

returned. The men want an emotional connection, but they don't want any obligations. They don't believe they can have no-strings-attached sex, which is why they pay. They'd rather pay than get it for free.

Christopher, a male sex-worker who had also once tried to redefine his relationship with a client, recounted similarly: 'I called a trick once because I wanted to have sex with him again . . . we agreed in advance that it was just going to be sex for sex's sake, not for pay, and that was the last time I ever heard from him!' Critics of commercialized sex may misconstrue clients' desire for bounded authenticity if their implicit point of reference is the modernist paradigm of romantic love, premised upon monogamous domesticity and intertwined life trajectories. Thus, Carole Pateman (1988: 199) asks why, if not for the sake of pure domination, would '15 to 25 per cent of the customers of the Birmingham prostitutes demand what is known in the trade as "hand relief"', something which could presumably be self-administered. Yet as one client insisted, after explaining to me that he studied and worked all the time, and consequently did not have much opportunity to even meet women, let alone to pursue a romantic relationship, 'it's more real and human than jacking off alone'. This client reveals an underlying sexual paradigm that is not relational but recreational, compatible with the rhythms of his individually oriented daily life, and increasingly, with those of other men with similar white, middle-class socio-demographic profiles.

The state and the redirection of desire

It's 9 am on a Saturday morning. In one of the only occupied rooms of the San Francisco Hall of Justice, I am seated in the back row of 'John School', the city's pre-trial diversion program for men who have been arrested for soliciting prostitutes. The city is proud of its program, and boasts a low recidivism rate of less than one percent for first-time arrestees, who, for a mere \$500, can have their records cleared. There are approximately 50 to 60 men in the room this morning, of diverse class and ethnic backgrounds (three of the men around me are accompanied by translators: one Spanish, one Arabic, one Cantonese).

More striking still is that there are nearly equal numbers of arrested johns and media people in the room. By the end of the first hour, I have been introduced to journalists from TV-20, the London Times, and Self Magazine. 'There are representatives from different media organizations here each month,' announces Evelyn, the program's feisty director, to the men. 'I never do this class without media coverage.' In stark contrast to the johns, the media people are predominantly 30-something, stylish, educated women, acutely and evidently fascinated by the spectacle of so many sheepish and

docile men before them, and by the feminist fantasy of having the gender tables turned (now these men are quiet and still, and, at least until 5 pm this evening, they will be forced to remain that way and listen). Although I am perhaps more conscious than they that it is as much class advantage as feminist victory that permits this witnessing, I notice too the superficial similarity between these women and me.

Yet according to the johns I chat with during the coffee breaks, very few are passively absorbing the information presented to them, and they are far from being persuaded of the error of their ways. The men say that John School is even worse than Traffic School – an all day ordeal in a stuffy room with a whole procession of equally stuffy speakers. ‘This is bullshit.’ ‘I was trapped.’ ‘These people are so hypocritical.’ ‘Prostitution should be legalized.’ ‘They act like it’s something special, but all men do it. . . . Men and women just think differently. Men will fuck sheep, boys, anything. They are dogs.’

The first presentation is led by an assistant district attorney, and is entitled ‘Prostitution Law and Street Facts’. Although John School is officially available to all men arrested for soliciting a prostitute, the structure of the program demonstrates that those who do get arrested comprise only a small and special subgroup of clients. This program is clearly geared for heterosexual men who shop the streets. During his presentation, the DA, trying to get the group to engage, asks: ‘How many of you were picked up in the Tenderloin? How many of you were picked up in the Mission?’ [two of San Francisco’s historically low-income, and newly gentrifying neighborhoods where street prostitution is concentrated]. He does not bother to ask how many were picked up at the local erotic theater, or with an escort, or while cruising for a sex-worker on-line, or even on Polk Street [where male and transgender street prostitutes work].

The DA’s objective is to scare the men out of their established patterns of behavior by gruesomely cataloguing the potential legal repercussions of what they are doing – what it’s like to get booked, to be herded into the paddy-wagon, to spend the night in jail, or to be forced to take an HIV test – all likely consequences of a second arrest. He shows the class a brief video reviewing the laws. I am at first confused by the last image in the sequence: the captionless depiction of a man hunched over a computer screen. The DA’s final words to the men are even more remarkable: ‘Next time you’re thinking of going out on the street, do like this guy: go on the Internet if you have to – but stay away from minors!’

The final presentation before the lunch break features a former street prostitute and ex-heroin addict who now runs a program to help prostitute women transform their lives and get off the streets. Seated beside her is a panel of three other former homeless and drug-addicted streetwalkers. Now clean and sober, well-scrubbed, well-fed, and conservatively attired, their appearances are not much different from other 30- to 40-year old

professional women. Only their scathing and effusively expressed anger betrays a difference.

For the men, this is no doubt the most riveting panel of the day. At last, their attention is focused, as they sit tense and upright in their chairs. From their facial expressions and inclining postures, some even seem to be vaguely aroused. The rhetorical tactic employed by the women is a combination of shock therapy and a firm reassertion of the primacy of marital domesticity. 'Most of the women I have worked with started turning tricks as children or teens,' says one woman in a harsh, accusatory voice. 'I learned a long time ago that it's not pedophiles involved in that, but the men that sit here in this room.' Through teary eyes and clenched teeth, another panelist tells the men her own story of early sexual abuse, addiction, and rape. Her tale, gripping and theatrical, ends with the following admonition:

Once, I remember being crusty and dope sick, wearing yellow shorts, and walking around with blood caked on my thighs for two days. No one asked me what was wrong. I felt like a fallen woman that God, society, and my family would never forgive. . . . We're not out there because we like to suck dick, and you're not out there because you like us. You're the cause of our suffering, and you can become statistics yourselves. Try and realize, if you have to go back out – these women were hurt! A lot of you men are husbands, fathers, and grandfathers. What did you tell your significant others today? Hopefully, someday soon you'll learn how to have healthy relationships: with your wives.

In the afternoon, there are three additional presentations: one featuring representatives from organized neighborhood and merchant groups, another with a sergeant from the Vice Squad on the dynamics of pimping, and the final presentation by a therapist on 'Sexual Compulsivity and Intimacy Issues'. The neighborhood groups are represented by two men and a woman, white residents and small shopkeepers from the Tenderloin district. Together with the Vice cop, they paint the johns as aggressors against family, community, and – rather ironically – business.¹⁹ The harms that the johns are held responsible for are both symbolic and material. 'Do you have sex in front of your children?' they ask. 'Little boys in my neighborhood blow up condoms like balloons! You hear about victimless crimes, but our whole neighborhood is a victim! Fifteen-year-old girls turn tricks and twenty minutes later deliver babies. Millions of dollars pass through these girls, but at the end of the day they have nothing. All the way through this business, there are victims.'

The final session, led by a licensed Marriage and Family Counselor, relies upon a 12-step sexual addiction model of client behavior. The counselor is a white, middle-class, casually dressed man in his late 30s, an exemplar of northern California therapeutic culture and soft-spoken masculinity. He begins his presentation with a definition: 'Sex addicts have trouble thinking

of sex and love together, in the same relationship. They say, "I love my wife, but I have sex with a prostitute". The challenge is to do them together, to learn how to nurture relationship. This is not just a woman's job.' After distributing a 'Sexual Addiction Screening Test' to the members of the class (with questions such as 'Do you often find yourself preoccupied with sexual thoughts?', and 'Has your sexual activity interfered with your family life?')

The Sexual Addiction Screening Test (SAST)

The Sexual Addiction Screening Test (SAST) is designed to assist in the assessment of sexually compulsive or 'addictive' behavior. Developed in cooperation with hospitals, treatment programs, private therapists, and community groups, the SAST provides a profile of responses which help to discriminate between addictive and nonaddictive behavior. To complete the test, answer each question by placing a check in the appropriate yes/no column.

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 1. Were you sexually abused as a child or adolescent? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 2. Have you subscribed or regularly purchased sexually explicit magazines like Playboy or Penthouse? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 3. Did your parents have trouble with sexual behavior? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 4. Do you often find yourself preoccupied with sexual thoughts? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 5. Do you feel that your sexual behavior is not normal? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 6. Does your spouse [or significant other(s)] ever worry or complain about your sexual behavior? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 7. Do you have trouble stopping your sexual behavior when you know it is inappropriate? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 8. Do you ever feel bad about your sexual behavior? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 9. Has your sexual behavior ever created problems for your family? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 10. Have you ever sought help for sexual behavior you did not like? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 11. Have you ever worried about people finding out about your sexual activities? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 12. Has anyone been hurt emotionally because of your sexual behavior? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 13. Are any of your sexual activities against the law? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 14. Have you made promises to yourself to quit some aspect of your sexual behavior? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 15. Have you made efforts to quit a type of sexual activity and failed? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 16. Do you have to hide some of your sexual behavior from others? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 17. Have you attempted to stop some parts of your sexual activity? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 18. Have you ever felt degraded by your sexual behavior? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 19. Has sex been a way for you to escape your problems? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 20. When you have sex, do you feel depressed afterwards? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 21. Have you felt the need to discontinue a certain form of sexual activity? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 22. Has your sexual activity interfered with your family life? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 23. Have you been sexual with minors? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 24. Do you feel controlled by your sexual desire? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | 25. Do you ever think your sexual desire is stronger than you are? |

Figure 3 The Sexual Addiction Screening Test, distributed at the San Francisco First Offender Program. Originally printed in Patrick Carnes, *Contrary to Love: Helping the Sexual Addict*.

the therapist tries to enlist them in a discussion about why men visit prostitutes. 'Stress,' volunteers one man. 'Curiosity,' says another. 'Anger? Loneliness?' offers the therapist, and some of the men agree. Finally, one john rouses himself out of boredom to protest. 'Come on already! It should just be legalized! Guys need a place to get relief.' The police officer who is seated to my left leans over to me and whispers in my ear: 'I agree. Anyway, I bet most of these men will now just go indoors, where they don't have to worry about any of this.' (Fieldnotes, San Francisco, May 1999)

* * *

Feminists have bemoaned, but also taken for granted, the sexual double standard in the treatment of prostitution by the criminal justice system. As recently as 1993, the scholar and prostitutes' rights activist Gail Pheterson (1993: 44) could righteously argue that:

[o]f course, the customer is also party to prostitution transactions and in countries where sex commerce is illegal, he is equally guilty of a crime. But such laws are not equally applied to customer and prostitute. . . . Nowhere is equal punishment enforced, however, partly because law officials are either customers themselves or they identify with customers. Prostitutes have numerous stories of the sexual demands of police, lawyers, judges, and other male authorities.

Pheterson and other critics would never have predicted that, by the mid-1990s, municipal and national governments might actually intervene to challenge and reconfigure patterns of male heterosexual consumption, and even mobilize feminist arguments in the service of such interventions. Nor did they foresee that, despite a shared gender and sexual identification with customers, male authorities would be beholden to other social forces and political interests that might lead them to curtail the prerogatives of heterosexual desire. And they did not anticipate how programs such as 'John School' and the expanding and diversifying market in commercial sexual services might represent what only seem to be paradoxical facets of interconnected social trends.

During the last five years, 'John Schools', 'First Offender Programs' and 'Client Re-Education Projects' have sprung up in American cities as diverse as San Francisco and Fresno (California), Portland (Oregon), Las Vegas (Nevada), Buffalo (New York), Kansas City (Kansas) and Nashville (Tennessee), as well as in Toronto and Edmonton (Canada) and Leeds (United Kingdom). Numerous other cities throughout the USA and Western Europe are currently considering implementing similar programs.²⁰ After decriminalizing prostitution in the late 1960s, in 1998 Sweden became the first national government to unilaterally criminalize the purchase of sexual

services by male customers (Bernstein, 2001). In the USA, although sporadic and fleeting gestures towards the arrest of male clients date back to the 1970s, contemporary client re-education programs must be seen as part of a new strategy of state intervention in male sexual behavior.

In both Oklahoma City and Kansas City, for example, city officials have begun to broadcast on cable television the photos and names of male clients arrested by police for prostitution-related offenses (Hamilton, 1999; Weitzer, 2000b). In Huntington Woods, Michigan, the police have released the names of 16,000 alleged prostitution customers on CD-ROM (Associated Press, 1999; Reuters, 1999). Police in various municipalities have also arranged for the names of arrested clients to be published in local newspapers, including the *Hartford Courant* in Connecticut, the *Brockton Enterprise* in Massachusetts, and the *Kentucky Post* in Kentucky (Lewis, 1999). Perhaps the most provocative (though not state-run) recent example of john 'outing' is 'Webjohn', an on-line database organized by 'concerned community members', featuring johns caught on video picking up or communicating with a known prostitute. The site's 'Mission Statement' notably posits johns, not prostitutes, as vectors of disease, and declares two official aims: 'to deny johns their anonymity' and 'to offer any residential or business community in North America a cost-free and law-suit-free mechanism to suppress street-level prostitution in their area'. Along with vehicle impoundment, revocation of driver's licenses, and stricter prohibitions against the patronage of child prostitutes and the possession of child pornography, this new spate of social policies constitutes an unprecedented attempt to regulate male heterosexual behavior (Lefler, 1999; Weitzer, 2000b; Bernstein, 2001).

Allison, Prasad, and other sociologists such as Castells (1996) and Kempadoo and Doezema (1998) have rightly pointed to the burgeoning demand for commercial sexual services as paradigmatic of various key features of late capitalism: the merging of public and private; the extension in depth and breadth of the service sector; the 'individualization' of sex; the preference for the neatly-bounded commodity over the messy diffuseness of non-market exchange – what I have further developed as 'bounded authenticity'. But missing from these accounts is a recognition of the fact that commercial sexual consumption is simultaneously being *normalized* and *problematized*, and that these two phenomena are linked. Underlying the lack of attention to the recent criminalization of consumer behavior is the neglect of two other key features of late capitalist society: the relationship between post-industrial poverty and gentrification, and the normative push on the part of some feminists to retain a modernist model of relationally-bound sexual intimacy.

John Schools are the outcome of an alliance between feminist anti-prostitution activists, organized groups of predominantly lower-middle class community residents and small-scale merchants, and politicians and big

businesses with interests in gentrifying neighborhoods such as San Francisco's Tenderloin and Mission districts. These are neighborhoods which are home to the city's principal streetwalking strolls and the most socially marginal sectors of the commercial sex trade, yet close to the business district and highly valuable real estate. Although the three groups indicated have disparate ideological and material agendas, they have joined forces to target the male patrons of prostitution's most publicly visible domain. In contrast to the moral wars of a century ago, contemporary campaigns against prostitution are chiefly concerned with cleaning up the gritty underbelly of an industry that is basically left alone so long as it remains behind closed doors, or, more preferably still, on-line (Weitzer, 2000b). Attempts to eradicate the most 'problematic' segments of the industry implicitly serve to legitimize the *unproblematic* parts that remain.

The district attorney's advice to the attendees of John School to get out of their cars and turn on their computers can be rendered decipherable in this way as an important step towards cleaner streets and gentrified neighborhoods. Thus in 1994, when the San Francisco Board of Supervisors assembled a Task Force to investigate revisions to the city's prostitution policy, the primary and explicitly stated impetus was community and merchants' objections to disruptions on their streets (San Francisco Task Force on Prostitution, 1994). In its *Final Report*, the Task Force noted that:

Despite their concerns about noise, traffic, etc., most residents [of the Tenderloin and Mission districts] supported decriminalization or legalization of prostitution. . . . Residents' valid concerns about quality of life, yet support for decriminalization, was a conflict more apparent than real. The conflict could be resolved by focusing on the complaints: not against prostitution itself, but by the perceived fallout or side effects of street prostitution. (San Francisco Task Force on Prostitution, 1996: 27, 29)

Although police representatives and municipal politicians continue to frame their street-focused enforcement strategy as being in accordance with the preponderance of citizens' complaints, the effect of their policies is clearly to divert sex-workers and customers into indoor and on-line commercial sex markets.

The new social policies targeting male sexual conduct and commercial consumption are not, however, completely absent of moral focus or content. The various strands of the ideological agenda behind programs such as John School, like the interest groups behind it, are multiple but interweaving. Many contemporary feminist activists, like their feminist forerunners, are keen upon challenging the male half of the sexual double standard. Given the emergence of the sexually consumeristic *Playboy* ideal in the 1960s (Ehrenreich, 1983), the deregulation and normalization of pornography in the 1970s (Juffer, 1998), and other predominantly male benefits of the sexual revolution, the reassertion of sexual domesticity and marital fidelity

is experienced as particularly crucial. Responding to a similar constellation of concerns, lower-middle class residents and small-scale merchants can also be seen as participating in both a material and a symbolic 'crusade' against the incursion of market forces into a longed-for protected sphere of family, neighborhood, and community.

Conclusion

The two historically unique and contradictory tendencies that I have documented here, namely burgeoning consumption and increasing state intervention, should be understood within a broad array of economic and cultural transformations that have unfolded over the last 30 years and crystallized even more dramatically during the last five. The pursuit of *bounded authenticity* that is encapsulated in the demand for sexual commerce has been augmented by the shift from a relational to a recreational model of sexual intimacy, by the symbiotic relationship between the information economy and commercial sexual consumption, by the ways in which tourism and business travel facilitate the insertion of men into the commercial sexual marketplace, and, more generally, by the myriad mergings and inversions of public and private life that are characteristic of our era.

At the same time, the corresponding phenomena of post-industrial poverty and the gentrification of the inner city have led to an overlapping of ambitions between municipal politicians, developers, and feminist anti-prostitution activists, who are jointly interested in 'cleaning up' the male desires that contribute to the sully of city streets. John Schools, as well as other measures that penalize a subgroup of the male clients of commercial sex-workers, have emerged out of the confluence of these disparate political agendas. The recent crackdowns on johns and the normalization of other forms of commercial sex go hand in hand because in addition to struggles over sex and gender, both the state policing of the street-level sex trade and the normalization of the sex *business* reveal a shared set of underlying economic and cultural interests. Both street-level policing and cultural normalization have facilitated the rise of the post-industrial service sector and the information economy, helping to create clean and shiny urban spaces in which middle-class men can safely indulge in recreational commercial sexual consumption.

Notes

- 1 All of the names and identifying details of individuals and specific commercial venues have been changed or omitted so as to protect their

anonymity. Geographical locations, when included, have been left unmodified in order to respect the locational specificity of the events that I describe.

- 2 These queries and postulated meanings derive from the abundant feminist-theoretical literature on the subject. For a critical overview, see Bernstein (1999).
- 3 My focus is on heterosexual male desire and consumption patterns – the primary commercial sex market in which the state intervenes, and the almost exclusive focus of state discourse. In touristic urban centers, heterosexual prostitution is estimated to comprise approximately two thirds of the overall market, while paid encounters between men constitute approximately one third (Leigh, 1994). Although there is a growing literature on the emergence of women as consumers of pornographic images (Juffer, 1998), and on the recent phenomenon of female sex tourism to the Caribbean (O'Connell Davidson, 1998), there is scant evidence that any significant number of female clients of prostitutes – either lesbian or heterosexual – exists domestically. I have thus not sought to include any female sexual clients in my sample. The lack of such a market reveals a great deal about the persistently gendered nature of commercial sexual consumption.
- 4 The first arrests of clients in the USA (which were intermittent and few in number) followed a 1975 ruling brought by the American Civil Liberties Union before a California State Court, which noted 'the plain unvarnished fact . . . that men and women engaged in proscribed sexual behavior are not treated equally' (MacDonald, 1978: C5). On the increase in client arrest rates in mid-1990's San Francisco, see Marinucci (1995a) (describing a 25 percent increase in client arrest rates) and Marinucci (1995b) (quoting SFPD statistics indicating a dramatic surge in prostitution-related arrests of male clients to 1,000 of 4,900 total). On the emergence of a similar phenomenon in New York City as part of Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's 'Quality of Life' campaigns, see Pierre-Pierre (1994) and Nieves (1999).
- 5 As Eric Schlosser (1997: 44) has pointed out, 'most of the profits being generated by porn today are being earned by business not traditionally associated with the sex industry – by mom and pop video stores; by long-distance carriers like AT&T; by cable companies like Time Warner and Tele-Communications Inc; and by hotel chains like Marriott, Hyatt, and Holiday Inn that now reportedly earn millions of dollars each year supplying adult films to their guests'.
- 6 Despite the fact that male prostitution was also prevalent in urban centers during this period, male prostitutes were typically subsumed under the new and more socially salient banner of 'homosexuals' in scholarly, medical-psychological and political discourses (Weeks, 1997[1981]).
- 7 It is ironic that prostitutes' rights movements have sought legitimacy under the banner of 'sex-work' (Jenness, 1993), considering that, for Marx and other early socialist critics, what was wrong with wage labor as 'work' was precisely that it resembled prostitution (Marx, 1978[1844]: 103).

- 8 Twelve of the client interviews were conducted face-to-face, lasting from one to four hours each. The remaining three interviews were conducted over the telephone. Interviewees were residents of four different West Coast cities and were recruited through referrals from sex-worker informants and through ads placed in local heterosexual and gay male sex newspapers. They were consumers of an array of sexual products and services, including massage parlors, independent sex-workers, street prostitutes, escort agencies, telephone sex, and strip clubs. Of the 15 interviewees, 14 were white while the 15th identified himself as Mexican. While to some extent this reflects the racially skewed and stratified composition of sex industry consumers (see note 12, below), another salient issue here may have been my means of contacting participants. Snowball samples were generated through white, educated, indoor sex-workers, who tend to have an upper-income, predominantly white clientele like themselves. In-depth interviews with both indoor and street-level sex-workers which lasted from one to four hours were conducted face-to-face in English: in the San Francisco Bay Area; Amsterdam, The Netherlands; Gothenburg, Sweden; Oslo, Norway; and Copenhagen, Denmark.

Over 1,500 pages of materials were consulted from print and on-line media from 1995 to 2000. On-line research involved a review of websites and chat rooms where sex-workers advertise and consult with one another, and sites and list-serves where patrons exchange experiences and other information. Ethnographic fieldwork consisted of on-site observations and informal conversations with participants in a diverse range of commercial sexual spaces, including sex clubs, streetwalking strolls, massage parlors, and brothels, as well as in criminal justice facilities, municipal policy-making meetings, and social service agencies. From 1994–1996, I served as a participant-observer on the San Francisco Task Force on Prostitution, created by the Board of Supervisors to review and amend prostitution policy in San Francisco. Through membership of the Task Force, I was introduced to the city's leading prostitutes' rights activists, neighborhood representatives, and government and police officials, including many of the parties who would later come to play a leading role in the development of 'John School'.

- 9 The period between 1880 and 1920 in US history has been designated the 'Progressive Era', marking the transition between pre-industrial kin-based society and the modern industrial nation (Luker, 1998).
- 10 In some texts, normalized and pathologized constructions of sexual consumption may exist side by side. Greenwald (1958), for example, presents a 'john typology' in which the 'compulsive' consumer is pathologized while the 'occasional' consumer is normalized.
- 11 The relevant studies include Månsson, 1988; Prieur and Taksdal, 1993; Allison, 1994; Hart, 1994; and Prasad, 1999.
- 12 As is typical in the literature, Sullivan and Simon narrowly equate 'paid sex'

with the patronage of prostitutes. Among Sullivan and Simon's most salient findings are that the rate of prostitution visitation is highest for men aged 53 to 60, that military service increases the chances that a man will have paid sex by 23 percent, that the overall effect of education is to increase the likelihood of prostitution patronage, and that African American and Hispanic men are twice as likely to have visited a prostitute as white men (1998: 139, 140, 150). This final claim is perhaps their most questionable, given the contradictory evidence presented in other published accounts, as well as in my own research about the skewing of the sex industry in northern California toward white and Asian male consumers (Flowers, 1998; Bernstein, 2001).

- 13 In the *Social Organization of Sexuality*, Laumann et al. use the terms *relational* and *recreational* to designate distinct normative orientations toward sexual behavior (1994). I use the terms both to distinguish between different normative models and to indicate successive, historically specific configurations of sexual and emotional life. Social historians have linked the relational model (also referred to as 'amative' or 'companionate') to the rise of modern romance and the nuclear family under capitalism, contrasting it with the prototypically *procreative* orientation of pre-industrial society (Fass, 1977; D'Emilio, 1983; Luker, 1984). Some social theorists have pointed to an emergent second shift in paradigms of sexuality, occurring roughly around the 1970s, in which sexuality derives its primary meanings from pleasure and sensation, and is no longer the exclusive province of marital or even durable relationships. This second shift to what I am calling a *recreational* paradigm of sexuality has been variously described as the 'normalization' of sex (Castells, 1996), 'unbounded eros' (Seidman, 1991), 'the postmodern erotic revolution' (Bauman, 1998) and the 'fun ethic' (Bourdieu, 1984). In contrasting *recreational* sexuality with *relational* sexuality, I seek to distinguish the former from the romantic residues and extra-sexual associations that typically accompany the notion of a 'relationship', but I do not mean to suggest that it must lack a meaningful intersubjective component.
- 14 Giddens's *Transformation of Intimacy* (1992) employs a 'compensatory' model of men's participation in commercial sex, while also describing more general reconfigurations in late capitalist paradigms of intimacy. Giddens introduces the term 'plastic sexuality' to refer to a new paradigm of eroticism that is non-reproductive, in principle reciprocal and egalitarian, and subjectively experienced as a property of the self. Plastic sexuality is the erotic counterpart of the 'pure relationship', a relationship entered into for the sake of the intimacy it affords both partners. Unlike the model of recreational sex that I present here, Giddens's 'plastic sexuality' is still essentially connected to a notion of private-sphere, durable romantic relationships. Giddens uses the term 'episodic sexuality' to refer to what for him is a less significant, if more troubling, cultural offshoot. Episodic sexuality is gendered masculine, compulsive in nature, and aims to neutralize the anxieties

- that are stimulated by the threat of intimacy contained in the pure relationship and the relative emancipation of women. As such, episodic sexuality typically finds expression in practices of commodified sex such as the consumption of pornography.
- 15 By 1988, nearly a third of American households consisted of a single individual. In Western European countries, single-person households have been the most rapidly growing household type since the 1960s, with from 25 percent (in the United Kingdom) to 36 percent (in Sweden) of the population living alone. In the USA, the percentage of unmarried adults rose from 28 percent to 37 percent between 1970 and 1988 (for a fuller account of recent changes in US and Western European social demography, see US Bureau of the Census, 1989, 1992; Sorrentino, 1990; and Kellogg and Mintz, 1993).
 - 16 Although I did not speak with the clients' partners directly, I did ask my interviewees if their partners were inclined to see their commercial sexual activity in the same way as themselves. Notably, most men reported that they chose not to tell their partners about their activities. The reactions of the partners who were told ranged from grudging acceptance to hurt and disapproval, providing further evidence of the extent to which heterosexual men (as desiring subjects) and women (as exchangeable objects) may have divergent interests with respect to sexual commerce.
 - 17 Marx was the first to note the ironic leveling capacity of market transactions, though in lament rather than celebration: 'That which is for me through the medium of money – that for which I can pay (i.e., which money can buy) that am I, the possessor of the money. The extent of the power of money is my power. Money's properties are my properties and essential powers – the properties and powers of its possessor. Thus what I am and am capable of is by no means determined by my individuality. I am ugly, but I can buy for myself the most beautiful of women.' (Marx, 1978[1844]: 103)
 - 18 Although prostitution (i.e. genital-oral or genital-genital contact in exchange for payment, which are criminal acts under California state law) has been well documented in San Francisco's legal sex clubs by the clients and sex-workers that I interviewed, by clients in on-line chat rooms, and by the local press, the clubs officially deny that illegal activities take place on their premises (Brook, 1998).
 - 19 Ruth Rosen observed a similar split between the interests of large- and small-scale business owners earlier in the century, when large-scale business interests (real estate agents, landlords, and owners of saloons and breweries) supported organized brothel prostitution, whereas small shopkeepers opposed it (Rosen, 1982: 77).
 - 20 See, for example, Marinucci (1995a and b); Kilman and Watson-Smyth (1998); Symbaluk and Jones (1998); Lefler (1999); Nieves (1999); Monto (2000); Weitzer (2000b).

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