALYSED IN CHAPTER FOUR

Year of Publication	Author	Publication /Programme	Network /Host website	Medium	Title
2011	Morton	The New Zealand Herald	NZME (nzherald.co.nz)	Text /Newspaper	Cleaning Up the Streets
2011	Rudman	The New Zealand Herald	NZME (nzherald.co.nz)	Text /Newspaper	Don't Turn the Clock Back on Prostitution
2011	Stuff.co.nz/No by-line	Stuff.co.nz	Fairfax (Stuff.co.nz)	Text	Community to Tackle Prostitution with CCTV
2011	Wane	North & South	Bauer Media Group	Text /Monthly Magazine	Not On the Street Where We Live
2012	Auckland Now/No by-line	Auckland Now	Fairfax (Stuff.co.nz)	Text /Newspaper	Prostitutes Wrecking Public Property
2012	Day	Auckland Now	Fairfax (Stuff.co.nz)	Text /Newspaper	Prostitute Flashes Breasts in Shop
2012	Fletcher	Auckland Now	Fairfax (Stuff.co.nz)	Text /Newspaper	Prostitute Pamphlet Riles Academic
2012	Koubaridis	The New Zealand Herald	NZME (nzherald.co.nz)	Text /Newspaper	\$1000-a-night Street Workers in Turf War
2012	Maas	Auckland Now	Fairfax (Stuff.co.nz)	Text /Newspaper	"Obnoxious Transvestites Descend on Corner
2012	Montgomery	The Aucklander	NZME (nzherald.co.nz)	Text /Newspaper	Pros and Cons for New Law on Prostitutes
2012	Ryan	Nine to Noon	Radio New Zealand	Radio	Are Legislative Curbs Needed on Street Prostitution?
2012	Shuttleworth	The New Zealand Herald	NZME (nzherald.co.nz)	Text /Newspaper	Street Prostitution Bill Doesn't go Far Enough - NZ First
2013	NZ Herald /No by-line	The New Zealand Herald	NZME (nzherald.co.nz)	Text /Newspaper	Vexed issue of sex in the city
2013	Taylor	The New Zealand Herald	NZME (nzherald.co.nz)	Text /Newspaper	Street Legal: Ten Years After Prostitution Decriminalisation

APPENDIX 2. TABLE OF TEXTS ANALYSED IN CHAPTER FIVE

Year of Publication	Author	Publication /Programme	Network /Host website	Medium	Title
2010	Nash	The New Zealand Herald	NZME (nzherald.co.nz)	Text /Newspaper	Sex Trade to Boom as Cup Fans Arrive
2010	Tan	The New Zealand Herald	NZME (nzherald.co.nz)	Text /Newspaper	Chinese Students Lured to Become Sex Workers
2011	3 News	3 News	MediaWorks (NewsHub.co.nz)	Television	Brothels Told No Foreign Workers Over World Cup
2011	Gibbs	Rotorua Daily Times	NZME (nzherald.co.nz)	Text /Newspaper	Inside Tauranga's Sex Industry
2011	The Nelson Mail	The Nelson Mail	Fairfax	Text /Newspaper	Sex Work Bonanza Expected
2011	Radio New Zealand	Morning Report	Radio New Zealand	Radio	No Evidence of Forced Prostitution in New Zealand
2011	Tan	The New Zealand Herald	NZME (nzherald.co.nz)	Text /Newspaper	Chinese Prostitutes Worry Sex Industry
2011	Tan	The New Zealand Herald	NZME (nzherald.co.nz)	Text /Newspaper	Brothel Checks Stepped Up for Rugby World Cup
2011	Tan	The New Zealand Herald	NZME (nzherald.co.nz)	Text /Newspaper	Brothel Watch Over Big Influx of Sex Workers
2011	Tan	The New Zealand Herald	NZME (nzherald.co.nz)	Text /Newspaper	Immigration Alert on Motel Sex
2012	Tan	The New Zealand Herald	NZME (nzherald.co.nz)	Text /Newspaper	Immigration Raids Catch 21 Illegal Sex Workers
2012	Tan	The New Zealand Herald	NZME (nzherald.co.nz)	Text /Newspaper	"Money, not traffickers," Lures Migrant Sex Staff
2013	Tan	The New Zealand Herald	NZME (nzherald.co.nz)	Text /Newspaper	Deportation Bill Hits \$1.7m
2013	Tan	The New Zealand Herald	NZME (nzherald.co.nz)	Text /Newspaper	Sex Work No Go, Student Visitors Told
2015	Tan	Newstalk ZB News	NZME (Newstalk ZB)	Radio	Rise in Foreign Sex Workers in NZ

APPENDIX 3. TABLE OF TEXTS ANALYSED IN CHAPTER SIX

Year of Publication	Author	Publication /Programme	Network /Host website	Medium	Title
2011	The Dominion Post	The Dominion Post	Fairfax (Stuff.co.nz)	Text/Newspaper	School's Cash Went on Sex and High Living
2012	Cooke	Stuff.co.nz	Fairfax (Stuff.co.nz)	Video	Sex, Conditions Safer but Prostitute Stigma Remains
2012	Cooke	The Dominion Post	Fairfax (Stuff.co.nz)	Text/Newspaper	Sex, Conditions Safer but Prostitute Stigma Remains
2012	The Dominion Post	The Dominion Post	Fairfax (Stuff.co.nz)	Text/Newspaper	High-fliers Who Turn to Escorting
2014	Meadows	Stuff.co.nz	Fairfax (Stuff.co.nz)	Text/Newspaper	Sex Industry Doing it Tough
2014	Trengrove	Salient	VUWSA (Salient)	Text/Weekly magazine	On the Job
2014	Henry	The Paul Henry Show	MediaWorks (NewsHub.co.nz)	Television	Sex Industry's Revolutionary Madam?
2015	Bones	Salient	VUWSA (Salient)	Text/Weekly magazine	The Working Girls Class
2015	Chang	Idealog	Idealog.co.nz	Text	Trick or Tweet - How the NZ Sex Industry is Embracing Hi-Tech
2015	Hewitson	The New Zealand Herald	NZME (nzherald.co.nz)	Text /Newspaper	Michele Hewitson interview: Mary Brennan
2015	McAllen	Sunday Star Times	Fairfax (Stuff.co.nz)	Text /Newspaper	Behind the Red Lights of New Zealand's Brothels
2015	McCarthy	Saturday Morning	Radio New Zealand	Radio	Mary Brennan: Domination and Submission
2015	TVNZ	Seven Sharp	TVNZ	Television	Meet the Pro-Dominatrix
2016	Olds	Stuff.co.nz	Fairfax (Stuff.co.nz)	Text/Newspaper	The Rules of the Game*

*"The Rules of the Game" (Olds, 2016) is included in this table, but discussed predominantly in Chapter Five. While technically it deals with a migrant worker, the text discusses one of the agencies most prominent in Chapter Six. As such the text straddles the two events, and where included it is used to highlight the racialised nature of much of the criticism of Asian migrant sex workers.

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