Sex as a Commodity

Prostitution: Engaging in Sex for Pay

- Prostitution is often called the oldest profession because for centuries unattached women were able to support themselves only in this way.
  - St. Mary Magdalene was often portrayed in a state of penitence
  - Often described as a prostitute, but it might have been a translation error
Prostitution: Engaging in Sex for Pay

- Although prostitution has been condemned as fornication throughout the Christian era, it was also condoned as providing a necessary safety valve for the release of male sexual energy.
  - St. Thomas Aquinas and St Augustine viewed it as a necessary “evil”

Sex in exchange for sexual access

- Men give women money or resources (things of value to women) in order to secure sexual access occurs in many situations
- Women who receive money from men and allow sexual access under many circumstances
- Evolutionary psychology suggests that such exchanges are mutual beneficial in the long run reproductive fitness
  - More sex leads to more offspring
  - Resources shift to the person likely to take care of offspring
- Evolutionary quid pro quo?
Prostitution: Engaging in Sex for Pay (cont’d)

- Despite efforts of the Protestant Reformation to eradicate prostitution because of sexually transmitted diseases, prostitution continued to flourish, particularly in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and America saw the development of “red light” districts in most cities. Epidemics of gonorrhea during World War I drove prostitution underground.

Prostitution: Engaging in Sex for Pay (cont’d)

- The sexual revolution in the 1960s, development of oral contraception, and a change in sexual morality that resulted in the increased willingness of unmarried women to engage in sex started a decline in prostitution.
Today, a hierarchy of prostitution exists, from streetwalking to off-street prostitution or escort services, to massage parlors and strip joints which serve as fronts.

Streetwalkers are the lowest-ranking and lowest-paid prostitutes. They face high risks of violence, STDs, including AIDS, arrest, pregnancy, and drug use.

Runaways or homeless minors who are prostitutes face heightened risks.

Streetwalkers are both male and female. Females tend to make more money, whereas males may derive more sexual enjoyment.
Prostitution: Engaging in Sex for Pay (cont’d)

• Streetwalkers
  – Violence ridden childhood
  – Homelessness
  – Alcoholism & drug addiction
  – Risk of rape, injury, and death at work
  – Less likely to use condom (STDs, pregnancy)
  – Studies from some cities
    • 30% of women who exchanged crack for sex hadn’t used a condom in a month
    • 1/3 of female prostitutes were HIV +
    • 41 of male prostitutes were HIV +

• Pimps
  – Take part or all earned money from their prostitutes
  – Set up women in apartments and provide food allowance
  – Are serviced by prostitutes
  – Provide drugs and social life
  – Pay off gangs, cops
  – Bail out of jail
  – It’s a hard life for a pimp
  – Disappearing
Only a minority of prostitutes solicit customers on the streets. Many transgendered men turn to prostitution to pay for operations—many men into “she-male” sex—For some it fulfills women identity to be mistaken for a woman.
Runaway prostitutes

- Runaways are particularly vulnerable to becoming prostitutes
  - Many already abused sexually or physically
  - Difficult to find legitimate work
  - Youth is a desirable quality
  - Vulnerability is a desirable quality
  - Many street people help runaways into prostitution – sometimes pimps
  - Sometimes adults “adopt” a runaway;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 19.1 Life experiences of female, male-to-female transgendered, and male prostitutes in San Francisco’s Tenderloin district</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>M-to-f</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean age</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used hard drugs at least weekly (%)</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution was only source of income (%)</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean weekly income in 1990</td>
<td>$1030</td>
<td>$688</td>
<td>$507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workload</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean number of clients per week</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean time with client (minutes)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ever got sexual pleasure from giving oral sex to client (%)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usually or always experienced orgasm during sex with client (%)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative effects (mean number of occasions in previous year)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raped by client</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaten by client</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrested for prostitution</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married or cohabiting (%)</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual orientation (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attracted to men only</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bisexual</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attracted to women only</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean number of noncommercial sex partners in previous year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male partners</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female partners</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: These data are not necessarily representative for all cities; arrest rates, for example, may be higher in cities that are less tolerant of prostitution than San Francisco.
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Prostitution: Engaging in Sex for Pay (cont’d)

- Off-street prostitution is varied and quite fluid.
- Escorts are off-street prostitutes who obtain clients through newspaper advertising, the yellow pages, websites, and by word of mouth.

Escorts
- More numerous than streetwalkers
- Comprise 50% of prostitutes in major cities
- Charge more
- In-call; out-call
- Work for escort agencies
  - Agency fee
  - Sex fee (tip, gift, donation)
- Some work independently
- Some have security; call to check in
- Girlfriend experience (longer)
- More likely to have regulars

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Reply to: pars-71129879@crane.net.org
Date: 2008-06-07, 12:15PM EDT

Full nude erotic massages: 912 484 4889
- WHITE ONLY NO INTERRACIAL
- I don’t give out anymore pics don’t ask.
- INCALL ONLY - 60-30min 100-hour 150-for...
- No blocked or private numbers will be answered.
- MON-THURS EVENINGS ONLY, ALL DAY ANYTIME FRI
Prostitution: Engaging in Sex for Pay (cont'd)

- Massage parlors, where services vary, and strip joints where exotic dancers provide a show and other forms of sexual arousal, are common in commercial locations in suburban areas.
  - Also independents

However, with the exception of Nevada, where prostitution is legal, the old-fashioned brothel or whorehouse has disappeared. A few have been preserved as national historic sites. Legal brothels do exist in other countries, such as the Netherlands and some states in Australia.
Prostitution: Engaging in Sex for Pay (cont’d)

• Legal Prostitution
  – Any county under 400,000 population
  – Any other county may regulate it or prohibit it
    • 11 counties permit it; 30+ brothels in NV
  – License fees for brothels range from an annual $100,000 in Storey County to an annual $200 in Lander County
  – Prostitutes checked weekly for several sexually transmitted diseases, and monthly for HIV
  – Condoms are mandatory for all oral sex and sexual intercourse

Prostitution: Engaging in Sex for Pay (cont’d)

• Typical encounter
  – Customer is buzzed in and sits down in the parlor
  – The available women appear in a line-up and introduce themselves.
  – The price negotiations take place in the woman's room
  – The house normally gets half of the negotiated amount.
  – The prostitutes almost never kiss on the mouth.
Prostitution: Engaging in Sex for Pay (cont’d)

• Good pay is the main motive for prostitution today. Even a streetwalker turning a single 20-minute trick can earn the equivalent of a day’s work at minimum wage.

• Prostitutes who are addicted to drugs and transgendered people who are trying to get money for sex reassignment surgery have special financial needs.

The Prostitutes’ Rights Movement and Prostitution Worldwide

• In 1973 Margo St. James founded COYOTE (“Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics”) in San Francisco with the mission of improving the image and working conditions of prostitutes.

• Today COYOTE is nationwide, and the present goal is decriminalization or the elimination of laws that outlaw prostitution.

• Although laws against prostitution are still intact, there is some support for legalization with regulation whereby prostitutes could work in prescribed locations and under certain conditions of licensure.
Prostitution: Engaging in Sex for Pay (cont’d)

• Legalize Prostitution in US
  – Under what conditions?
  – Under what regulations?
  – Yes or no?

The Prostitutes’ Rights Movement and Prostitution Worldwide (cont’d)

• Prostitution exists worldwide. Conditions for prostitutes are worse in developing countries than they are in the United States or Europe.

• The Coalition against Trafficking in Women advocates worldwide criminalization of everyone connected with prostitution—pimps, procurers, johns, and traffickers—but not of the prostitutes themselves, whom they view as victims.
The Prostitutes’ Rights Movement and Prostitution Worldwide (cont’d)

• Three aspects of worldwide prostitution that are of particular concern are prostitution by minors (ages 12–18), involuntary prostitution, and transnational trafficking of prostitutes.

• Transnational trafficking refers to the movement of women and girls from country to country—usually from poorer to richer countries—to supply the demand for prostitutes.

• The United States and other countries have enacted extraterritorial legislation that makes it a crime for their citizens to have sex with an underaged person in a foreign country, even if the act is legal in that country.

19.3 Traffic in women and girls for prostitution flows largely from poor to rich countries.
• Strip Clubs
  – Most are legitimate where little or no touching is involved
  – Some are fronts for prostitution

Phone Sex Blends Prostitution and Pornography

• The typical phone sex transaction involves a man telephoning an operator, who engages him in erotic conversation while he masturbates. The man typically pays about $2 a minute, which is billed to his credit card or added to his telephone bill. Phone sex is legal as long as both parties are over 18.

• Many phone sex operations have websites where the client can view photographs of the person who is talking.
• Pornography refers to depictions in any medium—prose, poetry, painting, the plastic arts, photography, film, or performance—of people or behaviors that are intended to be sexually arousing.

• Works that are considered to have literary or artistic merit are termed “erotica.” The term “sexually explicit material” is popular with academics and policymakers.

• Hugh Hefner, who founded the soft-core pornography magazine *Playboy* in 1953, is considered one of the most influential figures of the sexual revolution of the 1960s.
Pornography (cont’d)

• Pornography has battled censorship for centuries. In the nineteenth-century in England and the United States, anything that was potentially sexually arousing was considered obscene—that is, sexually offensive or threatening to public morality.

• Even works considered of major literary significance today were banned. However, large amounts of very cheap ephemeral pornography were printed illegally and smuggled into the United States.

In 1957 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a work could be ruled obscene only if the “average person, applying contemporary community standards” judged that the work as a whole was designed to cause sexual arousal.

Since the 1960s, new technologies have resulted in new kinds of pornography. These include hard-core movies in Super-8 format, peep shows, adult bookstores, feature-length movies in movie theaters, videocassettes of adult movies for home viewing, DVD technology, sexually explicit websites, and instant messaging technology.
Ch. 19, p. 635 Deep Throat (1972) is probably the most famous pornographic film of all time.

Pornography (cont’d)

• Although there is a trend toward more sexually explicit material for women, much of the new technology targets men. In spite of considerable research, the question of whether pornography contributes to violence against women is still unanswered.

• Only pornography involving minors is still illegal and actively suppressed in the United States and other countries. Japan has long been the world leader in the production of underage pornography.