ENTRANCE, MAINTENANCE, AND EXIT:
THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC INFLUENCES AND CUMULATIVE BURDENS
OF FEMALE STREET PROSTITUTION

Celia Williamson

Submitted to the faculty of the University Graduate School
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy
in the School of Social Work
Indiana University

March, 2000
Accepted by the Graduate Faculty, Indiana University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Doctoral Committee:

_____________________________
William H. Barton, Ph.D.
Chairperson

_____________________________
Valerie Chang, Ph.D.

_____________________________
Gail Folaron, Ph.D.

_____________________________
Phyllis Stern, DNS

December 14, 1999
2000
Celia Williamson
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED
To Jeff and Lisa with every blessing
To Emma Kay who gave her life to the streets
and Mary who understands the difference between a world that is
and one that might be,
I dedicate this work.
Acknowledgments

I wish to thank the Council on Social Work Education and Riley Children’s Hospital’s Adolescent Medicine Department for their generous fellowship and training opportunities. A special thanks to The Friendly Center Scholarship Fund and The United Methodist Women’s Guild for their support during my doctoral studies.

I am especially grateful to my dissertation committee. For Gail Folaron, Ph.D. who socialized me into a qualitative researcher and mentored me into a doctoral candidate. For William H. Barton, Ph.D. for his challenges, expectations, and tireless efforts in guiding me toward dissertation completion. For Phyllis Stern, DNS whose expertise shaped my thoughts, sharpened my lens, and kept me grounded in the data. For Valerie Chang, Ph.D. whose ambidextrous way of being able to see the overall picture while remaining focused on both the implicit and explicit meanings kept me focused on the understanding and explanation of my work.

I am especially grateful to my mom and dad, Carmen and Charlotte Williamson, whose love and support taught me the meaning of perseverance. To my sister, Carmenita and her husband Dean, whose many contributions helped see me through a doctoral program. To my partner, Jeff, whose loving connection keeps me grounded. To my daughter Lisa, who inspires me to be the best person I can be.

This work has been inspired by such women as Chris, Tracey, Tina, Mary, and Laurina who shared their lives with me and allowed me to write about them.

To Genesis House in Chicago for their willingness to let me visit and learn from them.

A special thanks to The Friendly Center in Toledo, Ohio for their many supportive and loving prayers, help, contributions, and guidance. I am grateful for years of continued support from David J. Morris of The Friendly Center, Jay Lee Shavers, Kathy Latta, John Stephans, and Melissa Raffa whose dedication to those living in poverty and in vulnerable life situations keeps me focused on what is important in life. I owe a debt of gratitude to James R. Colbert for giving me the capacity to act on my understandings. Finally a thanks to Rose Matheny, Lou Anne Garner, and Gloria Lewis for motivating and mentoring women in Toledo who continue to want a better life.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Challenges Presented

PART ONE- Literature Review, Methodology & Data Analysis 1

Entrance, Maintenance, Exit: A Literature Review 2-8

Methodology 8-18
  Description of Participants 8
  Methods of Recruitment & Data Collection Procedures 9
  Data Collection Sites 9-13
  Interview Questions 13-14
  Feasibility & Work Plan 14
  Ethics & Protection of Human Subjects 14-15
  Data Analysis 15-18

Significant Theoretical Propositions 18-21

PART TWO- The Socio-Economic Structure of Street Prostitution: 22
  Multiple Layers of Influence

Socio-Economic Factors of the Formal Economy 23-29

Socio-Economic Factors of the Underground Economy 29-33
  The Crack Cocaine Phenomenon 33-40

Prostitution Industry 40
  The Pimping Game 40-46
  The Prostitution Lifestyle 46-49

PART THREE- Typology, Risks, & Stages of Street Prostitution 50

Typology of Street Prostitutes 51-54

Common Risks 54
  HIV 54-56
  Violence 56-57
  Drugs 57-58
  Emotional Health 58-59
Free Choice Paradigm 167-175
Discourse 167-168

Post-Modernism 169-170
Policy & Practice 170-174
Implications for Policy & Practice 174-176

Limitations 176-178

Summary 178-183

References 184-196

Appendices 197

Appendix A  Informed Consent
Appendix B  Interview Questions
Appendix C  Progression of Street Prostitution Outline
Appendix D  Socio-Economic Structure of Street Prostitution: Multiple Layers of Influence Model
Appendix E  Progression of Street Prostitution Model
CHALLENGES PRESENTED

The goal of this study is to explain the basic social process of street prostitution from entrance to exit using Grounded Theory Methodology. This document is divided into four parts. Part One examines the literature on prostitution as a process over time and includes the method used to conduct the study. This includes a description of the participants, the method of recruitment used, how and where the data were collected, the questions asked, the work plan, and the ethical protection of the respondents. An explanation of data analysis and significant theoretical propositions for the study are also provided in this section.

In Part Two, the socio-economic structure of street prostitution is assessed by examining multiple layers of influence in street work. These layers include the socio-economic factors of both the formal economy and the underground economy, the nature and influence of the pimping game and the lifestyle of street prostitution.

Part Three provides an interpersonal look at the types of women involved in street sex work, the risks to these women, and the stages from entrance to exit in street prostitution.

Part Four explores the implications for policy, practice, and research as a result of this study. The limitations of the study are identified and discussed. Included is a discussion of the mission of social work and its relationship to street prostitution.

A central claim made of this study is the impact of socio-economic influences and cumulative burdens. Socio-economic influences are those social and economic structures that impact the lives of street prostitutes. The progression through street prostitution from entrance to exit involves a series of physical and emotional burdens. The determinants of these burdens,
namely daily hassles, acute traumas, and chronic conditions have a cumulative effect. Over time, emotional and physical burdens overwhelm the capacity to effectively respond and women seek to exit prostitution.

In order to make appropriate assessments of women anywhere along the continuum of street prostitution, it behooves us to understand the entire progression of street work from entrance to exit. A research agenda to fill in the gaps and add to the knowledge base of social work is therefore offered.
PART ONE:

LITERATURE REVIEW, METHODOLOGY, & DATA ANALYSIS
ENTRANCE, MAINTENANCE, EXIT: A LITERATURE REVIEW

Prostitution is defined as the selling or trading of one's body to be used in sexual ways in exchange for money, housing, or other items. The intent of this research is to explain the experiences of those prostitutes at the bottom rung of the profession. Street prostitution entails work on the streets (sex in cars and motels), as dancers in gentlemen's clubs, massage parlor work, truck stops, and crack house work. Prostitution is known as the oldest profession and has been estimated to be more than three thousand five hundred years old (McKeganey & Barnard, 1996). Presently, it occurs in both big and small cities, urban, rural, and suburban areas, both across the nation and internationally.

Considerable attention has been given to the constructs of childhood trauma, poor coping skills, and delinquency in explaining pathways to "street" prostitution in the U.S. The literature is extensive and authors suggest that childhood trauma defined as childhood sexual abuse, physical abuse, and emotional abuses are antecedents to juvenile and adult street prostitution (Inciardi, 1984; James, 1976; James & Meyerding, 1977; Mathews, 1986; National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, 1992; Silbert & Pines, 1982; Silbert & Pines, 1983). Poor coping skills are developed as a result of family dysfunction (Vanwesenbeeck, 1994) and adolescence is characterized by runaway behavior, general delinquency, and entrance into prostitution (Simons & Whitbeck, 1991).

Traditional research has looked toward deviance theories to explain prostitution. "Deviance refers to the motives and behaviors of groups of people who are ridiculed, scorned, stigmatized, discriminated against, and punished because their lifestyle is at odds with traditional and conventional standards" (MacNamara & Karmen, 1983 p.7). Often an
assumption is made that the source of this deviance is individual pathology. With this in mind, researchers have historically searched for associations between prostitution and pathology (Winick, 1983 p.39). Many theorists have rationalized a prostitute’s motives for remaining in “the life” to be one of fixation at the oedipal stage and feelings of guilt from incestuous fantasies, hostility, and regression (Greenwald, 1958; Maerov, 1965; Winick & Kinsie, 1971). Characteristics may involve a defense against homosexuality (Greenwald, 1958; Maerov, 1965) a masculinity complex (Deutsch, 1947) or being incapable of real intimacy (Greenwald, 1958). Even though these theories are dated, they set the stage and guide the mind set for contemporary researchers. When empirically studied, the validity of these theories becomes questionable (See Bour, Young, & Henningsen, 1984; Exner, Wylie, Leura, & Parrill, 1977; Liss, 1981). To speak of incestuous fantasies, hostility, aggression, defense mechanisms and intimacy issues is to construct a picture of the prostitute that set in motion the framework through which researchers studied prostitution.

More recently, alternative constructions have sought to attribute blame to societal outcasting and labeling rather than individual pathology (N.J. Davis, 1971; Pheterson, 1990). These alternative constructions contend that when the individual is seen as deviating from the norm in one area, deviation is assumed in other areas. By moving the deviance from specific to general, the total individual is assumed to be different. By pathologizing the prostitute, a priori, we construct and reinforce pathology in the literature and support the notion of “other” (Harding, 1991). If appropriate, pathology should be a conclusion, not a premise. As prostitutes get reinterpreted, the life of these already marginalized women
becomes distorted and the total individual is judged odd or immoral (Jenks, 1985). In addition, by concentrating on the “sexual” nature of prostitution, to the exclusion of its others dimensions, we create deviants that we can victimize with our professional categories or labels (Mathews, 1986). Therefore labeling theorists look toward the effects of stigma and other societal influences which lie outside of the prostitute. The effects of societal stigmatization represents a piece of a larger puzzle in the world of street prostitution. Although these explanations have often been useful in tipping the scales from individual pathology to the effects of societal stigmatization, they fall short in explaining the process of prostitution. The process of street prostitution over time, involves both the effects of the person as well as her environment.

Therefore, the paradigm used for this study is one of understanding prostitution as a process. Process driven inquiry enables researchers to find a juncture where the person and environment intersect. Four comprehensive studies provide an emic view of prostitution and represent the best information on understanding street prostitution over time. These studies include N. J. Davis’ (1971) theory of “Drift” into prostitution, Mathews (1986) “Social Effects Model” of sex work, National Center for Missing & Exploited Children’s (1992) report on Juvenile prostitution, and a study on “The Matthew Effect” by Mansson & Hedin (1998) regarding prostitution exits.

N. J. Davis’s (1971) theory discusses a process by which women essentially drift into prostitution which, over time, leads to professionalization into the role of prostitute. Her sample consisted of adolescent girls who, according to N. J. Davis, first drifted from promiscuity to their initial act of prostitution. Determinants of entrance involve poor
interactions with conventional society, family instability, desiring new experiences, and having idle time on their hands. N.J. Davis suggests that motivation for entrance has more to do with isolation from conventional supports, independence, and perceptions of easy money than with financial needs. In contrast, Silbert & Pines (1982) concluded that financial reasons were the primary motivators for entrance into a life of street work noting that 86% of their sample listed money as their main reason for entrance. Other studies concur (See Benjamin & Masters, 1964; James, 1978; Mathews, 1986).

Stage II, The Transitional Deviance Phase according to N.J. Davis, is the time when prostitutes move in and out of both conventional society and deviant society. This stage lasts an average of six months to four years with women periodically holding conventional jobs, moving back home with parents, or returning to school. During this stage, the conventional persona has not yet been abandoned and women express fear of being discovered. It is during this stage that financial reasons become the prime motivator for being in "the life." However, according to N. J. Davis (1971) negative experiences could lead the prostitute to reject her role as sex worker and give up the life. For others, consistent normalization and persistent rationalization for prostituting leads the sex worker to seek further support from deviant others. Public confrontations, time spent in jail, printing ones name in the paper are societal activities that assist the prostitute in assuming the professional persona.

At Stage III, the prostitute becomes socialized into the life. Behavior is largely geared toward prostitution and the self concept revolves around prostitution. Because of the many hours worked and the mobility involved in prostitution, conventional ties become
weaker and superficial, while deviant ties become increasingly stronger. The street
prostitute has internalized the identity as prostitute and cannot see herself living the
conventional life. She rationalizes the behavior by stating that it is a job like any other job,
everyone does it in one form or another, or it brings in good money (N. J. Davis, 1971).

N. J. Davis' work opened the door to understanding prostitution over time. Although
empirical evidence exists to support aspects of N. J. Davis' Drift Theory (James, Davis, &
Vitaliano, 1982), it is limited in that it does not incorporate the effects of current risks
such as HIV, violence, and drug abuse issues, nor does it account for and explain how and
why women exit. Albeit limited, this and a small number of other studies began to suggest
that prostitution did not consist of a random chain of events, but possessed a core process.

Indeed, there has been less research emphasis on exit and the associated socio-political
and emotional reasons for leaving prostitution. A report released by the National Center
for Missing & Exploited Children group (1992) identified common elements of women
who made the decision to exit street work. According to their findings, what initially
began as free lance work for women in street work soon became akin to a life of bondage
and servitude. Coercion and brutality from pimps became the norm, unable to escape,
women became trapped into a life of street prostitution as juveniles. Over time, a growing
concern of incarceration, becoming less marketable, health issues, and an increased dislike
of customers caused some to contemplate ending the life they had initially chosen.

Personal reflections intensified the anger felt toward themselves and their customers.
This, coupled with the realization of little financial security as a result of one's efforts,
motivated these women to reach out. By age 30 most women in this study sought help and left prostitution.

Data on life after prostitution is scant. However, Mansson & Hedlin (1998) provide us with detailed information on life after prostitution for ex-prostitutes in Sweden. They identified four primary challenges women faced after a prostitution exit. Women previously involved in prostitution were compelled to emotionally work through and understand their past experiences. Women struggled with aspects of shame and experienced difficulty maintaining intimate and close relationships after leaving prostitution. Finally, women had to learn to deal with a marginal living situation.

Even less common is the effort to study street prostitution from beginning to end. Here Mathews (1986) provides us with a more complete analysis of street prostitution from entrance to exit. Mathews (1986) chose to explain his findings using what he termed a “social effects model,” which viewed prostitution entrance in terms of needs, skills, and values, concluding that economic determinants as well as psychological and status needs were equally important in the decision to enter street prostitution. The same key concepts were used to explain maintenance in the life as a process of movement from “entrance” to what the Mathews termed “entrenchment” in prostitution. In summarizing his results, common factors of young women who exited prostitution included being disillusioned with the lifestyle, receiving support from outside prostitution, escaping the life and acquiring legitimate work or training in the formal economy and unlearning the values and patterns of the lifestyle.
Researchers have learned from these studies in that they provide the conceptual framework and a significant share of what is now known about prostitution process. The congruence of many of the earlier process studies to one another and to the findings of this study lends credence to the belief that a basic social process of street prostitution exists and, over time remains the same. In building on this knowledge, emphasis is placed on the growing realization of the need to look at the fundamental effects of current risk factors, namely HIV, violence, drugs, and the deterioration of emotional and physical health when studying prostitution process. This realization led to the development of stages that account for particular emotional and physical risks and protective strategies apparent as women entered and exited street prostitution.

**METHODOLOGY**

**Description of Participants**

Participants in the study were women eighteen years of age and older who were no longer involved in street prostitution activities. Through a process of purposive sampling, twenty-one former street prostitutes were interviewed. Eighteen were recruited from Toledo and three were recruited from Chicago. Respondents ranged from 18-35 years old. Thirteen white Appalachian women, seven African American women, and one Hispanic woman comprised the sample. Data gathered in Chicago complemented what was found in Toledo. The time spent in prostitution ranged from three months to thirteen years. Length of an exit from prostitution at the time of the study ranged from six days to five years. Six of the women in the study previously had pimps and fifteen worked without a pimp. Thirteen women entered prostitution before any drug addiction occurred,
and eight entered already addicted to drugs. All of the women were low income prior to entrance into prostitution.

**Methods of Recruitment and Data Collection Procedures**

In depth, face to face interviews were conducted with participants. Each interview lasted approximately two hours. For some, a follow-up interview, lasting no more than one hour, was necessary to gather further data and clarify responses. As in the nature of grounded theory inquiry, the study was completed when the basic social process was discovered and repeated enough times in interviews with respondents until the researcher concluded that increasing the sample would not bring forth new information (Glaser, 1978).

With prior permission, each interview was audio tape recorded and transcribed verbatim by the researcher. During the study, memos were kept throughout the process of data collection and analysis. Tapes and memos were stored in a locked file cabinet in the researcher’s office and will be destroyed in three years (December 2001) as agreed upon in the terms of the initial proposal.

**Data Collection Sites**

Data collection efforts were concentrated in the Midwestern city of Toledo, Ohio. Toledo represents an ideal research area. It has an unusually high representation of street prostitution, particularly on its north side (Taylor, 1997).

Prior to the 1970s, the north side of Toledo was dominated by Appalachian families. It was during this time that Appalachians began to migrate up from such southern states as Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia. Men migrated up and went to work in the
nearby factories. In the 70s, when factories began to close, the notion of going from high
school to factory work and retiring at age 65 was no longer the traditional route to
financial stability for these families. Parents found themselves unable to find stable
employment. Some were forced to accept the assistance of low income maintenance
programs.

In 1994, the average low income family on the north side functioned at between a
fourth grade and eighth grade educational level (B. Thomas, personal communication,
October 1995). Lacking any post high school training, many found it difficult to compete
in a technologically driven society. Neighborhood income slowly declined. The rates of
families involved in the welfare system increased and by the early 90s the north side was
listed as one of the top ten poor white neighborhoods in the country (Whitman &
Friedman, 1994).

During the 1970s and 80s, many of the larger historic homes in this area were
sectioned off, refurbished by the government, and turned into low income housing for the
poor. As low income housing opportunities began to open up, the names on the top of
housing waiting lists were those of low income black families who lived throughout the
city. The result was a steady influx of African American families into these traditionally
white Appalachian neighborhoods. In addition to refurbished homes, two housing projects
became quickly integrated with both low income blacks and whites. By the late 1990s,
integration of these two groups is evidenced by the number of biracial and multiracial
children living in the community (K. Latta, personal communication, 1999).
In the world of prostitution, an interesting phenomenon was taking place. Because of the city's problems with downtown development, Toledo had not been successful in its endeavors to build downtown Toledo into a thriving mecca for its residents. The result was a downtown with very few activities to attract and maintain an influx of residents. This had a profound effect on the street prostitution business. Women began working the residential areas of north Toledo. Two activities made the north side of Toledo fertile for prostitution. First, a gradual drop in income as evidenced by an increase in government assisted income and housing contributed to neighborhood deterioration. Neighborhood deterioration brought illegal underground economy practices. Prostitution, drug dealing, and gang violence made north Toledo among one of the highest crime areas in the city (Crime Watch, 1998). Second, north Toledo offered the convenience of interstate exit ramps that led those in demand of prostitution services right into the neighborhood. This is significant for business since some prostitute customers come from Michigan. The attraction of Michigan customers to Toledo prostitutes can be summed up as an effort to minimize risk. By coming to Ohio, Michigan customers decrease the risk of their activities becoming known to friends and family. If arrested, their standing in the community and relationship with family are likely to remain unaffected. This coupled with a stable Toledo market, created a demand for this type of service.

Pimps were all too willing to meet this demand by supplying an ample number of women. It must be noted here that the belief that street prostitution is an all black phenomenon is largely a myth that has been reinforced by interviewing biased samples of jail populations (Wahab & Sloan, 1997). Both black and white women work in street
prostitution. In the pimping business, it is more lucrative to have a white prostitute, as they are believed to be in greater demand. Indeed, over half, thirteen of the twenty-one prostitutes interviewed were white. Thus, prostitution in north Toledo is representative of both black and white prostitutes.

Social workers from a north side community center, Friendly Center, Inc., served as liaisons, asking potential respondents if they would like to be interviewed. However, Toledo was not the only city sampled. Three women, each representing a particular prostitution “type,” were interviewed in Chicago. A comparison was made to assess the accuracy of the data collected in Toledo against prostitution experiences of the three women in Chicago. Women in Chicago reported similar prostitution experiences as those in Toledo. Women interviewed in Chicago were recruited from a social service agency called Genesis House.

Genesis House provides two distinct types of services to women involved in prostitution. First they offer a comprehensive residential treatment program for women wishing to leave street prostitution. Second, they offer basic needs services such as food, clothing, and phone services to women still actively working the streets.

Social workers employed at Genesis House served as liaisons to bring the respondents and researcher together. Data collection at this site consisted of one on one interviewing with three women no longer involved in prostitution activities.

A Feedback group, consisting of a group of social workers from Toledo with experience in work with street prostitutes, was assembled to critique the process of data collection and provide guidance toward accurate interpretations. This group was
presented with unidentifiable summary data in the form of categories and themes found throughout interviews. This gathering is known as peer debriefing, the purpose of which is to challenge researcher interpretations, thereby increasing the accuracy of the study findings. In addition, a group of former prostitutes was formed to critique the study findings. None of the women chosen to critique the study were interviewed for the study. In addition, themes were also taken back to one respondent involved in the study, in what is known as a member check, to further assess for accurate interpretation of the data. Therefore, credibility was obtained through consultation with participants and professional peers.

Interview Questions

An interview guide was developed to enable the researcher to focus the interview. It represented broad categories of open-ended questions upon which respondents elaborated when telling their stories. The overriding question was, “What has been your experience in prostitution. Tell me stories about what you remember happening. Include your thoughts, feelings, and perceptions, as you remember them. Continue to describe each experience until you feel it is complete.” Clarifying and reflecting was used to prompt participants to continue. Leading questions were avoided. However, guiding questions were used as well as probing questions. Leading questions are those questions that attempt to lead the respondent to answer in a certain way such as, “How long have you been involved with drugs?” prior to the respondent’s disclosure regarding drug use. Guiding questions or guiding statements are open-ended questions or statements surrounding a particular topic such as, “What physical health problems have you
experienced?” Guiding questions and statements encourage the respondent to talk openly and freely about a particular topic of interest. The guiding questions and statements for this study included gathering information on experiences with drug and alcohol use, emotional coping and physical health, relationships with family and children, HIV risks, childhood and delinquency, violence and safety, friendships and community supports, and involvement with the criminal justice system and other systems (see Appendix B).

Probing questions included questions the researcher asked as respondents were describing experiences with a particular topic. These included, “You said he gave you $300 and you smoked an 8-ball together. What is an 8-ball?” Probing questions are used to gather more specific detail about a phenomenon and were not included in the interview guide.

Feasibility and Work Plan

My mentor in this process was Phyllis Stern, DNS, an international expert in the field of grounded theory and a prolific writer in the area of grounded theory methodology. She studied and facilitated conferences with both Glaser and Strauss, the progenitors of grounded theory methodology.

Permission was sought and obtained from social workers in Toledo and the prostitution specific program Genesis House in Chicago, to assist in the recruitment of volunteer participants, the use of agency facilities, and the use of agency staff as informants. Data collection began mid-January 1998 in Toledo, Ohio.
Ethics and Protection of Human Subjects

Because of the intrusive nature of the inquiry and sensitivity of the material discussed, the following safeguards were employed. An "Informed Consent" outlining the possible risks, confidentiality protections afforded by the researcher, how the data will be used and the availability of results was given and read to potential participants (Appendix A).

Written permission was necessary to proceed.

Data Analysis

Grounded Theory is inductive and the focus is to understand the perceptions of reality from the participants involved. Assumptions concerning qualitative research are that multiple realities exist and therefore theories are not established a priori but rather are grounded in the data (Cresswell, 1994).

An investigator's purpose in using grounded theory is to develop a theory, grounded in the data during a given study, rather than testing theory developed by other scientists....In the language of grounded theory, data are manipulated by "constant comparison" to develop "hypotheses" (hunches). Findings are reported in terms of explanations about what the researcher thinks is a workable hypothesis. The hypothesis, usually called a core variable or central process, is made up of a number of social psychological processes. These processes occur within a given "context" or scene. A grounded theory research report is a description of how the processes make up the discovered theory and often includes a comparison of how this theory and existing theory adds to our knowledge (Stern & Kerry, 1996 p.12).

Grounded Theory is rooted in a Symbolic Interactionist perspective. Three main premises of symbolic interaction are presented below.

The first premise is that human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them....The second premise is that the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows....The third premise is
that these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interactive process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters (Blumer, 1969 p.2).

Therefore, as people attend to their daily lives, the particular context in which they live, or their lived experience, gives meaning and value to the way they view reality. The framework for understanding and constructing the lived experience is through Grounded Theory Methodology. The grounded theorist works to interpret that meaning and reality as seen through the eyes of her respondents.

The level of analysis to be used will be psycho-sociological. It is psychological in that interest in the prostitute personality is cognitive and limited to her perceptions. The perception of beliefs, values, expectations, attitudes and orientation toward self and others reflects the meaning and lived experience of the participants involved. I was interested in the social constructions of the environmental dimensions such as supports, influences, controls, and resources with regards to the social experience. Highlighted was the interaction between the inner experience, outward action, and multiple societal influences in the development of a theory on prostitute progression.

The process of data analysis in grounded theory involves substantive coding and theoretical coding. Substantive coding consists of “open coding” or “coding the data in every way possible” (Glaser, 1978 p. 56). This involves coding and categorizing the data line by line. Early interviews with prostitutes consisted of open coding. Throughout the study, I simultaneously interviewed respondents and analyzed data in what is known as “constant comparative analysis.” Constant comparative analysis then, is a “process of taking information from data collection and comparing it to emerging categories”
(Cresswell, 1998 p.57). Upon the completion of my first interview, data analysis began. Early analysis involved analyzing data line by line and was completed using general descriptors. An example consists of coding data that involved a woman's first experience in prostitution. The general descriptor for open coding used was “first experience.” Other codes surrounding entrance into prostitution included such descriptors as “entrance feelings” and “entrance goal.” These are known as “concepts.” Concepts are the basic unit of analysis that are extracted from raw data. Concepts were then grouped together to form a category. Following the example above, the general category became “entrance” and incorporated respondents' first experiences, feelings, and goals which developed into a process of entrance into street prostitution.

“Since the theory must be grounded, verifying its fit and relevance requires patience in going over and over the data to be sure it works with ease, before a secure investment is taken in theoretical coding (selective coding) for a focus on the core variable or basic social process” (Glaser, 1978, p.61). After going over and over the data, and integrating more data from subsequent interviews, the category for the example above “Entrance,” became connected to subsequent categories (social adjustment, social immersion, caught up, and re-evaluation/exit) to explain the basic social process of street prostitution. This was accomplished by developing propositions or building a relationship between categories (Cresswell, 1998).

Once the basic social process was uncovered, subsequent interviews consisted of selective coding for the basic social process of street prostitution. The coding was then “limited to those variables that relate[d] to the core variable in sufficiently significant
ways” (Glaser, 1978, p. 61). The core variable or basic social process became a guide to further data collection (Glaser, 1978). I then focused on discovering those causes, consequences, contingencies, contexts, covariances, and conditions of the basic social process. This led me to discuss prostitution in terms of the formal and underground economy and its impact on street prostitution. Also, taken into consideration were the properties of the pimping dimension of prostitution, and the prostitution lifestyle. Presented below are developed propositions to connect and build a relationship between the conditions that impact the world of street prostitution.

SIGNIFICANT THEORETICAL PROPOSITIONS

Assumptions and theoretical propositions for the theory of the Progression of Street Prostitution consists of multiple layers of influence. The diagram below represents a visual picture, followed by an outline of the significant theoretical propositions of this paper.

Socio-Economic Structure of Street Prostitution: Multiple Layers of Influence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-Economic Factors of the Formal Economy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Socio-Economic Factors of the Underground Economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Pimping Game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution Lifestyle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Prostitution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• The formal economy, because of the existence of racist, classist, and sexist prejudice and discrimination, maintains real or perceived, limited and blocked opportunities that create the need to maintain an underground economy.

• To survive in oppressive conditions with limited and blocked opportunities to the formal economy, marginalized members become involved in the underground economy (Henry, 1987).

• The underground economy mirrors the formal economy in that a hierarchy exists which is class determined and gender stratified.

• The underground economy is a rubric consisting of several industries, one of which is street prostitution.

• Involvement in the street prostitution industry is otherwise known as being involved in “The Game” or “The Life.” The Game or The Life consists of a code of conduct and a lifestyle.

• Street prostitution is embedded in The Game/The Life. Street prostitution is not a random and unordered phenomenon, but instead encompasses a basic social process that involves progression through prostitution from entrance to exit.

• Progression through the stages of street prostitution from entrance to exit is linear. Stages consist of (1) Entrance, (2) Social Adjustment, (3) Social immersion, (4) Caught Up, and (5) Reevaluation and Exit. Street prostitutes cannot skip stages.
However, women may revert back to previous stages. Drug-addicted women enter prostitution already “caught up” in the game.

- Categories of street prostitutes exist. Psycho-social conditions involving personal experiences and choices made contribute to the type of cognitive, affective, and behavioral activities in which a street prostitute engages. Although common elements exist, as women progress through stages, variations in experience are manifested in the development of three prostitute “types.”

- Prostitute types consist of street prostitutes who by virtue of their experiences and choices become (1) Outlaw Prostitutes, (2) Renegade Prostitutes, and (3) Conventional Pimp Controlled Prostitute. Each category of female prostitute perceives and responds to “the life” is different ways. Categories are not mutually exclusive. Although one category type will dominate behavior, prostitutes can reflect patterns of a subsequent category. Prostitutes can crossover from one category to the next over time.

- As women progress through the stages they experience a series of emotional and physical hassles, acute traumas, and chronic conditions. These burdens accumulated over time. Interpersonal resources needed to respond to these burdens deteriorate and women exit prostitution.

This study provides an original work and a contribution to the knowledge base of social work in four significant areas of research on street prostitution. First, it delineates the progression of street prostitution from entrance to exit as it is understood in
contemporary Midwest America. Second, any analysis of the data on street prostitution is incomplete without looking at the larger context within which street prostitution functions. Therefore, this study of the lived experiences of sex workers is contextualized in the contemporary socio-economic structure of prostitution life. Third, while the naivete of other studies assumes a monolithic portrayal of a prostitute, this study describes the different categorical types of women involved in the progression of female street prostitution. Finally these findings delineate characteristics of exit, which has received minimal scientific attention in previous literature.

Understanding the basic social process of street prostitution is essential to launching solutions that work. Gaining better insight into how and why women enter, maintain themselves, and exit the life, will prepare the knowledge base of social work to be ready to then begin to develop appropriate assessments for health providers and social work practitioners to use with prostitute clients. In turn, this will help remedy ignorance in the area of prostitution and will lead to program development and advocacy for this vulnerable and oppressed population.
PART TWO: FINDINGS

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC STRUCTURE OF STREET PROSTITUTION:

MULTIPLE LAYERS OF INFLUENCE
SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS OF THE FORMAL ECONOMY

Two significant influences from the formal economy contribute to the functioning of street prostitution. These include the comparative worth of women in the formal economy to that of men, and the stigmatization of selling sex as a profession.

Despite decades of political and social pressure to make gains in both opportunity and equality for women, conceptualization of the female role in America has changed very little. The message was evident from the results of a poll conducted in public schools.

Students believe that males and what males do have more inherent value; this is true in schools, homes, businesses and communities....Students perceived the primary responsibility for women in this society is to attract and impress men and that no other activity, with the possible exception of family, has more importance (Women Matter, 1998-99 p.7).

Although significant gains have been made in education, politics, and history, children are receiving the underlying message that women are worth less than men. This message is heavily rooted in America and is connected to and supported by divisions in gender with regard to status, worth, and economic opportunity. The existence of institutional barriers as a result of gender discrimination is apparent in research on women and economic achievement. The majority of working women work out of economic necessity and have considerable financial responsibilities, as evidenced by the fact that out of all women employed in the formal economy, 70% are either sole wage earners, have partners who earn little, or are single (Equal Rights Advocates, 1999). In 1971, women earned 59 cents for every dollar a man earned. In 1991 they averaged 70 cents for every dollar a man earned (Sklar, 1997) and in 1996, women earned 74 cents for every dollar a man earned (Equal Rights
Advocates, 1999). Thus, despite modest gains made, income disparities between men and women still present a large gap.

Even those most successful women in our country feel the effects of gender discrimination, reporting they believed the glass ceiling to be a continued reality for them. Indeed only 3-5% of senior management positions are held by women and, as of 1994, only 6.9% of seats on corporate boards were occupied by women, despite the fact that women make up as much as 51% of the population (Equal Rights Advocates, 1999). Thus irrespective of those few successful women, movement up the corporate ladder has been slow in coming.

However, most women may still find themselves cleaning the board room instead of occupying a seat at the table. By and large, women are disproportionately concentrated in lower wage jobs. As educational levels decrease, the disparity between male earnings and female earnings widen. A high school diploma earned women only 69% of the wages men earned with the same degree.

Currently, families where the head of household is a single parent are the lowest paid in our economy (Sklar, 1997) and are generally concentrated in low wage jobs, e.g., domestic workers, childcare, waitresses, and cashiers (Equal Rights Advocates, 1999). Low wages are often interpreted to mean no health insurance, no paid vacation or sick days and no unemployment compensation insurance (Equal Rights Advocates, 1999). Indeed, of all the workers who earn minimum wage in this country, two out of three are women (Sklar, 1997). Furthermore, it is reported that only 30% of these women received any regular child support payments, yet working single parents still found a way to average
approximately 25% of their pay for child care (Coulton & Chow, 1995). Thus, the possession of a job may not provide the opportunity to move from poverty to working class. Indeed, even women who leave welfare generally do not leave poverty (Sklar, 1997).

A woman’s educational background is related to the length of time her family will spend on welfare. Level of education is directly correlated with job opportunities and stable income (Equal Rights Advocates, 1999).

Studies have shown that higher education has an empowering effect on women and their children. Studies in several states have found that post-secondary education not only increases women’s income, it improves their self-esteem, increases their children’s educational ambitions, and has a dramatic impact on sufficiency (Women Matter, 1998-99 p. 6).

Since the passage of the welfare reform act and the initiation of work first programs, the number of welfare recipients has decreased. However, to go along with the decrease in welfare programs is a decrease in the number of welfare recipients enrolled in colleges across the country (Equal Rights Advocates, 1999). Albeit the ideal way to leave poverty, without government support it appears that these women cannot afford to spend precious work and family time earning a degree. Therefore, low income urban women are often locked out of high paying jobs because they lack sufficient professional experience and a competitive education.

Women with any previous employment experience fair better than women with no previous employment experience. However, even gaining blue-collar work experience may prove to be a difficult venture for poor women. While most poor families
live in the inner city, structural conditions such as de-industrialization, the out-migration of the middle class, and the movement of low skill jobs to outlying areas have created structural barriers to finding blue collar employment (Wilson, 1996). America has shifted from a largely industrialized society to a largely technological society, creating an increased number of high paying jobs for those with professional skills. Those few blue collar industrialized jobs have moved to outlying areas where land is cheaper, but where bus lines do not generally operate. Because of white flight and the availability and location of inexpensive housing located near downtown areas, the poor remain in inner cities. According to Wilson (1996), this has created an increased distance between available jobs and those poor who are qualified and willing to fill those jobs. In addition, Carlson & Theodore (1995) report the ratio of available low skill jobs to those who live below the poverty level and are on public assistance is one to six; six job applicants for every one low paying job (as cited in Wilson, 1996). With the existence of gender discrimination, women with few skills may have an additional problem getting the job over a male applicant.

Transportation is an ongoing problem as many poor women cannot afford a car and auto insurance to reach outlying industrialized areas on a daily basis (Wilson, 1996). Even though it is required by law, car insurance is not traditionally been a legitimate expense that warranted an additional allotment of funds in a welfare check. Therefore, lifting oneself up out of poverty may require some illegal ventures or under-the-table work to meet the basic expenses of work.
It is important to understand and communicate the overwhelming obstacles that many ghetto residents have to overcome just to live up to mainstream expectations involving work, the family, and the law. Such expectations are taken for granted in middle class society. Americans in more affluent areas have jobs that offer fringe benefits; they are accustomed to health insurance that covers sick leave and medical care. They do not live in neighborhoods where attempts at normal child-rearing are constantly undermined by social forces that interfere with healthy child development. And their families' prospects for survival do not require at least some participation in the informal economy (Wilson, 1996 p.xviii-xix).

For poor women, the formal economy is in persistent economic depression, forcing them to scratch, scrimp, and sacrifice to be able to meet even basic monthly necessities. Considering the economic constraints placed on low income women, prostitution may appear attractive and may become a viable option.

When we assess the background of the women involved in the study, we find the personal story behind the above statistics. Seventeen of the twenty-one women in the study hadn’t earned a high school diploma. Ten of the twenty-one had no previous work history and all of the women were eligible for welfare benefits. All of the women came from families where their parents lived in poverty or fluctuated from poverty to working class throughout their childhood. None of the fourteen women who were parents had consistently collected child support for the thirty-two children they were attempting to raise. With very few skills, a limited education, and minimal, if any, work experience, these women saw prostitution as a way to succeed in otherwise blocked entrances to conventional opportunities.

Researchers have concluded that women enter prostitution for a variety of reasons, negative labeling (James, Davis, & Vitaliano, 1982), the need for independence (N. J.
Davis, 1971), and family dysfunctions (Silbert & Pines, 1983), but most agree that poor women enter for financial reasons (Benjamin & Masters, 1964; James, 1978; Jennings, 1976; Pomeroy, 1965; Vanwesenbeeck, 1994). The stressors related to poverty increase the probability that street prostitution will become a viable option for some women.

The reason I got into prostitution was to keep a house for me and my daughter....I wasn’t making enough money to pay the house note, my gas & water and take care of her....A friend introduced me to it. She told me that she knew I was having problems with money....So we would drive like three times a month and meet men at conventions....It was flexible and I only had to do it on the weekends when I started (Brenda).

Prostitution is a female dominated profession in which earning potential is not limited by a corporate ceiling. It is an attractive profession to some women because the profession engenders flexible hours, substantial pay, immediate opportunity, no educational barriers, and access for even low income women.

According to James (1976), women entered street prostitution because they saw no other occupational options for individuals with little skill that paid as well, were as adventurous and allowed them the flexibility and independence they desired. The traditional female role, which concentrates on physical appearance, sexuality, and service to men, presented an additional fit. The importance of having money and material possessions appealed to women who, because of their social status, were unlikely to obtain these things by legitimate means (James, 1976).

Because I wasn’t making it out there....Because I’m lazy or I don’t know. Well it’s just harder out there on your own. And see when I first came to Ohio, I didn’t have no birth certificate, no social security card, no state I.D., no nothin....We moved a lot and I couldn’t keep up. I didn’t go to school a lot, so I ended up quitting...then when I seen I could make the kind of money I could make out on the streets, I was out there everyday (Elsie).
The refusal of society to view prostitution as legitimate work leads some women into a profession that is accompanied by "whore stigma." "Prostitution is a highly marginalized activity that negatively affects the way society views a woman involved in this activity." It is viewed as a stain on one's character. It is a soiled identity in which negative assumptions regarding one's morals are presupposed. "Prostitution is the only criminal offense involving mutual consent between two persons, where, in most cases, only the female partner is arrested" (N. J. Davis, 1993 p.3). Therefore, women fear disclosure. Because of the illegality, street prostitution is a profession practiced in the underground economy.

Socio-Economic Factors of the Underground Economy

The inner city economy and the flow of money in the nation's ghettos thrive on several major sectors. Those sectors include a home-based sector, social-sector, welfare sector, under-the-table sector of work, legitimate but menial employment and illegal sector known as the underground economy. The home based sector is work performed in one's home and may include child care, laundry, housekeeping and the like. The social sector includes volunteer labor, and may be exhibited through church work, charity work at the local recreation center or community program, and school assistance such as PTA involvement, working as a class aide or lunch program volunteer (Hoymen, 1987). The welfare sector includes monies coming into low income neighborhoods as temporary relief options for needy families. Under-the-table employment is work being done devoid of paying taxes. Legitimate menial employment includes underpaid jobs available to some in poor communities. The illegal sector, otherwise known as an underground economy includes
drug sales, prostitution, and other illegal, money making activities. All of these sectors contribute to the flow of money in America’s low income neighborhoods. However, the underground illegal economy is the focus for this discussion.

The underground economy is “a patterned set of social relationships for the production, transport, distribution, and marketing of goods and services outside the legal system” (Wiegand, 1992 p.93). The underground economy mirrors the formal economy in that the goal is to produce and distribute goods and services in order to make a profit. From that perspective, it is a capitalist economy (Wiegand, 1992). What distinguishes the two then, is the legality of one and the illegality of the other. This research focuses on the dimension of the underground economy that involves drug sales, pimping, and prostitution. Like the formal economy, these aspects of the underground economy are capitalistic in nature, competitive, hierarchal, and concern themselves with supply and demand.

To understand the creation and maintenance of the underground economy, more sophisticated explanations point to structural inequalities and blocked opportunities that create social isolation. (Henry, 1987; Wilson, 1987). Social isolation is described as “the lack of contact or of sustained interaction with individuals and institutions that represent mainstream society” (Wilson, 1987 p.60). This creates a “cut off” between mainstream influences such as information on jobs, health, resources, and role models (Coulton & Chow, 1995 p.1874).

...In a neighborhood...with the overwhelming majority of families having spells of long-term joblessness, people experience a social isolation that excludes them from the job network system that permeates other
neighborhoods and that is so important in learning about or being recommended for jobs that become available in various parts of the city. And as the prospects for employment diminish, other alternatives such as welfare and the underground economy are not only increasingly relied on, they come to be seen as a way of life (Wilson, 1987 p.57).

According to Wilson (1996), many of the social problems found in the inner city ghetto are a consequence of the disappearance of legitimate and sustaining work. “The net effect is that joblessness, as a way of life, takes on a different social meaning” (Wilson, 1987 p.57). This condition creates and sustains the need to maintain an underground economy that provides illegal jobs as a means to survive and thrive in a community.

A number of underground industries are apparent in ghetto communities. Similar to the formal economy, these industries are largely gender stratified. The drug business has been historically dominated by males. “Because control of the distribution and sale of crack remain[s] male-dominated, women [are] unable to challenge existing hierarchies in significant ways” (Miller, 1995 p. 449). Therefore, women are relegated to the few successful labor markets operating in the inner city, none of which occupy the highest rung, e.g., prostitution and welfare.

The hierarchal criteria used to determine success in the underground economy are the same as that used in the formal economy, based on the acquisition of power, prestige, and respect. Currently, those most successful individuals are located in the drug industry. “Dope boys,” the contemporary name for drug dealers, command the most respect from others in low income, inner city communities. They possess the most power on the streets, including the power that comes from muscle and guns. Possessing the commodity
in most demand in these communities, they are afforded the most prestige. Because they are able to keep themselves in fine clothes, cars and other envied material possessions, they are often admired by other young people in the community. They are to be feared and fear commands respect in these neighborhoods (Canada, 1995).

I use to see him riding around town and I knew he was a drug dealer, but he was fine and had big money. He had some dudes working for him and shit. So anyway, we were suppose to be doing him for free one night, but really we was gonna rob him, set it off like that. So she’s under the bed and I’m taking his clothes off... He peeped our game and busted me in the face. She took off running, I ran too. My nose was bloody, my face was all fucked up and shit. Anyway, the next day, I’m walking down the street and his boys, some bump runners he has working for him, jump out the car and throw me in the back seat. I was scared. They put a gun to my head and took me to him. I was young and dumb and didn’t understand that that’s something you don’t try and do, especially to somebody that will kill your ass like that....So anyway, he wanted me. He liked me and wanted me to be with him. I stayed with him. He bought me everything. He took care of me. I didn’t have to work or nothing. Just be with him. He bought me jewelry, clothes whatever. If I wanted some Taco Bell or McDonald’s, he tell his boys to go buy it....Nobody would fuck with him. He was like, I don’t know, like he had power and everybody wanted to be with him or be him or something. I mean, he wasn’t the only one like that, but he was pretty big. I fucked that up though (Nina).

Paradoxically, street prostitution which earns women the most money in this economy, represents the bottom rung in the underground economy in terms of power, prestige, and respect. Irrespective of how much money they make or how well they establish themselves in the business, women are relegated to a secondary labor market (Maher & Curtis, 1992). The process of discrimination and gender bias, which serves to disadvantage women in the formal economy, also serves to sustain discrimination for women in the underground economy. Street prostitution is hardest hit, for it represents both the lowest form of work within the world of sex work and the least prestigious type
of illegal work in the underground economy (Maher & Curtis, 1992). More important, the work is equated with the person. In prostitution, what you do is who you are. Even when a woman interprets her work as part time, others interpret her as a full time whore (Pheterson, 1990). To Carol, disclosure of prior prostitution activities to boyfriends altered and ultimately destroyed relationships. “Guys that I kicked it with [dated], I would tell them I use to do that [prostitution] and from that point on their attitudes changed and the respect changed.”

In addition, the introduction of the crack cocaine addicted street prostitute, or “crack ho,” in the 80s has diminished an already stigmatized profession even further by creating a substrata of street prostitute that has not only served to increase the number of women participating in street sex work, but has deflated prices, altering the structure and nature of street sex work (Inciardi, Lockwood, & Pottieger, 1993 p.84; Miller, 1995 p. 429).

The Crack Cocaine Phenomenon

Early field observations and research reports discussed pimp-prostitute relationships as exploitative in nature (Milner & Milner, 1972; Slim, 1969). During the 60s and 70s, it appeared that pimps dominated the prostitution scene, often recruiting, manipulating, and exploiting women to work as prostitutes. Since then, a growing number of researchers have reported that crack cocaine has replaced the pimp-prostitute relationship (Miller, 1995; Inciardi et. al, 1993). While crack cocaine has legitimately been a strong force in the 80s and 90s version of street sex work, this literature obscures the pimp-prostitute phenomenon. Although crack cocaine is seemingly the most salient issue regarding street prostitution today, relaying to readers that “crack is pimp” has sent a distorted message
that pimp-prostitute relationships are nonexistent or of minimal importance to the lifestyle of the streets. It is apparent that this is an unintended misconception, yet one that has an impact on how we view prostitution in the 90s.

Some studies, albeit a limited few, report the pimping business to be dominating street prostitution by 84% to 90% (Barry, 1995; Hunter, 1994). It should be noted here that these figures are inflated and do not take into account the separation of one’s boyfriend from one’s pimp. However inflated, these findings suggest the pimping business is alive and well. According to my findings, this phenomenon continues to flourish in the world of prostitution. Pimp-prostitute roles are stereotypical of a pimp dominated relationship, and this structure continues to guide the code of conduct in the underground economy as it relates to the dimension of prostitution. Viewing street work as a combination of both pimp controlled prostitutes and independent prostitutes then is more representative of the phenomenon of street sex work. It is within this context, that of both independent working women and pimp controlled women, that we will seek to understand and discuss prostitution. A narrow view of prostitution leads to narrow conclusions.

It is my contention that this misconception in the research is related to who in prostitution is most likely to be placed under the research microscope and who gets protected. Wahab & Sloan (1997) suggest a direct relationship between power and protection, claiming that those prostitutes higher up the food chain are protected from inquiring minds, while those lower on the food chain, namely street workers, are unable to hide from the research lens. Street prostitution is estimated to represent 20% of all prostitution (Wahab & Sloan, 1997). Yet, an abundance of scientific research reports the
activities of street workers. When considering street prostitution alone, I submit that there, too, is a hierarchy of protection, with those involved with a pimp less likely to be located and interviewed and less likely to submit to an interview than those independent street workers. In the world of street work, conventional, pimp controlled prostitutes are guarded from the research lens more often than are independent workers. Furthermore, of those available independent workers, crack addicted prostitutes are more accessible than noncrack addicted prostitutes.

Crack cocaine is said to produce a euphoric high that lasts approximately two to three minutes. Urges for crack cocaine can repeat every five minutes for those strongly addicted. Also, given that fact that the lowest cost of the drug in high street demand typically equals the lowest price for street prostitution services, one can find women in the late 90s performing sexual favors often and for as little as $5.00 (Maher, 1996 p.156).

Therefore, crack addicted women are a more visible street population and interviews may be had for a small fee. In addition, because addicted sex workers are more visible, the likelihood of arrest is greater. Addicted workers are also more likely to be less discriminating with customers and are believed to increase their odds of propositioning undercover officers. Researchers who interview jail populations, then, are more likely to make acquaintance with drug dependent prostitutes. By disproportionately finding and interviewing women who are drug dependent and not involved with a pimp, researchers send the message that street prostitution is solely made up of women who are independent workers addicted to crack cocaine.
The significance of prostitution and contemporary drug usage lies in the increased risks associated with crack cocaine abuse. Translated in terms of risk, women are doing more for less and under riskier circumstances. By interpretation then, women are increasing customer contact and are thereby placing themselves at greater risk for HIV infection, assault, rape, robbery and murder.

Critics of prostitution research suggest that when researchers study prostitution only in terms of drug abuse, the results of these studies are suspect and appear to be more about drugs then about prostitution (Pheterson, 1987; Wahab & Sloan, 1997). All women do not enter prostitution already drug addicted, yet research on prostitution prior to addiction is scant. Despite the fact that crack cocaine becomes a major influence in many women's lives, it only tells a portion of the story. My research indicates there are independent workers early in their career who are not addicted to drugs, but are instead independent entrepreneurs in prostitution. However risky street work becomes, so long as drug abuse and street prostitution continue to be positively correlated, the basic social process of the stages of street prostitution will remain consistent. Therefore, this study uncovers an understanding of the progression that transcends the particular context of the time.

In this work I found two types of women in terms of drugs, those who recreationally and sporadically engaged in drug and/or alcohol use and those who engaged in drug and/or alcohol abuse. Thirteen women in the study entered prostitution as recreational drug and/or alcohol users. Eight entered addicted to crack cocaine. Drug use within the underground economy, particularly in drug sales and street prostitution, is common and often thought to be recreational. Women who are said to have entered prostitution prior
to drug addiction are women who have socially and recreationally used marijuana and alcohol in various social settings prior to entrance. In contrast, women involved in drug addiction are women addicted to crack cocaine, heroin or other hard narcotics prior to entrance. Women involved in drug addiction prior to entrance entered prostitution already in the “Caught up” stage. Therefore, stages prior to the “Caught up” stage are particularly referring to women who engaged in recreational drug use rather than abuse.

Increased crack use by women has created a shift in power among men with controlling interests (Miller, 1995). In the hierarchy of the underground economy, the pimping game was thought to occupy the highest rung on the social ladder, and a successful pimp could consider himself an aristocrat among common hustlers (Milner & Milner, 1972). Since the surge of crack-cocaine in the 80s, dope dealers have emerged and assumed their place at the top of the hierarchy in the underground economy.

The early 70s brought along well-known street terms such as “dope man” and “pusher man.” These were the men who sold heroin and, to a lesser extent, marijuana and cocaine. Pimping was still the most prestigious business of the day as pimps acquired the most wealth in this economy. The pimp with the most power, prestige, and respect earned the distinct title of “Mack” of the year. Many cities have hosted the “International Players Ball” including Detroit, Las Vegas, and Chicago. This gala event is an annual affair, akin to the movie industry’s Oscar Awards, in which the most prestigious pimps appear sporting their most successful ladies.

The 80s saw a shift in the economic structure of the illegal underground economy. This was initiated by the formal economy and began with the Rockefeller laws in New
York which called for swifter, and stiffer penalties for adult drug dealers. This type of response grew quickly in popularity with many states adopting similar laws. In response, drug dealers began to recruit juveniles to be watchers and runners of drugs. A watcher is someone paid to stand and watch for the police while drug deals are occurring. A runner is someone paid to run drugs from one designated spot to another in order to complete a drug transaction. Juveniles were recruited because of the lighter sentences they would receive if arrested. Eventually, as crack cocaine began to increase in popularity, juveniles began to take on more responsibility and became drug sellers and even distributors of crack cocaine. The street term used now in the 1990s by women involved in street prostitution is “dope boys,” which is appropriate to their age. Dope boys do not typically take their earnings and purchase houses or create investment portfolios. They cannot and most likely do not desire to open savings accounts or invest in U.S. stocks. Typically, dope boys are known to typically spend their money on clothes, shoes, jewelry, and cars. It is indicative of their developmental stage in adolescence to be concerned with external appearances and to acquire material possessions as a sign of power, prestige and respect in the ghetto.

With dope boys leading the trends in inner city fashion, the 80s witnessed kids getting into fights over expensive tennis shoes and some getting robbed of their jackets while on their way to and from school. In the world of drug sales, dope boys needed to protect their investments. They needed guns. In addition, there was no organized structure on drug sales. Therefore, territory was up for grabs. Dope boys needed to secure their investment by protecting their territory from other drug entrepreneurs (Canada, 1995).
Finally, the U.S. gun market was becoming saturated. Having saturated the white male market, and not greatly increasing the female market, gun distributors began marketing to a new group of potential customers. New and exciting names for guns began to spring up, such as the viper and glock nine. Rappers began to use rap videos to display the proper way to hold a gun and the coolest way to shoot your victim, e.g., holding the gun level to your face and turning it to the left so that the gun would fire sideways at its victim. It became a symbol of manhood and a symbol of power and pride to carry a gun. For other adolescents, carrying a gun simply meant protection from others (Canada, 1995).

When crack cocaine flourished in the 80s, the world of prostitution shifted in a profound way. Crack cocaine became the drug of choice for street prostitutes. According to Miller (1995), women have actually lost more power in the shift. Pimps and dope boys share similar roles in that both control women’s money. Indeed, women involved in this study increasingly reported spending more of their prostitution earnings on crack cocaine the longer they were in prostitution. What did not change was control of women by men (Miller, 1995).

In traditional pimp-prostitute relationships, pimps provide food, clothing, and protection in exchange for a prostitute’s money. Dope boys receive the lion’s share of addicted prostitutes’ earnings, yet provide women with no food or clothing, leaving them without money and without the promise of protection. This is thought to have increased women’s vulnerability to violence in the streets (Miller, 1995; Owens & Shepard, 1998). Despite the fact that dope boys have acquired the most wealth in the underground
economy, and have crossed over to capture a percentage of the prostitution market, pimping is still a viable force. For some, pimping still remains a lucrative venture.

PROSTITUTION INDUSTRY

The Pimping Game

Those involved in prostitution activities refer to this sector of the underground economy as "The Game." Players, Pimps, and Macks are those at the top of the pimping game. To these men in power, it is a game in which they control and manipulate the actions of others subordinate to them. A "Player" or "Pimp" has a particular manner or style of playing the game. A pimp is "a man who procures clients for a prostitute" (Flowers, 1998 p.100). It should be mentioned here that by Flowers definition the majority of pimps are white. They are the owners of massage parlors, strip clubs, escorts services and brothels (Flowers, 1998). However, for the purposes of this research, I will refer to pimp in its street meaning of a man who works outside of the formal economy for the purposes of collecting monies from prostitute women belonging to his stable. In this context, although there has been one known white pimp in the U.S. called "Whitefolks" and one recent female pimp named "Big Lex,", pimps are by in large African American men (Owens & Shepard, 1998).

It's all about the game. Nothing in the game changes, but the name. It's all about getting that money. Some women have pimps that they give the money to, some are just out there on their own (Monica).

The pimping game requires strict adherence to the rules. The idea of a "game" parallels the formal economy in that one can be said to be in a game, e.g., he's in the real estate game. Players and pimps are also said to "have" game. To have game is to possess
a certain amount of charisma and smooth talking, persuasive conversation toward women.

The term “he got game” has been made popular in Spike Lee’s movie “He got game” that opened in theaters in 1998. Spike Lee created a play on words, using the term “he got game” to mean basketball instead of its root urban meaning denoting black male charisma.

There are several rules that one must be willing to follow in order to be a successful pimp. The most paramount rule in the pimping game is, “the pimp must get paid” (Bromfield & Juan, 1994; Owens & Shepard, 1998; Slim, 1969). This means there can’t be any “shame in your game” (Massi), one must require and, if necessary, demand the money. Second, any successful pimp will remember that the game is “sold and not told.” This means that pimps are expected to sell it to a prospective prostitute that he wants to occupy his stable, without revealing his entire game plan. In order to do this, he has to develop “his game” or, “his rap.” These consist of a series of persuasive conversations similar to poetic and rhymic scats that are philosophical in nature and ideological about life and making money. Examples include;

Keep on believing in me....and your next move will be your best move.
Green for the money, gold for the honey. I’m in motion, just like the ocean.
All a bitch gotta do is come on drink some of this love potion
(Owens & Shepard, 1998).

Philosophically pimps believe all capitalistic pursuits are parallel to pimping.

According to pimp philosophy, in life there are two types of people, pimps and ho’s. It is up to the individual to choose which role to assume. A pimp says to a ho, “hmmm you look nice...you gonna make me some money”...and he puts her out there on the track the way an owner puts a horse out on a race track. When the ho has produced all she can for
the pimp, she is discarded and the pimp finds himself a new ho to make him money. To pimps this is the basic recipe for all money making industries both legal and illegal (Milner & Milner, 1972; Owens & Shepard, 1998). In an example of this philosophy, Ice Tea, gangster rapper and former pimp, used the entertainment business to illustrate his point. “The producer says “hmmm you look nice...you gonna make me some money” and he dresses his ho up pretty and flashy and he puts him or her out there on the music track. When she or he is all used up and can no longer make him money, he moves on” (Owens & Shepard, 1998). With this philosophy in mind, a pimp believes one should either be the best ho they can be and get to a point where they can pimp themselves, or choose to be a pimp and pimp others.

The third and final ingredient for successful pimping is that a pimp must have a woman or women that want to see him on top. He is looking for dedication. He’s looking for someone who wants to see her man in fine clothes and driving fine cars. His success or lack of success is a reflection on her. If her man is not looking his best, then she is not a very successful ho and this will make for an embarrassing impression. As a committed prostitute, she must work very hard to earn his respect, his love, and to keep him achieving the best in material possessions. He in return invites her into his social network along with the sense of security that it brings (Jarvinen, 1993 p.34).

I know about the game because I was [his] bottom bitch. I knew everything about hoeing, tricking or whatever. I was with [him] for eight years. He had women out here working their asses off. Wouldn’t even ask him for money or nothing, not even 5 dollars, thinking that’s making him respect them more (Massi).
The most well respected pimps are called “Macks.” They are at the top of their game and employ many hardworking and successful prostitutes. Dominating the pimp scene are “players” who have an average stable of women, are well respected, and make a good living. Lowest in the hierarchy of pimping are what Johnson (1992) calls “popcorn” pimps. These pimps may have one or possibly two prostitutes on the street. They are seen as least successful in the game, and unlike more successful pimps, they may do drugs and allow their women to do drugs. In this study, six of the women previously had pimps ranging from popcorn pimps to players.

A pimp must be skilled at playing on a woman’s vulnerabilities. In fact, he assesses her psychological state to determine if she is a good candidate for exploitation (Owens & Shepard, 1998). The true talents of a pimp however, are in his ability to keep his women happy, command money, and portray a deep mysterious and somewhat mean demeanor about him, one that conveys the message not to cross him. He is then said to be “cold-blooded,” able to turn off any warm feelings and loving affection in exchange for certain emotional and physical cruelty. Two famous and successful pimps, Iceberg Slim and Ice Tea were said to be so cold blooded they called themselves “Ice” to let everyone know their capacity for heartlessness.

He would just snap. Like his whole expression would change. One day he came to my motel room to beat my ass. He came over just to beat my ass. And made it clear that he came over to beat on me. He said he had some extra time on his hands, that he didn’t have anything to do, so he wanted me to know that he knew I was thinking about doing something stupid. And I was too. I was thinking about leaving him again. The last time I left him, I ended up in Cleveland....He beat me until I blacked out....But he was like that. He could be so much fun one time, silly and playing around and the next minute, he could be something else, somebody you don’t want to
fuck with (Massi).

A pimp's approach is never to cow down to his woman at any time. He cannot let love cloud his judgments concerning business. If he lets these weaknesses show, he will be left vulnerable and runs the risk of being less successful. Although pimps appear to be in control, in a sense, every pimp becomes a whore to his prostitutes. The pimp rule is "purse first, ass last" (Massi). He may treat his ho's in loving ways in return for the amount of money he requested she bring him. She must pay for his love with her sheer tenacity to work and bring him the money. In this arrangement, he gets their money, their loyalty, and their love. She must in turn request little emotionally and financially. Because of his generosity, he gives her what he thinks she needs.

Pimps are educated in the inner city and schooled on the pimping business by a mentor or series of mentors (Slim, 1969). They understand the meaning of business over personal ventures, marketing a product, and investing in your product first, so your product can return profits. Thus, there is a honeymoon period or courting time between pimps and prostitutes. This is the time in which the pimp runs his game. This may last one day or several months.

As alluded to earlier, in the pimping game, white girls are a more marketable product. All of the women in the study who had pimps were white. Two reasons for this exist. First, white girls remain the symbol of beauty in the United States. Second, white girls are believed to instigate fewer problems with the police. To a pimp, the police are more apt to arrest black women than white women (Owens & Shepard, 1998). This may have some basis in fact, given that more black women are arrested for prostitution and prostitution
related charges than white women (Flowers, 1987). In turn, pimps believed that black
women engage in more fights with dates, resist arrest more, and become belligerent more
than do white women (Owens & Shepard, 1998).

Because pimps respect free enterprise and competition, women are free to “choose up”
whenever they are dissatisfied with their current pimp.

You choose up. And if you’re with a pimp and you want to go with
another pimp, you have to put the money in the other pimp’s hand and let
your man know, you know, you’re leaving and going with somebody else
....I’ve been with three (Elsie).

Outside pimps are free to attempt to seduce a woman away from her current pimp and
into his stable for his financial gain. He may do this without retaliation from the current
pimp, as the street rule is “Bros before Ho’s” (Massi). With this ever present threat to his
livelihood, it is in the pimp’s best interest to keep his women happy. In the event that she
is approached by another pimp, she is not to respond to his strategies. She is not to make
eye contact with another pimp. If she does, then she is “out of pockets” a term referring
to women who flirt with the other pimp, and is subject to being “broke,” meaning
physically reprimanded. On the other hand, the enticing pimp may choose to “break her”
and take all her money. He is not subject to reprimand. Rules may vary in situations
where a woman is prohibited from making eye contact with a pimp, to situations in which
she is not allowed to make eye contact with any African American male.

I mean most of the time, if they’re a true pimp, they’re not gonna play
like that. You know, they’ll harass you and you mainly just turn away and
look in the other direction or whatever, and try not to come in contact with
them, because if you do, then they do what you call “break you”, they take
your money....He’s allowed to harass you as much as he wants. But if I
don’t talk back to him, them I’m cool. But if I’m “out of pockets” that means you’re doing something that you aint suppose to be doing. You know some pimps will beat you or you go through a lot of stuff....They’re in control. You do what they say (Sonya).

A pimp’s main job is to know his prostitutes inside and out, without letting them completely know him. “A pimp is the loneliest bastard on earth. He’s gotta know his whores. He can’t let them know him. He’s gotta be God all the way” (Slim, 1969 p.3). These fundamental rules have been handed down from older pimps to younger pimps. The names change, but the rules remain the same (Bloomfield & Juan, 1994; Milner & Milner, 1972; Owens & Shepard, 1998; Slim, 1969). For those who occupy the position of street prostitute, a life of prostitution is much more than just selling sex.

**The Prostitution Lifestyle**

Women in the study described themselves as being involved in and in many instances “addicted” to what they call a “street lifestyle.”

He didn’t make me, he didn’t say Carol, you gotta do this. I did it because I wanted to and because I wanted to be with him and at that point in time I was into that life so it was addictive. That lifestyle is addictive (Carol).

“Lifestyle” provides one with a framework for viewing the self and others. It is defined as a typical way of living that helps to shape identity, both personal and social. It provides a lens for perceiving and responding in the world of street prostitution. Within the culture of street life, values, norms, and expectations for appropriate behavior are established with respect to one’s positioning in the social order. The parameters for choices and
opportunities (social, educational, and occupational) are dictated by the structure and market of the underground economy.

For the purposes of this study, the prostitution lifestyle is central to understanding the experience of prostitution. It provides the context and gives meaning to the subjective experiences of women involved in street prostitution. It structures interpersonal relationships. It forms behaviors and activities. It determines the kind of support, language, and role models guiding “the life.” Therefore, a discussion of women’s experiences over time is incomplete without an understanding of the context by which these experiences occur.

The “lifestyle” may be described as both socially and psychologically fast paced. There is always something to do, whether it is working or spending the money just made. Because life is fast paced, it is subject to extreme changes and women get the message to live for the moment and let tomorrow take care of itself. The life pace is faster than the previous slower paced life of poverty, and women are busy at their new life. It can be socially fulfilling and psychologically addicting. Women report sharing their money with friends and family, sometimes treating loved ones to new clothes, dinner, movies, or a night out going to bars. Women report being in bars more often, socializing with others and the sense of empowerment and self fulfillment that comes from buying your own drinks or occasionally treating friends. When one is living the “lifestyle,” the payoff is immediate. One doesn’t have to work and wait two weeks, payday is everyday one is willing to work. Immediacy becomes a way of life and has been described elsewhere as possessing a “present time orientation” (N. J. Davis, 1971). This immediacy feeds the life
pace in a manner that engages the prostitute and makes life interesting. Women can adopt a certain air of sophistication that has been described as

...hanging out at the bars, and getting quick and easy money. Staying at hotels like you rich, like you got credit cards. Taking cabs every damn where....You know to me, that was good living. You know pool, air conditioning, I could go shopping when I wanted to (Carol).

In this sense then, the lifestyle is more extensive than simply sex for money. It indeed encompasses prostitution work, but also incorporates a socializing and entertainment component. Moreover, it includes a way of living that reflects the attitudes and preferences of those involved. Furthermore, the lifestyle embodies a manner of living in which one’s behavior and thinking coincide with the social circle in which one is involved.

I quit drinking 10 days on labor day September 15. But still there was the lifestyle. I was still doing everything else so I might as well have been drinking too. I mean because I was still going to bars with him or whoever going...doing this, still making fast money, still hanging out...going to the after hours, doing all that. So I still was living the lifestyle. I mean with two and a half years in recovery, not drinking, I went back to the lifestyle (Debbie).

Embedded in the lifestyle are also negative aspects of street prostitution that includes drugs and violence. These are not believed to be inherent to prostitution, but are outgrowths of an unregulated industry and the result of environmental influences such as stigma and the absence of conventional protections and benefits of society.

To summarize, the socio-economic factors of formal economy affect prostitution largely by maintaining both blocked opportunities for low income women and societal stigmatization which marginalizes women who choose to enter prostitution. Even though
street workers remain relegated to second class citizenship, the underground economy offers an opportunity for work and substantial financial gain. The pimping game set the stage for street prostitution. Largely regulated by men, the language of prostitution and the code of conduct for prostitution began with these players. Even though pimps still maintain some control over prostitution activities, dope boys have crossed over to assume a large share of the market.

Discussed thus far has been the contribution of socio-economic demands that have influenced prostitution and set the parameters for the industry. These environmental influences set the boundaries, establish the rules, and provide the context in which street life occurs. In turn, prostitutes act on their environment by working within these parameters. However despite socio-economic influences, there is little question that individuals move through life making their own choices. Past histories, personal experiences, and individual choices guide a prostitute from entrance to exit. The concept that people are both psychological and sociological beings, then, lends credence to the belief that women make choices within identified socio-economic parameters. Much that is understood about street work in this study connects the person and environment in this fashion. The next task, then, is to delineate those individual characteristics that contribute to the particular types of street prostitutes one may encounter working the streets in Midwest America on any given day. Therefore, it is important to make the distinction between various types in our next layer of understanding the phenomenon of street prostitution.
PART THREE: FINDINGS

TYPOLOGY, RISKS, & STAGES OF STREET PROSTITUTION
TYPOLOGY OF STREET PROSTITUTION

Before we engage in a discussion about similarities in pathways through street prostitution, we must entertain a conversation concerning difference. One of the most interesting features about these findings is the three primary types of street prostitutes that were uncovered as a result of data analysis. Striking variations can be found in the behavioral characteristics of prostitutes working the streets. While these variations are influenced by the psycho-social choices women make, the socio-economic system of street prostitution helps to create and sustain these types.

The first is the conventional, pimp controlled prostitute who is otherwise known as the "pimp controlled" or "conventional prostitute." She has a bonafide pimp who has set the rules, controlled her actions, and took her earnings. Most often she is infatuated with her pimp, but not always. Women involved with a "popcorn pimp," a man who has only one or two women, were more likely to consider themselves in love and defined the involvement with their pimp as a relationship. The more corporate the pimp, for instance a "player" possessing three or more women, the less likely it was for women to describe their feelings as love or to define their interaction as a relationship. Women's feelings were instead described as infatuation, admiration, or loyalty. The more women involved with a pimp, the less likely it became for each woman to achieve a status that allowed for the comforts of his affections, time, and attention. It was more likely that each became a part of his pimp family or "stable" that was made up of many women. This type of arrangement between women is known as a "wife-in-law" situation in which each prostitute is a member of the family that works for the benefit of the same pimp. They are
seen as wife-in-laws to each other. There are rules to be followed as a member of his social network. Rules are set by him and strict adherence to these rules are essential.

The traditional pimp-prostitute relationship set the standard for the sale of sex on inner city streets in the underground economy. Thus, the two subsequent categories of female prostitutes challenged street mores by opting out of the services of a pimp. Because they deviate from the standard, the two subsequent categories of street prostitutes are known as Renegade Prostitutes and Outlaw Prostitutes. Renegades enter the profession without a pimp and work as independent entrepreneurs, keeping all of the profits for themselves. They are defined as deserters and are viewed as traitors to the traditional pimp-prostitute relationship.

There’s a lot of girls out there called Renegades....A Renegade is when you don’t have a man....Some prostitutes are out there for a man, for a pimp. We’re out there bustin our ass to get our money for a man and you know, these bitches are out here making money and going home and not giving it to nobody (Sonya-Conventional Prostitute).

Some Renegades report they have trusted in a male partnership with pimps in the past for mutual gain only to have been exploited. Therefore, they prefer to work alone or in partnership with one or a few select women. As Renegades progress through the stages, fear from repeated customer-related assaults propels these women to begin abusing drugs in order to function in the life.

“Outlaw” is a term I developed after assessing this category of prostitute against the rules and expectations for the profession. Outlaws are described as those not interested in conforming to the established rules for practice. However, Outlaws not only refuse the
services of a pimp, but often manipulate, exploit, and may even rob their customers during a sex exchange transaction. They are rarely interested in an even and honest exchange with a customer and expect to walk away with more than agreed upon in an exchange encounter. They are more representative of hustler types than prostitutes. Hustlers attempt to earn money by developing creative schemes. They participate in dishonest activities designed to elicit money from their unsuspecting victim. They become skilled in the art of deception (Waldorf, 1973).

Outlaws may engage the efforts of a male or female partner in crime. Although not always, an Outlaw may have a boyfriend, who engages in hustling activities. He is not her pimp, although he may be instrumental in helping to arrange dates, provide security or be a partner in a scam to get money from a potential customer. Any money either partner brings into the household is shared. This is a relationship where despite prostitution activities, emotional and physical fidelity is important. Thus, in prostitution there are clear distinctions between a relationship with someone a prostitute may call her “man” and that of a pimp-prostitute relationship (Miller, 1995). He would not seduce another woman into working for him as a prostitute unless this was a scheme developed and agreed on by both his mate and himself. Taking men for their money is a necessary evil in order to provide financially.

Outlaws enter prostitution with a disdain for performing sexual acts with men to whom they are not attracted. They attempt to manipulate men from the very beginning and throughout their careers. They are quick to begin using drugs early in their career to help medicate their emotions and to be able to sexually entertain men they find repulsive.
Because Outlaws often get involved with drugs, their trickery, deceit, and exploitation activities progress and become more dangerous the longer they are involved in prostitution and the more addicted to drugs they become. Since many have been assaulted by a customer on one or more occasions, Outlaws develop a justification for manipulating and robbing their customers.

The identification of these categorical types aids in our understanding of the contemporary progression of street prostitution. They account for the presence of traditional pimp-prostitute relationships as still a functional component of street prostitution, and also incorporate contemporary crack addicted prostitutes that are pervasive today. Whether one is an Outlaw, Renegade, or Conventional Prostitute, all street prostitutes face substantial risks while working the streets.

COMMON RISKS: THREATS TO WELL BEING

Four main risks to street prostitutes have been identified: violence (Miller, 1993), decreased emotional well-being (Vanwesenbeeck, 1994), HIV/AIDS (Cohen & Alexander, 1995), and drug abuse (Inciardi, Lockwood, & Pottieger, 1993). These common risks threaten the physical and emotional well-being of street prostitutes and are examined below.

HIV/AIDS

Since HIV has become a major threat to the western world, research on prostitution has increased (Vanwesenbeeck, 1994 p.38). Sexually transmitted diseases vary depending on the work setting, level of professionalism, type of sexual contact, and relationship
between partners. Prostitutes are most at risk from transmission occurring from personal relationships as most women report not using a condom with their significant other.

The type of sexual contact is correlated with risk. High risk categories are anal sex, followed by vaginal intercourse, fellatio or cunnilingus, and zero risk for hand-genital contact. The majority of street contact is fellatio lasting less than 15 minutes. Higher risk is suspected to occur among women who connect with clients through escort services and the like. These women engage in a variety of sexual activities for longer periods of time. However, behavior predominantly unrelated to sexual activity places street women at most risk. Intravenous drug use increases the odds that HIV will be contracted. For instance, in Nevada Brothels HIV infection was zero compared to a rate of 47.5% for those women working in New Jersey. The difference? The abundance of "shooting galleries" or houses set up for the explicit purpose of injecting and smoking drugs. Excluding New Jersey, overall rates of HIV infection for street prostitutes are 12.3%, 19.9% for intravenous drug users and 4.8% for non-intravenous drug users (Cohen & Alexander, 1995). In addition, there is some evidence that crack addicted women are at increased risk for HIV (Pyett & Warr, 1997). Crack addicted women found to have cracked, split, or burned lips along with holes on the roof of their mouths present opportunities for transmission during fellatio (Cohen & Alexander, 1995). In addition, women in desperate need of more drugs are most likely to allow customers to negotiate condom use. Finally, because chronic male crack smokers experience difficulty with ejaculation, penile abrasions frequently occur during prolonged intercourse with a sex worker (Inciardi, Lockwood, & Pottieger, 1993).
Violence

Despite apparent health risks to women in terms of contracting HIV, "the greatest risk to the health of such women (at least in developed countries) comes not from a deadly virus but from the violent actions of many of their clients" (McKeganey & Barnard, 1996 p.3). Both customer-related and pimp-related violence is brutal, frequent, and pervasive. Rape, beatings, and yanking (a term used to denote the experience of a prostitute who after rendering services is forced by the customer to return the money) were among the more common occurrences. Others include being thrown or jumping from a moving vehicle, being stabbed or slashed, kidnapped and held against their will, beaten with a blunt object, being thrown or throwing themselves through glass to escape, and being tortured. These are referred to in this study as acute traumas. Other researchers have found occurrences of similar traumas (Barnard, 1993; Miller, 1993; Miller & Schwartz, 1995; National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, 1992; San Francisco Task Force, 1996; Silbert & Pines, 1982).

Women who were on drugs were particularly vulnerable to violence as they would take extra risks in attempts to obtain money for drugs. Drug-addicted prostitutes often ignored emotional signals or feelings of impending danger with a new date unknown to them. They often used drugs while working, and occasionally allowed for the negotiation of the date site to be one that was out of the area and unknown to them.

Despite the prevalence of customer-related and pimp-related violence (Barnard, 1993; Miller, 1993; Miller & Schwartz, 1995; National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, 1992; San Francisco Task Force, 1996; Silbert & Pines, 1982), presently no data exist on
the murder rate of street prostitutes. However, based on studies of the frequency and intensity of violence, it is determined to be an important consideration when researching this population.

Drugs

Whether drug use began as a way of coping with the act of prostitution (functional use) or whether prostitution is a means of supporting a drug habit (causal use), drug use among street prostitutes is high (Boggs, 1991). Crack cocaine in particular, is popular among street prostitutes. During the 60s and 70s cocaine was readily available on the streets and using cocaine to “freebase” was common. Cocaine was expensive, however, and was usually in the hands of those with the money to afford it. The entrepreneurs of the mid-80s expanded crack use by developing it into rock form prior to distribution, thereby bringing cost down and raising profit (Inciardi, Lockwood, & Pottieger, 1993). Crack cocaine is currently the most popular drug on the streets (Inciardi, Lockwood, & Pottieger, 1993; Miller, 1995).

Crack cocaine brings about an intense euphoria that lasts three to five minutes, followed by a gradual decrease and an intense need to repeat the process. The difference between heroin and crack is that a heroin addict typically “fixes” three to five times a day whereas a crack addict’s need to smoke is considerably higher. Crack smokers have a difficult time hiding the smell. Therefore, a secure place is needed. Crack houses or shooting galleries (a place where intravenous drug users can inject drugs) are usually rented by someone who allows guests in to get high without interruption. Heavily addicted crack users desire to be at a crack house whenever possible. Crack addicted
women will often offer sex in exchange for money or crack or will become the house
whore where she may be obligated to have sex with anyone who visits the house (Inciardi,
Lockwood, & Pottieger, 1993).

“A core theme that pervades the relationship of participants in sex-for-crack exchanges
is the low value they place on human life” (Inciardi, Lockwood, & Pottieger, 1993 p. 17).
For women, self esteem was reduced by the willingness to participate in degrading acts in
order to obtain the drug. Many times women would steal from family and friends, spend
rent money, and participate in sexual acts with dominating men. Domination sometimes
turned violent and rapes were not uncommon (Ratner, 1993).

**Emotional Well-Being & Mental Health**

Prostitution work is intrusive in nature, often requiring one to act in ways false to the
feelings of the true self. It is a fake behavior that requires one to play the game of the
interested whore. It is likely, then, that feelings are being “split off, denied, or
dissociated.” “Cutting off, denying, selling one’s emotions by playing the game of an
interested sexual partner takes it toll on the emotional health of women involved in street
prostitution” (Vanwesenbeeck, 1994 p.151).

Experiences with violence, drugs, and HIV risks contribute to decreased emotional
well-being (Miller, 1993; Vanwesenbeeck, 1994). Depression has been linked to street
prostitution (Alegria, Vera, Freeman, & Robles, 1994). Mental health may suffer as a
result of the traumatic effects of violence in street work. Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome
has been diagnosed in this population (Farley & Hotaling, 1995).
The relationship between prostitution and/or mental distress has been well documented (El-Bassel et al, 1997; Farley & Hotaling, 1995; Vanwesenbeeck, 1994). Each of these risk areas, violence, HIV, drug abuse, and emotional and mental distress, is important to the study of street prostitution. Therefore, the emotional and sometimes physical consequences to each of these risk factors are threaded throughout the progression of street prostitution.

ACCUMULATING BURDENS

Developmental stages within the underground economy have been researched and documented. Drug careers have been compared to conventional careers in terms of stages (Biernacki, 1986; Blumstein, Cohen, Roth, & Visher 1986; Blumstein, Farrington & Morita, 1985; Preble & Casey, 1969; Waldolf, 1973). A study on the progression of street prostitution carries with it certain assumptions. First, as stated earlier, street prostitution is not an unordered, unorganized, and random phenomenon, but instead is a basic social process identifiable in the form of stages. Second, the term “progression” implies that not only is there movement through time and space as in other “process” oriented theories, but that this movement is progressive, building on previous stages. Considering the fact that five million American women between 16-64 have engaged in various aspects of sex for pay (Janus & Janus, 1993), it behooves us to consider the entire progression of prostitution from entrance, through maintenance and exit.

It has been apparent to me as a social worker with inner city families for ten years that the emotional well-being, looks and behavior of women who entered and those who exited were noticeably different. Specific life events in prostitution appeared to contribute to
these adverse changes over time. Although there are many emotional and behavioral factors that contribute to the bio-psycho-social health outcomes of prostitutes, the three most influential factors from the findings of my study were the effects of daily hassles, acute traumas, and chronic conditions.

**Daily Hassles**

Daily hassles are the annoyances we find as a part of the roles we play throughout our daily lives. They are those events that “irritate and distress people” (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984 p.13). In the world of street prostitution, daily hassles serve as aversive and unpleasant micro events that tax a person’s mental, physical, and emotional resources. However, these are common daily annoyances over which the prostitute has little control. The degrees of emotional distress as a result of “daily hassles” in street prostitution vary depending on the situation and how much of a stake a woman has in the outcome of an encounter. While it would be too cumbersome to attempt to list every daily hassle experienced, a few examples are provided to shed light on the type of daily hassles associated with street prostitution.

The threat to one’s physical safety while involved with a customer is a source of persistent daily concern. Energies used to avoid violent encounters with others such as customers, pimps, and street robbers are a source of continual concern. These thoughts and behaviors create a daily hypervigilence that necessitates the drive and forethought to anticipate each individual’s moves and motives while remaining always perceptive of one’s surroundings. These persistent activities can be mentally and emotionally strenuous.
Events that are directly related to periodic detainment by police represent hassles for women. Actual arrest by police is a distressing event because it temporarily threatens the end of freedom and financial means through incarceration. Therefore, energies are used to develop strategies to avoid arrest. When exercised regularly, these activities are also mentally and emotionally burdensome.

Events that damage a person’s self respect, e.g., degrading sexual encounters with customers and name calling by passers by, can be a source of daily emotional distress. The social pressure from the stigmatization of a profession that generates the need to hide prostitution activities and create a double life can be emotionally taxing and represent hassles for women. Failure to maintain a double life successfully may result in being evicted from one’s place of residence or reported to child welfare agencies. Finally, the emotional tension associated with thoughts of placing important interpersonal relationships at risk, as a result of prostitution activities, is a source of daily emotional turmoil.

The importance and significance of daily hassles, even those most seemingly subliminal daily occurrences, are that they can and do affect morale. These burdens are often taken for granted but, over time, work to diminish emotional well-being.

**Acute Traumas**

Acute traumas to the mind and body are those events that are intense, severe, and time limited or episodic (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). In a traumatic experience, physical and emotional harm is inflicted. In the world of street prostitution, acute traumas include instances of rape, robbery, and assault. Most women in the study reported being assaulted
by customers during the course of their career. Two women involved reported never
being assaulted by customers, but suffered regular assaults by pimps.

**Chronic Conditions**

The longer women remained in street prostitution, the more likely they were to
experience chronic conditions. These chronic conditions were in response of repeated
assaults to women’s emotional well-being. In this study, these were defined as persistent
depression and repeated drug use. Depression stemmed from growing feelings of shame
and guilt. Seeds of shame and guilt were likely to have been present upon entrance into
prostitution, but grew over time as a result of daily hassles and repeated rapes, beatings
and other forms of violence. These were all assaults on the self respect and self esteem of
women involved in the study.

Depression was viewed as the emotional aspect of diminished self worth. Drug abuse
was the behavioral aspect of such. In later stages of prostitution, depression became a
source of continual pain. It was described as a consistent, gnawing, aching emotional
attack on the self. Drugs were used in an attempt to nullify the pain associated with
depression. However, over time drug abuse became the source of chronic pain in and of
itself.

**Cumulative Effects**

The lingering effects of daily hassles, acute traumas, and chronic conditions created an
accumulation of emotional and physical burdens. Emotional and physical burdens occur
when a woman grows increasingly unsuccessful at dealing with hassles, traumas, and
chronic conditions. They are the residue from previous personal assaults. Emotional
burdens are defined as short and long-term feelings of guilt, shame, and depression, all of which attack the self-esteem and decrease emotional well-being. Physical burdens are the result of physical consequences from customer-related and pimp-related violence, long term drug abuse, venereal disease, and the lack of attention to self-care and general health. These work to decrease physical health. Over time, as burdens accumulate, the mind and body’s ability to meet these stressful demands deteriorate, and women exit prostitution. In prostitution, burdens accumulate as a result of threat, harm, and personal loss. The threat of daily hassles, acute traumas, and chronic conditions become emotionally burdensome. The harm that is inflicted as a result of a hassle, trauma, or chronic condition creates emotional and physical consequences. Finally, the cost of personal losses as a result of hassles, traumas, and chronic conditions takes it toll on emotional well-being and physical health.\(^1\) The idea that a series of traumas experienced by prostitutes represented accumulating burdens was first cited by Vanwesenbeeck (1994), in her study on prostitutes in Sweden. She found the existence of burdens in women who experienced violence and who had to work out of economic necessity.

Daily hassles, acute traumas, and chronic conditions are evidenced by interview reports and are supported by quotes from prostitute women. The assessment of a cumulative effect is apparent for three reasons. First, every woman in the study discussed the presence of daily hassles, acute traumas, and chronic conditions. Second, no woman in the study discussed attending a support group or therapy to deal with their emotional and

\(^1\) Similar results were found in Swedish prostitutes (Vanwesenbeeck, 1994).
physical burdens while in prostitution. Thus, there is an accumulation of assaults to the emotional and physical well-being over time. Finally, no woman in the study reported working with minimal emotional or physical trauma and retiring with minor complaints.

**Protective Strategies**

Protective strategies were ways in which women learned to handle these physical and emotional affronts. Two protective strategies, problem-focused and emotion-focused, were dominant responses from women in the study. In problem-focused solutions, women attempted to change the environment or manipulate the conditions in order to resolve the problem; examples include getting information on how to solve the problem, the use of identified protective strategies, direct intervention, purposeful action, and asking for help. The greater women’s success at problem solving, the better they were able to respond and maintain a level of functioning that was productive and positive. However, as less then healthy emotion-focused solutions dominated women’s responses, they attempted to control or manipulate internal feelings in order to meet the stressful demand; examples included wishful thinking, self blame, seeking diversion through alcohol and drugs, dissociation and denial. Factors that increased the likelihood that one would employ unhealthy emotion-focused solutions included society’s negative appraisal of a woman, a woman’s subjective appraisal of herself, the lack of social support from others including the lack of conventional avenues for protection or retribution, and the repeated inconsistency between problem-focused action and expected outcome.

Throughout the progression from entrance to exit, women’s responses to hassles, traumas, and chronic conditions were not static, but were dynamic, and involved both
problem-focused and emotion-focused solutions. Indeed, a typical response included the use of both. However, the dominant response, whether problem-focused or emotion-focused, depended on the belief in a woman's ability to control the outcome of a situation (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Over time, as women's attempts at problem-focused strategies were successful, efforts in this direction were likely to continue. As strategies failed or became difficult or ineffective, women increasingly resorted to emotion-focused solutions. The sum of women's successful experiences in prostitution was related to their ability to meet and successfully overcome the hassles, traumas, and chronic assaults to the mind and body.

STAGES OF STREET PROSTITUTION

As we discuss the stages of street prostitution from entrance to exit, the central focus for women at each stage will be highlighted. Definitions of central focus depend on the conceptualization, and the context in which a phenomenon is described. In stage analysis, central focus is used to describe one's primary motivation given a particular social context. In relation to stages in prostitution, embedded in each stage are activities that consume a large portion of both concentrated time and emotional, physical, and social energies. As women progress through the stages of street prostitution, central points of concentrated efforts are apparent and are described in detail within each stage.

Each stage consists of activities that consume a large portion of concentrated energies. Throughout stages a pronounced set of particular burdens occur that include daily hassles, acute traumas, and chronic conditions. These burdens have a cumulative effect on the individual over time. As burdens increase and accumulate, emotional and physical well-
being deteriorates. Protective strategies shift from problem-focused to largely emotion-focused. Accumulating burdens overwhelm the ability to function productively and women exit prostitution.

The "why" women exit, then, is determined largely by emotional and physical burdens and reactions to these burdens. The "when" women exit is highly individualistic and includes determinants of past experiences, individual adaptability, personal resiliency, social support, and past burdens. Therefore, women may exit at any time and at any stage during their prostitution career. My focus was not to determine when, on an individual basis, particular prostitutes will exit, it was to delineate all of the stages as identified and analyzed from the data.

Therefore, outlined is the central focus for each stage and the identification of burdens and protective strategies for dealing with these burdens. This lens becomes the organizational framework used to approach the progression of street prostitution.

ENTRANCE

Central focus

As women make the decision to enter street prostitution, two activities are necessary. First, they must allow themselves to be enticed by the prospects of substantial financial gain and, second, they must learn to shed any moral objections to prostitution work.

Exposure to prostitution consists of a period of enticement that leads to first sexual contact with a customer. While the actual event of sex-for-money marks official "entrance" into prostitution, the social process of entrance into street work begins with a period of enticement. The most pervasive form of enticement is financial gain. This is
consistent with other studies (Reynolds, 1986; Rosenbaum, 1982; Scambler & Scambler, 1997). Women who are enticed by the financial prospects of street prostitution perceive themselves to have few alternatives as financially promising as prostitution.

Once the desire for the money is established, women commonly develop ways to rationalize any moral issues with sex work. The value of making money is supported over the value of chastity. Helping to solidify these rationalizations, are friends who introduce them into the life. They report meeting and socializing with those involved in the prostitution lifestyle. Interestingly, most women report living, playing, or working on the periphery of street prostitution for some time, with little specific knowledge of the game, prior to entrance. Therefore, the operations of the underground economy are not new to them. However, they have a very limited understanding of prostitution upon entrance.

**Overcoming Barriers to Prostitution: Meeting Financial Needs**

Upon entrance, prostitution was not viewed as an additional burden, but was perceived as a necessary response to alleviate the burdens women currently faced. Common burdens at entrance included those social institutional stressors that come from the effects of poverty, structural barriers, and family dysfunctions. It was initially a response to meet financial needs.

Women perceived barriers to financial opportunity in the formal economy which included for adult women, a lack of competitive training and a subsequent paycheck to sustain a family sufficiently. Carol illustrates this point; “I was poor and couldn’t go get a nice job. I always dreamed of a way of getting out and having money.”
Women who entered under legal age reported being too young to work legally in conventional employment settings and sought out alternative avenues for making money. Being underage Nina saw no other alternative; “I started out prostituting for the sake of just wanting to make more money. For being a kid and everything, I couldn’t just go out and get a job because of my age.” These findings are consistent with other literature (Reynolds, 1986; San Francisco Task Force, 1996).

Not only is prostitution work more financially promising than current situations, for most women who entered, the prospect of sexual encounters with men for financial gain was perceived as less stressful than an abusive, neglectful, or poverty-stricken home life. Eight women in the study came from homes where they were sexually abused. Seven women left alcoholic homes. Two came from a home that had a history of prostitution in the family, where older sisters modeled prostitution behavior. Two reported being physically abused. One came from a home where a parent suffered from a severe mental illness and was both neglectful and physically abusive. All of the women lived in poverty. Those who had come from abusive homes or were homeless as a result of prior abuse saw prostitution as a step up from their previous lifestyle. When Elsie turned 15 years old, prostitution seemed a viable option.

My step-dad was raping me and my mom was [neglecting] us...passing us off to her friends so she could go out. [They] never spent no time with us. I’ve been in and out of foster care my whole life. My real dad’s in prison, so I had a lot of problems going on....I was curious. I seen other girls doing it and they were having some fun. And they had some things I didn’t have and I asked them how they got it and they would tell me, “you know, just go out and do this and this and this, and you can make this much money. And go out and buy yourself this.” And you know, they worked for pimps and stuff....And as long as they’re making money, the pimp takes care of them.
So I was like, “oh that sounds fun.” At first I thought it was fun. (Elsie).

Prior to entrance, women suffered daily struggles associated with a life in poverty. Never having enough to buy cigarettes and barely enough to pay rent, women found a way to rationalize any moral objections to their proposed work and set out to make money.

This girl asked if I would walk with her because she was scared to walk by herself....She said, “you watch the type of car I get in and try to get a look at the license plate number in case I don’t come back, you know, you’ll know who I went with”....So she was gone like five minutes and back and had 50 dollars, and I said, “damn!.” So I said, “well shit, I’m gonna try this.” Cause I was broke, living on the streets wondering how I was gonna eat (Cara).

Brenda’s husband died and she was left to pay the family bills. Her desire to keep her daughter in sports and other school activities outweighed any moral objections. As her financial needs mounted, she found prostitution a viable opportunity to maintain her family’s current lifestyle.

I tried to keep the bills paid and everything. I had a job, but after Joe died, the money just didn’t stretch. So my girlfriend use to go out of town a lot and she told me that we could do this together and so we started working conventions. We would travel out of town and we only worked weekends at first (Brenda).

**Prostitution Types**

Although descriptions above illustrate the common elements of entrance for street prostitutes in the study, stories particular to the types of prostitutes found working the streets crystallize the experience of street work. Upon entrance, Conventional Pimp Controlled Prostitutes were wooed by the promise of fine food, fine clothing, and trips out
of town. They were told they were beautiful and that men wanted them. Men desired them so much, they would pay hard earned money for them. They were literally “sitting on a gold mine” (Massi). Although pimps never guaranteed emotional or financial security, the potential for success inspired women to test the waters in this new life. There was a sense of belonging that women longed for, a sense of exciting hope for the future, an adventure that would take them from their meager existence into a life with a fine-looking man who smelled good, looked good, was interested in them, and told them they had special skills, intelligence and beauty. In return for his attention, protection, and love, she would be required to work to bring their dream into a reality. “These prostitutes want what comes along with a pimp, his dress, his smell, his demeanor, his power, his prestige, his respect” (Owens & Shepard, 1998). He is looking for dedication. Together they would make him a lot of money and she would be taken care of forever. Trust in him, believe in him, and she will have the type of clothes, jewelry, and lifestyle she always wanted. Sonya describes the intoxicating attraction of a pimp’s seduction. “For me, it was what we said. It was wanting to be loved and I liked the words that was said and the nice things that I got” (Sonya). Debbie adds:

He progressively led up to the fact that, that’s what he wanted....We didn’t just meet one day and he said, “this is what you’re gonna do.” I think they really feel like they have to gain your trust, win you over, before they can dump something like that on you (Debbie-Conventional prostitute).

There is an intensity, confidence, and charisma about him that is alluring and if he can catch a woman’s eye, he will run his game. He is looking for a woman that has had some
trouble in her life and has a void to fill. He assesses her weaknesses and limitations and fills the void. He becomes her father, lover, and friend.

Elsie, the product of repeated incest and a child of the foster care system, ran away and at age 15 became involved with a pimp in Toledo:

I was walking and a guy, a pimp just pulled up along side of me and told me I was what he was looking for and like he told me some different things. And...he asked what I'm interested in and if I'm interested...he'll take care of me and buy me this and whatever I want. And he doesn't ask for much so I did it (Elsie- Conventional Prostitute).

A pimp offers hope for the future and women see this as an opportunity to be financially successful. The time a prostitute is entering street work, the pimp is said to be "turning her out" or has "turned her out" on the streets to make a profit.

I knew this guy and he brought me here and turned me out on the streets. He was a pimp....The first day I was scared, but I got the money. And once I seen the money. I mean, my first day I made $600 in a three hour period (Sonya).

Renegade Prostitutes enter with the same hopes and dreams for financial success as Conventional Prostitutes, only they enter a free agent. At this stage they are filled with an excitement that motivates them to look toward working the streets as a means to gain financial security. Most Renegades are flatbacks (as are Conventional Prostitutes). A flatback is one who does an honest days work for an honest days dollar in the world of prostitution. They are interested in a fair and even exchange as agreed upon by themselves and the customer. Renegade prostitutes have prostitution savvy and have learned from the best, often getting close to pimps or other prostitutes in the know, to
learn what they need to know and then disappearing to put what they’ve learned into practice.

Upon entrance, Renegades are interested in building a substantial client base as they intend to be successful entrepreneurs. They can be friendly with customers, smiling, chatting, and hoping to entice their customer into returning time and time again. They will allow a customer to touch their body and fondle them in efforts to make the experience a good one. Work then is effective and efficient. In the minds of these business women, a quick and happy customer is a returning customer. Michelle explains the lure of fast and easy money; “And I was hooked, I was hooked. Cause you know, it was a good time....So I don’t know, that’s that’s how I started” (Michelle-Renegade).

Nina began prostituting at 14 years old. Unable to find a job because of her young age, Nina describes her first prostitution experience with a 70-year-old customer:

Well as quick as he got off, I was like damn, 20 dollars for this little bit of time! That’s cool! You know it took like a couple minutes....damn, I could make hundreds! So I was just out there non-stop everyday (Nina- Renegade).

Renegades during this stage, receive some emotional fulfillment from working. A narcissistic belief that numerous other men find them sexually appealing along with the adventurous nature of the lifestyle itself catches their attention and they are smitten with the idea of making fast and easy money. While they don’t report finding their dates particularly sexually appealing, they enjoy the aspect of being wanted. Some report that sex work filled a void of loneliness and a void of being loved.

...after my husband died, prostituting made me feel desired. I don’t
know. Men would buy me flowers and they wanted me. For me it filled a void because my husband left a hole there and I wanted to be loved and needed and desired (Brenda).

Outlaws, on the other hand, enter for financial gain with no prospects of gaining any emotional benefit from turning dates. Upon entrance, Outlaws report a sense of considerable emotional disturbance having to be sexual with strangers. It is upsetting to them and their only hope is to complete the act, get the money, and buy what they need to survive. If anything, Outlaws are seduced by the prospect of making a life with a boyfriend who may also make his living as a hustler. These women perceive blocked opportunities in other areas of work, and find street prostitution to be their only alternative. Prostitution is most often a last ditch effort to prevent homelessness and in many instances may be akin to what researchers have termed “survival sex.”

Outlaws typically don’t have repeat customers. They are not interested in building a client base. They are interested in getting the maximum amount of money from a customer in one encounter as they possibly can.

A lot of girls do it for $20.00, and I’ve done it for $20 too, don’t get me wrong. But to me, if they got 20, they got 30. And to me that’s just three minutes. If you’re not done in three minutes, “oh well, you want some more, you give me some more money.” That’s how I am. “And no, you can’t touch me. If you touch me, you have to pay extra.” So all in all, if you want a decent blow job from me, you gotta pay 80 bucks....Those guys hated me.....I never got no repeat customers, never (Carol-Outlaw). Once women enter prostitution, they are required to modify their persona in order to meet their individual and social needs in conjunction with the demands of the prostitution industry. This is described in the next section.
SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

Central Focus

Social Adjustment is the time when women are adapting to their new environment. Key elements of this stage include intense street learning that focuses on problem solving and the prevention of negative events through the use of protective strategies. In this stage, the rewarding aspects of prostitution are prominent and women focus on the benefits of the lifestyle.

After entering prostitution women learn the lifestyle and how to play the game. During this stage, the importance of being a quick study in this field is necessary. For some, this is their first work experience. However new to the game, women involved reported feeling a sense of financial security as they are able to create and sustain a steady income. More important, money is a source of power and women feel they are able to have some input in their financial lives. Even women involved with a pimp believe their contribution makes a significant difference between success and failure in the lives of the pimp and themselves. Because of the financial means to support themselves, women believe in their ability to control and influence activities in their lives in a way that they had not been able to before. Because of this, they report a sense of accomplishment and mastery over their world. It may be described as a sense of coherence, of connecting or being engaged with the world in a way that only having money can bring. It is empowering. It is in this sense that the lifestyle is valued and enjoyed.

Prostitution life is fast paced. More than ever, there is a fascination for life and while in prostitution, women surpass merely surviving. There is always something to do,
whether it is working or spending the money just made. Before prostitution, women were surviving as daily efforts were focused on meeting daily needs. The life pace was slow and vacillated between waiting for a welfare check, watching daytime soaps, gathering with neighbors to socialize, struggling to pay monthly bills and keep utilities on, keep food in the refrigerator and maintain a place to live. For women who began working as an under aged minor, the psychological pressure of attempting to keep the peace in a conflict-filled family, to stabilize a transient family, or be taken care of by neglectful or perhaps abusive adults were problems too powerful for an adolescent to solve. Being able to take care of themselves through prostitution activities or partnering with a pimp appeared to at least be attainable.

The lifestyle can be socially fulfilling and psychologically addicting. Women report sharing their money with friends and family, sometimes treating loved ones to new clothes, dinner, movies, or a night out. Having established new relationships, women report being in bars more often, socializing with others and the self fulfillment that comes from buying your own drinks or occasionally treating friends.

Even though there is a focus on the benefits of the lifestyle, because of the stigma attached to work in street prostitution, women feel forced to lead two lives. This societal stigmatization does not allow for women to integrate life or even to consider themselves part-time prostitutes. It instead encourages a double life, one that dictates that the prostitution related part of their life remain separate and hidden. “Prostitution for women is not considered merely a temporal activity as it is for men who are clients, but rather a heavily stigmatized social status which in most societies remains fixed regardless of a
change in behavior” (Peterson, 1990 p. 399). Cara describes an example of this separation in the common practice of developing of a street name. “My street name was Ann or Red. I went by Red a lot because of my hair.”

The lifestyle requires one to incorporate new habits and new ways of thinking. Not only have women found a way to silence those moral restraints, but now they begin to learn the value of exploitation. It becomes an issue of ignorance which justifies exploitation. “Find a fool, bump his head” (Massi) is the saying on the street. The argument follows that if one is ignorant enough to be taken, then I am justified in doing so. This philosophy is not only exclusively for customers, it is universal and can happen to the less street wise individual:

There used to be the country [bar] down there, that’s where all the square white people went. There was this square white girl...and I, when I ran into this guy going into the...bar, I came back and I told her. Because she had a car, a Sierra, I said, “Well let’s go out here.” I talked her into doing it with the guy and while she was doing it with him, I took his wallet and left. Left them both, ha ha ha (Carol).

The rule on the street is, “don’t hate the player, hate the game” (Massi). With that sentiment, women are taught to take it in stride and learn from their mistakes. For some women this lesson has been felt personally as they have been the victims of exploitation themselves.

Oh, she tricked me. The game out here is like, “you give me a girl and I’ll give you this,” you know what I’m saying? So she said, “hey Nina, I want you to meet this guy, you know, he’s really crazy and cool and everything. He’ll take you to these real slick places” and all this other blasé, blasé. I’m like “well cool,” you know. He pulls up in this gold Cadillac, you know, and we’re getting in. I’m sittin in the back, you know, they up front talking all under their breath and stuff you know,
talking to each other. And the next thing you know he’s reaching and handing her something and she jumps out. And he says, “jump up front sweety.” You know, so I jump up front. I’m talkin to him and the next thing you know, I’m out here....she took and actually sold me to someone and I didn’t know it. You know, I’m young in the game, and she sells me to this man for an 8-ball of crack cocaine. And you know...the next thing I know, I’m down on Broadway clockin $400 a day for him (Nina).

Protective Strategies and Meeting the Demands of Daily Hassles

Bearing more directly then on a woman’s ability to remain productive in the game, it is imperative that she learns strategies to protect herself. Ignorance limits her ability to handle herself and take care of business. Thus, despite the positive aspects of working and producing money, the importance of learning protective strategies to minimize risks are paramount. It has been pointed out earlier that experiences with violence, HIV, drug abuse, and poor emotional and mental health are prominent risks. The stakes can be high as women learn to navigate their terrain. In order to be successful, women are challenged to learn the code of conduct regarding prostitution, dealing with customers, and dealing with the police and the justice system. Discussed below are those most prominent rules that make up the code of conduct.

Because of the unpredictability of the streets, this stage dictates that one learns the code of conduct, defined as a process of socialization or learning the roles and rules of behavior for the context of street prostitution. The code of conduct regarding street prostitution is necessary for this industry to remain a thriving market and for women to be successful.
One of the most salient issues is dealing with customers. When engaging a first time customer four tasks are necessary, setting the price and getting the money, providing the service, assessing for police, and using protective strategies to both evaluate customer intent and to keep oneself safe from physical harm. Each of these functions is important in increasing the probability that a successful sex for money exchange will occur. While settling on a price, getting the money, and providing the agreed upon service typically describes the sexual exchange encounter as commonly understood, assessing for the police and using protective strategies become key elements in women reporting successful completion of any arranged services. Street prostitutes attempt to identify and screen for undercover police. Explanations regarding successful procedures for accomplishing this task appear idiosyncratic with no common pattern. However, methods used to screen out potentially dangerous dates are uniform and common with every woman in the study adhering to most protective strategy practices before accepting a proposition from a potential customer. These strategies consist of ritualistic behavior and intuitive assessment of customers. This complex set of intuitive feelings coupled with protective behaviors are preformed quickly in order to minimize the likelihood for arrest. The most commonly used protective strategies for customer assessment were consistent across respondents and include the use of instinct, engaging in chatting and checking rituals, sharing information, relying on God, establishing date spots, dating regulars, and escape.

The most frequently identified protective strategy in the code of conduct is what prostitutes term the use of instinct to “read” dates. The term “date” is a commonly used term to describe a customer. “Reading” a date is synonymous with using one’s instinct.
Instinct involves a complex set of impulses that serves as a gut-level feeling designed to predict the dangerousness or lethality of a potential exchange encounter. It is the \textit{feeling} aspect of protection. Street workers are very much in tune with these gut level instincts.

With a highly audible gut level voice, they listen and read their dates very quickly.

At first I’d let them do most the talking. Feel them out. Find out where their head was, what they were interested in. If I felt that things weren’t right, I wouldn’t do nothing. I’d get out of the car (Monica).

If you don’t feel right, don’t get in the car. Always be alert. Listen to their conversation. Does it seem right? Watch their hands, they might try to go for a weapon…you can even check under the seats. I’ve done it a million times (Carol).

\textbf{Women engage in chatting and checking behaviors before agreeing to a date.}

Respondents in this study were specific in their description of a need to look into the eyes of their dates, to assess body movements, and to look for appropriate or inappropriate gestures in one’s assessment of a customer’s intentions to inflict harm. While women are instinctually assessing the potential for customer-related violence, they simultaneously engage in talking to a potential customer to assess for appropriate and inappropriate voice inflection and intonation. They are interested in seeing if their conversation and bodily gestures are representative of someone who is genuinely interested in sex for money. At the time these psychological assessments are taking place, their eyes scanned the car, checking for weapons or signs that would reveal the potential for violence. Once they agree to a date, assessment doesn’t stop there but continues throughout the date. A woman must be prepared to flee the scene at the first sign of trouble.
I had him park right there because it wasn’t even a block away from where I was standing at. We backed in and I was looking at him and he went in the back seat to get a gun. I said, “what are you doing?”, and he said, “I need protection.” So I got out and ran. I mean, I hurried up and got out and ran (Carol).

Although using one’s instinct is the primary and most essential protective strategy, it is not the only one used among workers. Street prostitutes place themselves at risk whenever they enter a stranger’s car. The women interviewed described strategies used to prevent violence in secluded environments. Massi describes a well choreographed oral sex encounter:

I always sit in the car with my arm up on the back of the car seat and my fist close to his head just in case I have to punch him....I keep my left foot near the hump on the car floor so if I have to push off while I getting out of the car....I keep my right foot very near the door so if I have to make a fast escape I can open the door and step right out and I keep my right hand near the door handle so I can open the door real fast and jump out if I have to (Massi).

In the event that a prostitute went to a date’s home, she may ask several questions before arriving to find out who lives in the house and if there are animals in the house. Once she arrived, she would most likely go through the house and make sure it was empty and relatively safe.

Some of the women interviewed stated they would share information about a potentially dangerous date with other prostitutes, perhaps sharing particular stories about the violence or threats they suffered at the hands of a particular customer. At minimum, most would describe the car and the customer alerting other workers not to become involved. However, because of the street value of exploitation, some women would opt
not to tell others about dangerous customers. Wilma explains, “Girl, my sick mind would
be thinking if one of them got caught up by one of them crazy tricks or serial killers, I’d be
thinking ‘less girls,’ more customers for me.”

Monica explains how some women would lead other women into potentially dangerous
situations.

If you have a girl out there that doesn’t like you, she’s gonna lead you
to the guy. And most girls are jealous of each other. They think somebody’s
making more money than the next one, so they try to lead you to them.
You can’t trust anybody in that life. There’s so many people that are out
to get as much as they can.

In addition to fine-tuning instinct and mastering particular behavioral skills, most
women interviewed talked about their reliance on God to protect them, keep them safe, or
get them out of dangerous situations. Some of the women prayed to God as a matter of
course. Others described prayers while in potentially dangerous situations.

Women felt most safe when they established particular date spots, and did not
negotiate on where to date. These date spots (their term) were carefully chosen in efforts
to prevent violence, have an option for escape, or be in the vicinity where others could
hear screaming. These designated sites are considered by weighing safety and risk.
Simply put, “don’t let them take you where you don’t want to go....I had my dates park
right there because it wasn’t even a block away from where I was standing at” (Carol).
Not only was staying in the vicinity safer, but going out of the area took more time and
therefore should cost customers more money.

You don’t go far, that way you don’t take long to go and get back. You
stay within the vicinity of where you gettin picked up at, which is three or
four blocks of the area that you’re in. If they want to go further, it costs more (Cara).

Dating regulars is viewed as potentially risk free in terms of violence. However, regulars are described as few and far between. The women explained that they didn’t make enough from regulars to meet needs. Also, over time regulars became interested in negotiating for lower prices. Given the scarce supply and availability of regulars, women were forced to continue to solicit strangers.

In the event that any of the women became involved in a dangerous situation, they tried to escape. Escape attempts most often involved injury to self, leaving the attacker unharmed. Escape patterns have involved jumping through glass windows, jumping from moving vehicles, and running from date scenes.

Some women carried protective devices with them while working. Nina described carrying a razor blade for protection:

A girl I knew taught me how to flip a blade in my mouth....I could keep it in my mouth. She showed me how to give a blow job without cutting the man, without cutting myself, and when I need it, just flip my tongue and it was there to do my thing (Nina).

However, even with the possession and use of weapons, women typically fared worse than their assailants;

Me and my friend went to this motel room to date these two guys. My friend brought a gun because she was scared that something might happen .....My friend ended up getting killed with her own gun by one of the dates ....I was the only one that walked out of that hotel room that night that wasn’t shot. She shot both the customers before one of them got a hold to the gun and shot her (Brenda).
Despite the sometimes deadly outcomes attached to this type of work, the protective strategies above may be described as active problem-focused activities directed toward direct intervention and purposeful action and are developed to protect women from physical harm. In the absence of conventional protections of society, these strategies may be considered necessary ways then of dealing with the daily hassles of prostitution and to decrease the risk of violence. They are necessary responses to an otherwise unprotected and unregulated activity and women worked hard to apply these strategies when working. The belief that these strategies are somewhat effective is key to continued work in prostitution. Protective strategies then are specific acts that address potentially dangerous situations and at this stage are not associated with apathy or learned helplessness.

Women also practice strategies to protect them emotionally. Those most common emotion-focused responses at this stage are denial and dissociation.

Through the use of denial as a strategic emotional tool, women minimized the dangers of street prostitution. At this stage, women believe in their ability to control an event and depend heavily on what they learned in terms of protecting themselves. It is interesting to note, that in their perception, men were not in control. It was the women who governed what actually occurred during a customer-prostitute exchange. However, women find out much later that what they believed was only an illusion of control and that men could abuse and assault them in any event they desired to inflict harm.

During the act of prostitution, dissociation assumed a functional purpose as women learned to dissociate where they were from the sexual act they were performing. When dissociation is described in psychological terms, it is described as:
...The psyche's normal reaction to a traumatic experience....If withdrawal is not possible, then a part of the self must be withdrawn, and for this to happen the otherwise integrated ego must split into fragments to dissociate....It allows life to go on by dividing up the unbearable experience and distributing it to different compartments of the mind and body. This means that the normally unified elements of consciousness (i.e., cognitive awareness, affect, sensation, imagery) are not allowed to integrate. Experience itself becomes discontinuous. Mental image may be split from affect, or both affect and image may be dissociated from conscious knowledge (Kalsched, 1996 p.13).

Since childhood trauma and dissociation have been inextricably linked, it is reasonable to assume that women who use dissociation may have had practice in childhood. The use of dissociation as a protective strategy may not be new, but may be related to a history of childhood emotional traumas. Whatever the case, dissociation serves as a functional tool of work that maintains emotional distancing between the customer and the sex worker.

In terms of protection from HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases, women reported using various protective strategies all which involved condom use. Among the largest barriers that confronted women in terms of disease risk, included money to buy condoms and getting men to wear them. One woman reported using the plastic cellophane cover from a cigarette pack when she ran out of money and needed to turn a date. However most women could and did supply condoms for their dates. The biggest obstacle then was getting some men to wear them. The solution? To avoid asking them and simply slipping the condom on the man without his knowledge. Women were very creative in ways to accomplish this task. Some women would hold condoms in the side of their cheek while talking and negotiating for the date. She may slip it on him during oral
sex and slide it off with her hand, him never being the wiser. Intercourse required even more skill.

There’s plenty of ways to get a condom on a man and they don’t know nothin about it. And even if you’re having sex. If you’re having foreplay before you have sex. It’s very easy. While a man is sucking on your breasts or whatever, you could be stroking him and slippin on a rubber. And don’t give him time to get up or whatever, to climb on top of you. You just roll em over....You don’t want to get beat up. You don’t want them to take the money back....But if your slick about it, you have the tissue next to you, so when the man is ready. Let’s say he thinks he ejaculated inside you, you tell him “oh wait a minute, let me get this tissue so it don’t run down the crack of my butt.” And you put the tissue down there and when he’s gettin off, you take the rubber off, you know you hold it and let him slide out, and the rubber comes right off of it. Cause the rubber stays inside you. If you hold the ring part of a man, and he’s coming out of you and your holding that ring, that condom aint going nowhere, it stays right there, he’s the only thing moving, you know....And then you wipe yourself and pull it out in the tissue.....There are so many ways. I aint lying, so many different ways (Cara).

For men that agree to wear a condom, some women may choose to place a condom containing nonoxynol-9 on and another condom on top that is flavored so they can give oral sex and still have the protection of the nonoxynol-9 at work for them.

Like there’s a kiss-of-mint condoms for blowjobs, but they got a powdery, it’s like puttin on one of them gloves from the doctors office and you get that powder all over your hand. Well the rubbers that you use for blowjobs have powder on them. And they’re very dry, they catch your teeth and I mean, you could easily poke a hole in em. So you double up if you want to, you know. You put a laytex condom on first and then you put the kiss-a-mint condom on cause then the lubricated rubber will slide up and down on him to where the powder one doesn’t (Cara).

After hours of discussion in my interviews with women, it soon became obvious that what public health professionals had termed “the barrier method” had a much larger
meaning to women in prostitution, other than protection from HIV, sexually transmitted diseases, and pregnancy. For women in the study, condoms were used to inhibit emotional intimacy and to separate from customers using several emotional and physical strategies. Physically of course, the condom is used to prevent genital contact. Prostitutes reported typically using condoms with customers. However, with lovers prostitutes reported not using a condom. Emotionally, the barrier method meant the difference between dissociation and being emotionally present. With lovers, women reported being emotionally present.

...when you’re doing it like 3,4,5,7, times a night, you kinda just go somewhere else...you know, you’re mind aint there. I mean it’s happening to you physically...and I’m not saying I have two personalities or something like that, but you kinda just like...the same way with incest...your body’s there, but your mind is in Hawaii somewhere, or your mind is at Walt Disney World buying T-shirts. You know...but with someone you love and care about you’re there physically, mentally, emotionally, all that. So it’s different (Debbie, 1998).

Being someone’s pimp however did not automatically mean one did not use a condom. Some pimp-prostitute relationships still required the use of a condom. In some cases very little or no sexual relationship was involved. For some, occasional fellatio was involved. For special women, the pimp reserved access to her vagina for himself and this woman was only required to use her mouth and hands with customers. In these cases a condom wasn’t used.

Another form of separation common among this study group was separation by racial division. By in large, both black and white women commercially dated white men and emotionally dated black men. This is not to say that there was never a merging or blurring
of this division, but this was the most common scenario. Massi has created a clear
separation in her mind. “When I see a white man, I see a trick....I could never like a white
man seriously” (Massi).

At this stage it appeared that daily hassles were the most common source of pressure.
Those most common daily hassles, in particular, included police interactions, efforts to
anticipate and prevent violence, general stigmatization and societal hypocrisy.

Police interactions involve detainment and arrest along with the daily conscious efforts
to prevent arrest. Arrest avoidance involved questioning customers in efforts to detect
police. Although there was little consensus in this area, one woman reportedly would ask
to see a customer’s genitalia before proceeding with a date. The idiosyncratic means
women used to detect police and avoid arrest was ineffective, as several women described
being involved in an undercover sting at some point during their career.

Whereas the first experience with arrest may be quite traumatic, repeated arrest
appeared to be more of a hassle:

...he said, “how much for a blow job?,” and I told him 30 dollars. And
he said, “how much for a half and half,” and I said, “50.” And I said, “if
you don’t have any condoms then we have to go to the store.” He said,
“no problem, I’ll take you anywhere you wanna go.” So we went down
Huron Street. He took me up Chestnut...and cut over to Summit Street.
He turned off of Summit onto Cherry, and that’s when I knew I was
going to jail. I said, “alright, I know I’m busted.” He said, “what do you
mean?” And I said, “dates don’t come down here by the court house, by
the jail where all the police are sittin. So, I know I’m going to jail”
(Cara).

Since prostitution is not a priority crime requiring stiff sentences and strong enforcement,
arrest typically served to detain and temporarily interrupt prostitution activities.
Women are at risk of getting robbed by a crack-addicted prostitute or someone in the vicinity needing money and knowing she has just completed a date. This can be a source of daily pressure as women must be aware of their surroundings while exiting a customer’s car.

Well you can get robbed just as much as anybody, especially if they know you’re working the streets. Like they can see you getting out of a car and come knock you upside the back of your head and take the money....one day this one bitch come up in my face and thought well, “you got some money?” And I said, “naw, I aint got no money.” “Well you just got out of that tricks car. I know you got some money cause I dated him before. He’s a 50 dollar trick.”....She tried to get in my face....She was gonna take my money out of my pockets. She got close enough and I punched her in her face and laid her out. She left me alone. Never fucked with me again (Cara).

The stigmatization from a society that ignores conditions and denies opportunity to acceptable employment and degrades work in the sex industry creates internal turmoil for a woman who knows she must work in order to survive. It’s the daily hassle that comes from the perception of being between a rock and a hard place. Elaine explained; “I am ashamed of being a prostitute. I hate it but I’m not ashamed of getting the money for my kids, because I knew it was going to my kids” (Elaine).

Finally, there are daily hassles from societal hypocrisy in action. Women experience gender discrimination in arrest rates. Despite the lack of discrimination in the letter of the law between those who buy sex and those who sell sex, according to James (1976), two customers are arrested for every eight prostitutes. In addition, women see the contradiction between word and deed for those that fall on the moral right side of the law. Renee discussed her companion who worked in the field of corrections. “I was dating a
probation officer and smoking drugs with him” (Renee). Dot accommodated some members of a local church. “I’ve seen people from church as dates, which is really bad” (Dot). Drug counselors were another source of walking contradiction for one of these women.

I have had some drug counselors as dates a few times, which don’t make no sense cause if you’re a drug counselor, then you’re contributing to the problem by giving a prostitute money to go buy drugs. That just doesn’t make sense (Maureen).

While these women understand and respect the value of having individual morals and ethics, they do not respect those societal keepers of morality. Police are another source of concern. The women speak from experience, as not only have they dated those most respected citizens in the community, ten of the twenty-one women interviewed discussed dating police officers during their careers.

Prostitution Types

Aside from common experiences of all these women involved in prostitution, daily hassles, specific to Conventional Pimp Controlled Prostitutes, are apparent. Conventional Prostitutes are often pressured by quotas.

Different pimps have different rules. I mean some of ‘em set quotas with the girls. You have to make a certain amount of money before you can go home... When I started, I was bringing $1000 a day. But then that [pimp] didn’t last long. But then this one I’ve been with for five years he, I mean at first it was like that, but then it wasn’t because I mean he wasn’t involved in drugs so I mean I was bringing him maybe $600-700 a night (Sonya).

For those not placed on a quota system, there is competition from other women in the pimp’s family of prostitutes to bring in enough money in order to earn the respect of the
pimp. His success as a pimp is dependent on fueling two emotions in a woman, love and fear. By giving his attention to more than one woman at the same time, he heightens both the love each woman desires all to herself, and fear that she may lose any part of it. These situations create jealousy and promote rivalry for his affections.

"..."[I'm] just tired of it...cheating on me and you know, the wife-in-law stuff, where you know the wife-in-law is another girl that is working for him....I just couldn't handle all that. It made me crazy" (Sonya).

Some women will not tolerate competition and move on, while other women welcome the prestige of being with a successful pimp and willingly take on the challenge and responsibilities (Milner & Milner, 1972). While they are said to be “turned out” by a pimp, ongoing job training is often the task of other prostitutes, known as wife-in-laws, also involved in the pimp family. The availability of wife-in-law training depends on how large the stable is and how corporate the pimp.

Renegades are true entrepreneurs and are interested in working for themselves. However in order to be effective, they need to learn the tricks of the trade. At this stage, Renegades often attempt to get close to key players who are veterans in the game and learn what they know. They may accomplish this by choosing a pimp, listening to his rap, accepting his gifts, hanging out with him while he talks and attempts to woo them into his stable. When they have gathered what they can get from him, both tangible and intangible knowledge, they disappear and begin putting what they know into practice. Renegades would consider maintaining a partnership with a pimp if it were to be an equitable partnership in which they would pay him a percentage for protection. Unfortunately, the
game does not function in that manner, leaving Renegades to opt for independent work.

Other Renegades get close to other prostitutes and learn what they know about the game. Periodically, they may team up with a girlfriend to work the bars or the streets, but if and when they engage in partnership, it is understood that each earns and keeps her own profits.

Outlaws, having never liked the idea of sex with unappealing strangers, focus on learning to talk their way out of a sexual encounter with the money. In the event they can’t talk their way out, their goal is to walk away with more than the customer expected to pay by attempting to manipulate him. This is evident, even from Carol’s first experience in commercial sex.

I don’t date old men anyway, so I’m like “damn, how am I gonna get out of this?”.... So I talked the man into giving me more.... I got forty dollars....I told him my stomach hurt. I told him I just had had a baby and I never really had a baby. I made him feel sorry for me. So we ended up not doing anything because I made him feel bad for me and he let me keep the money. The other girl, she fucked [her] old man and sucked his dick. I even ended up talking them into taking us to get something to eat too at Wendy’s (Carol).

Outlaws may feel justified in performing manipulative schemes on unsuspecting customers:

I never treated them guys nice....I’m gonna tell you about the point where I started getting into taking their money. After a couple of times of getting taken advantage of, raped, which I though was unfair, I felt dirty and nasty so I was like, “this is crazy.” I was about 17 (Carol-Outlaw).
Most times the women report being successful. At this stage, Outlaws will go through
with a sex for money exchange as planned, but do so grudgingly.

I would say 90% of the time I didn’t [have sex], 10% of the time I did. There’s some people you can’t rob. I’m not gonna lie and say you can
rob everybody, because you can’t. Some motherfuckers are not going
to let you rob them. They will die for theirs. Some take precautions,
because they been through that. Ten percent of the time I had to actually
go through with it the whole time I was out there doing it (Carol).

With the exception of Outlaws, then, prostitution is seen as fast money and easy money
during this stage. Indeed, this is the definable difference between Renegades and Outlaws;
both are independent workers but Renegades report making fast and easy money that was
necessary, while Outlaws reported rarely thinking the money was easy. All women
initially believed the money was necessary to their eventual success in life and became
immersed progressively into a life of street prostitution.

SOCIAL IMMERSION

Central Focus

Social Immersion is defined as intensive involvement in the lifestyle of street
prostitution in which the prostitute assumes the full persona of a professionalized street
worker. This has been supported by others who determined that women at this stage were
“entrenched” (Mathews, 1986) or “professionalized” (N. J. Davis, 1971) into the role and
activities of prostitution. At this stage, the sex worker views herself as a full-time
prostitute and establishes congruency with that community of others involved in
underground social networks.
To get at the central focus within this stage, we must first examine the emotional attachment to street work. Having the ability to make money continues to be appealing and women are willing to concentrate significant time and energy toward prostitution activities. Women immersed in the lifestyle work and earn a substantial amount of money compared to a pre-prostitution lifestyle. However, as fast as money is earned, it is quickly spent. Being able to spend well-earned money on those things beyond one’s basic needs places women in a position not only to attend to those basic needs but, for the first time for many, also to acquire ample clothing and shoes for themselves, their children and other family members. They are able to meet monthly bills and have funds left over for entertainment. The amount of money that can be acquired is only limited by their efforts. Here is tangible proof of their accomplishments. This can be personally satisfying and a source of positive reinforcement to continue. This feeling of empowerment through financial success helps to keep women involved in the prostitution game.

During this stage, women report being addicted to the lifestyle.

A lot of the lifestyle is money. The money is real hard to give up. You can make a lot of money, but you don’t keep it, but it’s the idea you’re making all this money...and you always have access to money (Debbie)....and you can spend it on what you want and get more (Nina)....Once you know that, it’s addicting and hard to stop (Debbie)....But it’s also about being out late....traveling and having fun....and being with who you wanna be with....and living like you rich...like you got credit cards (Carol).

As a result, they chose to distance themselves from conventional connections and formal economic attachments such as school, church, and other political and social institutions. Logistically, the more women associated with those in the prostitution
lifestyle, the more difficult it became to maintain ties in both. The illegality and social stigma attached to prostitution activities encourage the need for this division. As efforts to maintain two lives grow increasingly difficult, it becomes a matter of course to eventually let go of the conventional foothold in favor of underground social networks. Unfortunately this creates a lack of conventional role models and encourages underground role models.

The most prominent feature of this stage concerns increased time spent in prostitution. This includes time spent working and time spent socializing with others in the lifestyle. Three distinct activities result from immersion into the lifestyle. First, increased socialization with underground social networks encourages increased drug use. Second, women experience a broader range of customer encounters. Third, because of increased customer contact, women experience more customer-related violence.

While women report becoming more immersed in social networks, they also report increasing both the frequency and duration of drug use with the introduction of harder drugs stemming from these social contacts. This is the point in time when those who haven’t begun to use drugs begin using, and those previously using move from episodic recreational use to more frequent drug use. There is a shift in the intensity of drug use from recreational, gateway drugs including marijuana and/or alcohol to harder drugs.

I met up with some people, you know, and they was doing drugs and I wanted to try it. So I tried it.....I had smoked marijuana for a long time, since I was twelve but not with cocaine in it, I had never tried it and when I did, I liked it. So I just kept doing it....At first it was marijuana with cocaine in it....I was smoking it for awhile, and then it progressed....after that I started with the pipe and I was sniffing cocaine and it just kept
progressing....I went from coco puffing¹ to the [crack] pipe. (Nina)

Although the predominant drug of choice was crack cocaine, one woman reported shooting heroin.

Because women are working more during this stage, they come into contact with a broader range of clients and are willing to fulfill a broader range of sexual requests. A graphic illustration of such is told by Cara, who by this stage was a seasoned worker who was professionalized the game and has been sensitized to diverse sexual requests:

Well those are freaks. When you get somebody, I mean, it’s weird, it’s not normal...when you get a man wanting you to slice him very gently, just so he can see the driplets of blood come out of his penis....And they come prepared with their own razor blades? You know they got to have more than one razor blade and if I accidently happen to cut to deep or whatever, I aint getting cut too. You know what I’m saying. I don’t wanna bleed. But this one man wanted me to cut him, real gently on his penis, close to the vein so he could see the driplets. And that got him off. But I didn’t do it that way. Instead I put the razor blade between three fingers, so in other words, between all four of my fingers, between three of the gaps there was a razor blade, and you jack em off to where they can feel that sharp edge scrapin on him. He got off. For $150.00, I did it..... There’s another man. First time I met him, he wanted me to shit in his mouth. I got $300.00 for that.

An amateur in the entrance or social adjustment phase would typically shy away from such requests.

Facing Sterner Realities: Experiencing Acute Traumas

Although the prostitution lifestyle is valued and enjoyed, sterner realities must be addressed. Women are spending more time working during this stage, and therefore place

¹ Coco Puffing is smoking a marijuana cigarette that is laced with cocaine.
themselves at higher risk for violence. By now work is no longer seen as “easy money”.

Negative occurrences at this stage include daily hassles and acute traumas. Acute traumas such as rape or other forms of customer-related or pimp-related violence are more prevalent as a result of more time spent engaged in street work. By this stage, there are issues of morale and apprehension as most women suffered some form of victimization.

From what previously seemed like a beneficial lifestyle, now subtle strains of emotional deterioration such as depression become apparent. Imperfections in the profession are now evident.

Conventional pimp-controlled prostitutes also fall victim to pimp-related violence.

Monica sums up her experience with her pimp Mingo. “He got me to work truck stops, telling me that we could have beautiful things together. He beat me up three different times” (Monica). Carol tells of her short stay with a pimp-in-training named Julius.

He really wasn’t a pimp. He was a dope dealer trying to be a pimp. I could go shopping every weekend and I didn’t have to go sell my body at the time.....And I started liking him and getting jealous....One time, he did get him a girl, a prostitute....He didn’t want me to do it. He wanted her to do it. But he was spending his time with her so I got mad. She use to bring her money to the house and give it to me. I took the money that she brought to the house and all the jewelry he bought me and some of his jewelry, a whole bunch of it, and a leather coat that he bought me, and I took off.... He had heard I was with this guy. He said he was going to kill us both. So when he caught me he was like, “I got you now,” and he jumped out. We was in the projects. We were high as fuck off crack, me and Tony was. We were like, “oh fuck.” He had a baseball bat and Tony ran and left me. So yes, I got the baseball bat. He beat me in my legs and told me, “if you fall bitch, I’m a hit you in your head and kill you.” So I didn’t fall. I just stood there and screamed and took it. Finally, he hid me out at somebody’s house....My face was all swollen. I looked like a cabbage patch. I was horrible....I was just very fucked up.....So I called his house, the guy that did it, I said, “well somebody’s got to take care of me”....and I went home with him (Carol).
Foà & Rothbaum (1998) have shown us that emotional strategies used to protect the psyche during and after a violent acute trauma, such as rape and other physical assaults, are necessary for survival of a vicious attack, but work against healthy emotional functioning. For instance, an emotional response such as dissociation protects the woman at the time trauma is occurring, but is not a useful tool for long-term coping. A laundry list of long term emotional responses as a result of acute traumatic episodes includes recurring dissociation, depression, anxiety, panic, phobias, anger and rage, low self-esteem, shame, somatic pain, self-destructive thoughts and/or behavior, substance abuse, eating disorders, and relationship or intimacy difficulties (Foà & Rothbaum, 1998; Harvey & Herman, 1992). Although many of the above responses may be evident in a prostitute population, depression is a universal occurrence among these respondents by this stage. Depression is the emotion-focused response to both daily hassles and acute traumas. In an attempt to respond to the emotional pain associated with depression, drug use begins to shift from recreational use to functional use. Women use drugs in order to be able to counter recurring depression and continue working. Of course the genesis for such depression may be rooted in childhood traumas, chemical imbalances and many other variables that may have been dormant or perhaps intermittently under control, but what is known is that degrading and violent experiences in prostitution contribute to depression.

The current drug of choice for street workers is crack cocaine. It is cheap, available, but more importantly it gives its victim a euphoric high. However, the dysfunctional aspect of crack cocaine is that it creates paranoia. Women typically did not work the
streets immediately following the ingestion of crack cocaine. Crack cocaine makes women hypervigilent to the point of paranoia. They are said to be “tweaking” or “geeked up” and unable to work. They prefer to wait until the high dissipates before pursuing their next date.

You do the date, go find the drugs, you go smoke your drugs, you calm down a little bit. Cause you don’t wanna go out. You don’t wanna smoke a rock and then run outside.... The sunlight hurts your eyes plus you get a little bit of paranoia to where, you know, you always wanna come down a little bit before you go outside and catch another date. You wanna know the full concept of what you’re doing with that person. You don’t want to get in that car and be tweaking. You know, worried about this guy and what he’s gonna do (Cara).

All of the women report being involved with the police by this stage. Police-prostitute relationships are known to vary. In this study, I identified six types of police involvement scenarios. The “cop as paying customer” is common along with the “fringe benefits cop.” Both kinds of officers engage the prostitute sexually despite their societal responsibility to uphold the law, but one considers pay for services and the other expects free sexual services in exchange for continued freedom. Women described the “police as protector” and the “police as perpetrator.” One officer would reportedly go by the book, respond to calls, document violent incidents, search for assailants, and follow up on incidents as reported by prostitutes. Another type of officer has been described as a violent perpetrator with a badge. Not only does he coerce women into sexual situations, but he engages in abuses that, given the circumstances, are rarely reported. Finally, women made references to what is termed the “non-response officer” and the “nice cop.” The nice cop has been described as one who buys diapers and food for women he sees standing on the
corner, desperate for money. Upon arrest, they allow the woman to dispose of any drug paraphernalia prior to arriving in the booking department at the local jail. The non-response officer is one who is annoyed at the possibility that he must serve and protect a population so undeserving. Women talked of instances when they called and needed the aid of the police only to find a general lack of concern for the issue at hand. Short of checking the victim for warrants before leaving the scene, they rarely took prostitution complaints seriously, seldom filed a report or took the necessary steps to resolve the problem. With police protection viewed as the luck of the draw, women had little else to rely on except themselves and their protective strategies.

However, if there was any doubt that protective strategies learned were not foolproof; it is acknowledged by this stage. In order to cope, women are forced to concede the limited capabilities of their protective strategies and begin to deal with the presence of “chance” that is embedded in any customer-prostitute exchange. “Chance” is the uncontrollable and unpredictable probability that an encounter with a customer may turn violent and even deadly. “Skill” represents the knowledge and use of one’s protective strategies. In street prostitution there is a substantial amount of uncertainty regarding customers that represents skill and chance conditions. During the social adjustment period, these “chance conditions” seemed minimal, something that with more skill training, experience and effort, the women believed could be minimized. Now, due to extended duration in the field and repeated assaults, the element of “chance” has to be acknowledged.

I been raped. I was kidnapped and they put a pillow case over my head
and raped me. They would walk by and put a gun to my head. I remember I could hear the clicks. There wasn’t any bullets in the gun (Renee).

I was walking outside of a bar and I was drunk and high....I told [this guy] I had a place where we could go date. And he took me over to a truck terminal....He ripped my clothes off. He beat me. He threw me out for dead and drove off. A truck came in and that’s what made him stop. He left me for dead. I think he thought he killed me. The police couldn’t find him. They said there was only one entrance and they didn’t know how he got away. I ended up in intensive care (Monica).

He took me up on the hill behind the sports arena. At gun point, he made me take off my clothes, fold them nice and neat and put them in a pile....He’s sitting in the drivers seat and I’m in the passenger seat. He told me “very slowly take off your top and fold it, fold it nice and neat. Then take off your bra. You start at the top, take off your clothes and fold them neatly and sit them in front of you at the bottom of your feet. Then your bra”.... [This is] at gun point. I don’t know if the gun’s loaded or the gun’s not loaded.... I got completely naked. And he told me what I was gonna do to him. “You slowly start kissing me on my forehead and work your lips around my eyebrows, both sides. Then you kiss my eye lids, both sides. Then you work your way around, put your tongue in this ear.” He’s telling me how to do the shit. He was really weird. And then finally, he wasn’t comfortable being behind the steering wheel, cause it’s only about this much space (holds fingers slightly apart). If he wanted me to give him some head, there’s no way. He’d have to adjust the seat to where he’s layin back and I could have elbowed him up the nose or whatever. They don’t take that chance. So he made me back out. He got out of his side and stood there with the gun down far enough to where nobody could see if the, you know, the light comes on inside the car. He’s holding the gun in the car, pointed at me. He told me, “Turn around. Face the passenger’s door, put your feet out first, and then crawl out through the driver’s side, and stay sideways on my knees facing the passenger side.” So then he went around the car. He got in on the passenger side. And just as he was gettin comfortable, I snatched a shirt out the back and opened the door and ran down to the gas station. The only thing I had on was his shirt. Barefoot, I ran through broken glass. I ran through stones. I ran through everything. When your heart is pumping and just thinking about gettin away so you don’t get shot, you don’t care about your feet. He could have shot me as I was runnin (Cara).
Skill and Chance conditions are described as strategies that may be effective in one instance, but not effective in another instance. The extent to which a strategy is effective depends on a number of factors, namely the customer's motivation and intent for an encounter and the worker's judgements about the customer's intent. The customer's true motivation is unknown to the sex worker until after the exchange encounter has occurred. Therefore, each exchange encounter involves the skill of the sex worker both to read the potentiality of a date and make critical judgements regarding the customer's intent, and at the same time to ultimately accept the element of chance from not knowing the customer's true intent. A mismatch between a worker's fundamental appraisal and the customer's true intent may result in a violent encounter. Threat, harm, loss, assault, and murder may become a reality of any prostitute-customer encounter. Because a worker can never with all certainty know a customer's intentions, a level of vulnerability is apparent. Skill and chance conditions are such that a sex worker can never have a feeling of total control and personal safety on the job.

Vulnerability creates apprehension. The more vulnerable one feels, the more apprehensive one will be about engaging customers. Strangely enough, at the same time apprehension is at the forefront, women are increasing their time spent in prostitution. Because the amount of time working in prostitution increases, so does the risk for acute traumas.

Up to this point, women appear to focus on active problem-focused protective strategies. However, in response to the acknowledgment of chance as a contributing factor and because women have not fared well in violent encounters with men, there is a
shift during this stage to using predominately emotion-focused strategies to deal with prostitution-related hassles and traumas. In street work, effective problem-focused solutions as a result of an acute trauma may involve quitting prostitution or perhaps managing prostitution activities by dating regulars who are thought to exhibit no violent intent. However, for women who stay involved in street prostitution for economic reasons, quitting is not an option and regulars “don’t come around enough” (Dot) to make financial ends meet. Street prostitutes are therefore more likely to adopt emotion-focused strategies in response to trauma. Common emotion focused responses at this stage are depression and drug use.

Therefore this stage is identified by the amount of social immersion that takes place in street prostitution networks, but also in street drug networks. Drugs take on a functional use during this stage. Whereas previously women used drugs to socialize, now women increasingly use drugs to decrease depression.

Prostitution Types

Because of the increased time in which women engage in a prostitution lifestyle, reinforcement to the particular prostitution types is apparent. Professionalization at this stage is noted in Conventional Pimp-Controlled Prostitute types.

A Conventional Prostitute attempts to impress her man by working the hours he suggests she work in order to bring him the money he needs to dress well and be content with the type of lifestyle to which he is accustomed. Her identity is defined through him. For fear she may lose him or lose his love, she works longer and harder to bring him the
money he needs. She is hoping to show her loyalty and her love more than the other girls in his stable (Flowers, 1998).

Now that she has learned “the game” and is proficient in playing, she is known as a thoroughbred. Thoroughbreds are professionals in the prostitution industry and they maintain the market rates in the profession. A thoroughbred is able to handle customers, command money, and conduct business effectively and efficiently in order to maximize profits.

When you’re turned out, you’re just out there. You don’t know what you’re doing. You’re just being turned out for a new job. You’re being trained for it. And then once you get down the steps, you know, you become a thoroughbred. You don’t let the guy take control of you, you take control of it. You take control of tricks. You know what you gotta do to make your man happy (Sonya- Conventional Prostitute).

There is now little question as to the appropriateness of handing one’s money over to a pimp.

Like if I gave him 500 dollars one night, he might give me like you know, five dollars for living money. And like for my kids’ birthday, he’d give me 50 dollars. I never got back what I gave him, but I’d have access to money. If I needed something, I could call him and get it you know....I made him money. It’s like I’m his employee or he’s my employee, because I have to pay him. And some girls...they’ll walk around dirty, you know, dirty because they think that that’s making him respect them more because they don’t ask shit (Debbie- Conventional Prostitute).

In a more corporate pimp family, meaning a pimp with many prostitutes, one woman is usually afforded more power than the others and is considered his number one lady or “bottom bitch” as it is called in the streets (Massi). She may be required to work, but to only use her mouth or hands when dating and to save intercourse for her pimp. She may
live with him and may be required to train the new women joining his stable. They may even drop off money to her after work in the event that their pimp is otherwise occupied.

If a woman becomes unhappy with her current pimp, she may “choose up”. More than likely, little acts of defiance against a pimp are sometimes initiated when a woman gets jealous or is unhappy with her current arrangement. She may create a situation in which she is “out of pockets” by withholding money, talking to other pimps, or leaving work early. This is sometimes done to get the attention of the pimp or may be an activity leading to an eventual severance between the pimp and prostitute. It almost always leads to pimp initiated retaliation. Because each woman watches to see if a violation of the pimp rules will result in violence, pimps believe they must adhere to this rule to keep order. Being “out of pockets” most assuredly, then, leads to a violent beating. As a measure of protection against acts of defiance, some pimps will beat a woman for little reason other than to remind her not to try and defy him. This is most poignantly described by Massi.

I wouldn’t say to much to him, but when he pissed me off, I would take off and be gone for three days or maybe three weeks. He would find me, bring me back. But this time I didn’t take off....I was living in a hotel and sometimes working out of the hotel and Mason (her pimp) came by and when he came in, he told me “I’m here to beat your ass, and the funny thing about it is, you didn’t even do nothing.” And I didn’t. I didn’t do a damn thing. He told me he was gonna do it because I hadn’t had an ass whoopin in a long time and he had some extra time. And he did. He beat my ass. My body was sore. My eye was black. And for nothing. Just because he had more time on his hands (Massi).
Since women are free to choose up, a pimp's particular style of pimping and control must be almost flawless, as he must walk a fine line between creating fear and instilling the type of trust that promotes and sustains loyalty.

All relationships require a degree of vulnerability and pimp-prostitute relationships are no different. Trust determines how vulnerable the person is willing to be. Without some degree of trust, interactions are limited to explicit contracts (Holmes, 1991), which is what prostitutes have with customers. On the surface, pimp-prostitute relationships appear to consist primarily of financial connections. However, a deeper look into these relationships reveals strong issues of trust. A pimp-prostitute trust scenario may be described as such; "by giving you this money, I trust you will take care of me, in turn, I am taking care of you. We trust each other in that way." Trust incorporates many components, including issues of faith trust, "emotional trust," and "dependability trust" (Holmes, 1991). As a prostitute, a woman has faith that a pimp will take care of her and she is forced to depend on that as part of the arrangement. "If I needed something, I could call him and get it you know...." (Sonya).

A pimp controls the movements of a prostitute, her finances, her ability to buy clothes, food, and pay rent. He controls her time and ability to form and sustain relationships with others. Women begin to rely on this control, they build a reliance on it and feel a certain amount of comfort and security in this type of arrangement. Often women who have experienced heavy emotional costs in their upbringing are prepared to remedy the imbalance of a harsh world by the security of a pimp. All of the women in the study who were involved with pimps reported being sexually abused as children. Attachment to the
relationship then becomes more a sense of control and security than an expression of mutual love and equality. Therefore, more than any traditional expressions of love that outsiders looking in would determine as essential to a relationship, the feelings of security, protection, and control become a blanket that prostitutes believe insulates them and becomes their refuge from a world of unpredictable abuses. The trade off for fulfilling needs for security and protection has consequences which, in this case, involve aspects of control and abuse.

...he ended up getting mad at me one day and punched me in my chest and cracked my rib. That was cracked and all I could remember is that I couldn't breathe. I mean, I passed out. I was knocked out all day. I was unconscious (Debbie).

"Trust involves coming to terms with the negative aspects of a partner, accepting or perhaps tolerating issues by buffering them in the broader context of the lifestyle" (Holmes, 1991 p. 79). Therefore, women take these abuses in stride and learn to cope with this relationship by not focusing on the abusive aspects for what they are, but by instead encapsulating those aspects of their pimp that serve their needs for security and protection. Therefore, a pimp-prostitute relationship often lacks cognitive and behavioral consistency. What is believed and what actually happens in the relationship do not correspond and often require repeated leaps of faith on the part of the prostitute.

Women involved with a pimp are typically not engaged in drug use. Professional pimps do not allow their women to indulge in crack cocaine. They realize that crack is the competition and frown upon any substance abuse in their stable.
Because prostitutes are working more during this stage, any or all of them are at higher risk of becoming a victim of rape, robbery, assault or murder. When this occurs to Renegades, the usual response is to get high more often and cover the emotional scars of a previous attack and the fear that it will happen again.

Renegades are resilient in that they are determined to develop this career into the fantasy life they have dreamed about. However their dream is a “whores dream” (Milner & Milner, 1972 p.81). A whore’s dream never comes true. Nevertheless, they continue to work in order to create the life they’ve envisioned for themselves. Renegades who stay the course are unwavering. Determined that they may increase their odds of safety by being even more careful, they hold true to protective strategies. To address apparent risks, some women find it necessary to hire the services of “watchers,” who are often low income friends, to look out for them on the streets and in bars as they leave and return with customers.

I was always by myself. I never had anybody watch my back. That’s probably why a lot of times, I got robbed and shit. Because now there’s a lot of guys out there that will walk around with you. But you walk maybe a block and a half ahead of them. Or they’ll ride their bike up and down the street or whatever, you know, just to keep an eye on you, make sure nothing happens to you; make sure nobody snatches you up (Cara).

Some watchers may even help recruit customers for a small fee.

There’s been a couple of times where I would tell Douglas, “if you see any dates in the bar, let me know.” You know, “I’ll throw you a couple dollars.” Say if I made 50 dollars, I’d give him 10 for letting me know the man is in there. Don’t introduce me to him, don’t do that. Just show me who he is and I’ll go over....But if I didn’t make nothing, he wasn’t gettin nothin (Cara).
Outlaws become immersed because they require more money to buy the things that
make life interesting while maintaining those basic necessities they worked hard to finally
achieve. They begin to work more, but remain consistent in their disdain for customers.

I would be like, “I’ll be back”....I’ll leave go get drunk and [my friend] be like, “let’s go get a rock,” and I’ll be like, “okay, fuck it.” We had everything we needed at the time. Not saying we lived in no nice house or nothing, but the kids had everything. We had food. Lights and gas was included with the rent, so we was cool. I felt like I wasn’t jeopardizing nothing. So I went out, did my thing, you know robbing people, hustling people, and then had fun (Carol).

Hustling refers to “any activity that utilizes guile or deceit to gain money. This may be legal or illegal, but most often is illegal” (Waldolf, 1973 p.50). Outlaws become increasingly more interested in developing ways to get a customer’s money without providing services. Their motivation is to make the money as quickly and painlessly as possible and to get back to living the type of lifestyle they enjoy. They feel justified in using these tactics on customers since they have been robbed, raped, and assaulted in the past. They do not desire an honest exchange, nor do they ever trust there can truly be one. In their perception, someone is attempting to “get over” on someone and they are just hoping the odds are in their favor.

Well I’m the type of person, I would charge anything you wanted me to because you wasn’t gettin nothin no way. I would just get the money and jump out. That’s what I did for years. Even before I was jumping out of cars, I wasn’t giving them what they wanted. I wasn’t satisfying them. I might tell you, “yeah, you can have sex for 50 bucks,” but I’m not gonna really give you none. I might try to jack you off. I might try and get you off and if you don’t like that, oh well, that’s your fault (Carol).
Women developed creative hustles to manipulate customers and get their money. Some have included having a partner hide under the bed, while the prostitute undresses her customer. She lays him on the bed and his pants on the floor in reach of her stowaway partner. As she is getting him ready, her partner takes the money out of the wallet, scoots across the floor and out of the room. She then tells her customer she has to go to the bathroom and leaves the scene. Other schemes have included jumping out of cars with the money, or taking him to a designated scene and robbing him point blank.

Because of previous assaults to women who are characterized as Outlaws, these women attempt to balance skill and chance conditions in their favor. Their goal is to decrease chance by creating a situation in which they will walk away with more money by providing few or no services. Some women will work with a partner who is close by to protect them, who participates in customer robberies or who assists in the getaway. However meticulous, the plan is to decrease chance. Albeit often well planned, the level of vulnerability and personal risk remain during the time she is alone with a customer.

I snatched the money and tried to jump out of the car. He grabbed my arm before I could get out and was calling me a bitch and stuff. My dude heard it and saw that I couldn’t get out of the car so he ran over and punched the dude in the face and he let go of me (Carol).

CAUGHT UP

Central Focus

Much of the interaction prior to exit involves what women describe as being “caught up.” Although not intentional, women eventually find themselves “caught up” in a wave of chronic depression, drug abuse, and learned helplessness. Indeed, these three elements
comprise the essence of this stage. Throughout the course of both the social immersion stage and the caught up stage, the person is heavily involved in the prostitution lifestyle. However, these two stages are divided by central focus. In the social immersion stage, women feel as though they are in control and are choosing to immerse themselves in the life. In the caught up stage, they believe they are not in control. They are ruled by depression and reactions to depression. The most common reaction to depression was drug abuse. For most women by this stage life consists of two activities, drug taking and drug seeking. During this stage, associational patterns shift with most social networks consisting of drug users and drug dealers. Friends, family or customers are often targets of exploitation, manipulation, and deceit. Immediate gain is the goal in almost every opportunity. These activities provoke deep remorse and shame when the drug-addicted prostitute is sober. “When you start remembering everything you know, people that you hurt that comes along with prostitution, because you tend to rip people off a lot. It makes you feel bad” (Maureen).

I have ran off with people’s money. They done sent me to get a twenty cent piece [drugs] and I don’t come back. I have took from my family a couple of times. I have took from friends that trusted me. One time I was so high, I cleaned this guys whole apartment out. I took everything (Renee).

Women did not engage in drug abuse to be able to work in any direct sense, as evidenced by their resistance to work while high. Depression was, instead, a mediating factor between prostitution and drugs. Women would get high in order to fight the depression that stemmed from prostitution activities.

Well I use to hide from depression by getting high. Bought more
drugs, got high again. But it seemed like the higher I got, the more money I spent, the more depressed I got. I'm spending all this money trying to fight my depression, and I was more depressed after the fact.... I got so bad, I was smoking $500 a day (Cara).

Life consists of movement from one hit to the next, day in and day out with no serious thought about next week or next year. In moments of sobriety, when she is remorseful and considering the terrible things done in the past to friends and family, she thinks of quitting. Soon the next date comes by and she is off chasing the next high.

I didn't care. I wanted to get high so bad, I would suck a man's dick for any type of money he would give me...I wouldn't tell them that at first. But before I let them drive off, I would drop the price to whatever he would pay me (Patrice).

I got to the point where I wasn't even paying rent. No one was. They were just living in this apartment building, all crack heads....no lights, no gas....They had bathrooms on every floor and kitchens on two floors (Carol).

Safety becomes a vital issue during this stage as women place themselves at increased risk in order to obtain money to buy drugs. At this stage women not only acknowledge the probability of "chance" conditions in any exchange encounter with a customer, but they accept the element of chance and what little control they have over any customer-prostitute encounter. By this stage drug-addicted women are willing to get into the car of almost any customer regardless of chance. Protective strategies once used to decrease "chance" conditions are now strategies without substance. Women at this stage report still using protective strategies such as chatting and checking and using one's instinct to "read" dates, but report following through with dates regardless of the conclusion of their assessment regarding the potential dangerousness and lethality of the encounter.
The acceptance of chance then leaves women to rely on God or luck to see them through any exchange encounter. Cara gives a chilling account of proceeding on with a date that gave off all the signs for potential violence. A customer, unknown to her, asked her to allow him to bind and blindfolded her. She agreed for a sum of $50.00.

He scared me because I didn’t know this man. He tied me up one time in his truck and put duct tape on my eyes, my mouth, and around my ankles and wrists and rubbed his dick on my leg and got off and untied me. But the first time I ever went with him, I was scared to death. But I didn’t have no drugs that day. And that’s when I was in it real bad. And I needed the money just to fix myself you know (Cara).

Acceptance of skill and chance conditions are akin to conditions of learned helplessness. Crucial to understanding learned helplessness as it relates to street work is to view the effects of a repeated lack of consistency between action and outcome. Repeated attempts to use protective strategies to screen out potentially dangerous dates has worked in some instances and failed in others. “One cannot control a situation that is not predictable” (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984 p.86). Therefore, individuals become conditioned to believe that they lack control over the outcome and are therefore helpless to produce the outcome they desire consistently. Women act accordingly, placing their hope of a safe customer encounter on probabilities, percentages, luck, and God. This, coupled with persistent depression and a strong desire for drugs, is the essence of being “caught up.” Nina, a seasoned worker, throws caution to the wind in her remarks:

What would make me not get into the car with somebody? Really nothing. I would just get in there. I wouldn’t even care if they were the police or if they were a mass murderer or something you know. I’m gonna get in that car and I’m gonna try it because if it’s some money that I need then I’m gonna do anything for it (Nina).
Women addicted to crack cocaine, prior to entrance into street prostitution, view sex work as a means to finance a habit. Drug-addicted women enter already “caught up” in a wave of drug addicting behaviors and drug addiction needs. In order to serve the addiction, addicts new to prostitution engage in a substantial amount of customer contact. Never having had the opportunity to establish a safe core of customers and with no knowledge or training regarding protective strategies, these new prostitutes increase the odds that they will encounter a dangerous customer. The probability that they would employ protective strategies is slim, having never taken the initial time to enter, learn, and adjust to the mores of the lifestyle. By eliminating the “skill” portion of skill and chance conditions, women leave prostitution encounters largely to chance and report many incidents of violence, rape, and occurrences of torture. Monica entered prostitution addicted to crack cocaine. She recounts a near fatal mistake of taking a trick to her house:

I got raped. One time I had a drug dealer pick me up as a date. He was taking me home, got me in my apartment and asked me if he could use my bathroom. I let him use my bathroom and he hit me in the mouth, busted my nose and took what he wanted. He raped me twice. He threw a 20 dollar bill on me and told me if I ever told the police he’d kill me or have me killed (Monica).

The prostitution market is driven by two capitalistic mechanisms, supply & demand. Crack cocaine has been said to create an imbalance on the supply side of prostitution, contributing to greater competition on the streets, thus creating lower pricing (Maher & Curtis, 1992). As I have noted, historically, the lowest price for oral sex equals the lowest price for the most desired street drug. The 1970s and the 1990s are two time periods in
which this sex-for-drug exchange rule was visible. In the 70s the lowest price for heroin was $25, making the lowest cost for oral sex the same. Today, a hit of crack cocaine may cost as low as $5 (Maher, 1996). Without regulating bodies establishing minimum standards for pricing, drug-addicted women are exploited by their customers and are often forced to accept $5 for their services. These small compensations may add to feelings of an already diminished self worth.

A diminished self worth is further wounded by the stigma from society. However even more devastating is the depreciated social standing acquired in underground street networks. “Crack head” is a degrading term used by those in a higher social position within the underground economy to depict those addicted to crack cocaine. Crack heads have a social identity distinct from others who get high. Since they don’t follow the social order or the code of conduct regarding safety, pricing, and self respect, they are not trusted and lose respect from others. Unfortunately the sum of one’s worth is often equated with the pay an individual receives. They ultimately fall to the bottom of the pecking order and become a sub-stratified group in the underground economy, the lowest in power, prestige, respect, and most important, worth. Because of this depreciated social standing, and the conscious choice not to follow safety protocol, women in this group shift into a vulnerable position where the risk of murder is hypothesized to be high.

To reiterate, being “Caught Up” is a time when women are caught up in a wave of chronic depression, learned helplessness, and drug addiction. It is also a time when internal processes needed to deal with these conditions are deteriorating.
However, it is important to acknowledge that not all women turn to drugs. Five of the twenty-one women did not involve themselves in crack cocaine. However three were restricted from usage by pimps and two were interviewed prior to the caught up stage. Those three women not involved in drug abuse nonetheless reportedly felt the same emotional and physical paralysis from depression that they summed up as being "caught up" in something bigger than they were. Debbie never indulged in drugs, but finally sank so low, she admitted herself into the psychiatric ward. "I ended up in a psychiatric hospital, in this crazy ward....I was diagnosed with major depression" (Debbie, Conventional Prostitute).

For the majority of the respondents, physical deterioration accompanies depression and drug abuse. Because of excessive drug use, many respondents suffer substantial weight loss. In the event that women became ill, they were unlikely to visit a doctor at the first sign of physical symptoms. Women were not prone to seek professional help for illnesses until they became chronic. When physical conditions became chronic, women were more likely to visit emergency rooms than doctors offices. Prescribed care was not typically followed and follow-up visits were rare. As a result, medical conditions took longer to heal and persistent medical conditions without proper care worsened.

I have rheumatoid arthritis in my hip. I've had it so long that the stuff in between the bone has grinded down and now it's like bone on bone. It hurts like a mother fucker, and I'm supposed to have a plastic hip made. I take pills for the pain (Cara).

At the time of this interview Cara had been walking with a cane for over a year attempting to secure governmental aid and subsequent medical coverage. By the time
Cara's surgery was scheduled, she was arrested on an old warrant and spent the next five months serving time in jail. She is once again attempting to schedule her surgery.

Aside from one's general physical condition, devaluation of a woman's physical assets can be emotionally costly. Beauty is a defining characteristic in the U.S., one that is accompanied by social pressures to remain young and beautiful. As the average woman matures and sees her physical assets fade, she can look onto her accomplishments, her emotional growth, her wisdom, and her worldly possessions to maintain her self esteem and worthiness in her eyes and the eyes of others. She can shift her thoughts to what she has contributed and the meaningful relationships she has built and nurtured over the years. Street women can take no such solace in their accomplishments, contributions, or even their relationships. What is left is a weakened emotional state and deteriorated physical body. Their very will to want something better in life is all they have and even that has been damaged by low self esteem and severe depression. By this stage, it is a struggle against oneself to seek help.

The day I decided I wanted to get out of prostitution, I got on the bus and wanted to go to Genesis House. I knew if I could get to Genesis House that I would be ok. I just turned a trick and I had money. It was so hard. I had money to buy more drugs. I felt so bad inside. And when I feel bad, I get high. It took everything I had to stay on that bus and take myself to Genesis House. So many times I started to get off and go buy some dope. I kept telling myself, "if I get to Genesis House, I'll be ok" (Patrice-Outlaw).

By this stage family members are emotionally drained from worry and have grown tired of covering the void evident by a missing parent. They have grown leery of allowing the drug-addicted prostitute into the house only to have her steal and sell family items to feed
her addiction. They often have lost patience with a woman who says she will be there for her children and repeatedly lets them down. Women at this stage report losing any social support they may have had from informal social networks and all have lost most meaningful connections with family. Indeed, even the strong ties that Stack (1974) claims are often able to see black families through hard times in the ghetto, namely inner family strengths, strong kinships, and intergenerational relations, have been stretched and seriously undermined by crack cocaine abuse (as cited in Maher & Curtis, 1992).

Not wealthy, these family members are financially strapped having to feed and clothe additional children. A graphic illustration of such is told by Patrice who had three children prior to entrance into street prostitution and two subsequent children as a result of sexual encounters with customers. She describes her sister, the mother now of seven, adding five of Patrice’s children to her original two.

My sister has lost boyfriends because of me. Every time I go by there she is doing laundry. She has about 14 dirty uniforms to wash and iron just to keep the kids clean and ready for school. If she isn’t doing laundry, she is cooking or helping somebody with their homework. My sister use to be pretty, but she doesn’t have time to worry about herself. She is always screaming up the stairs for one of the kids to come and eat or do something. I feel real bad about that. It’s hard to go over there (Patrice).

Addicted prostitutes with children leave a trail of broken trusts and broken hearts:

First of all, Steven caught me smokin one time, after I promised and swore up and down that I wasn’t smoking. I was letting people sell out of my house and he said, “mom, please promise me that you aren’t doing it. Please promise me that you’ll never do it.” I said, “don’t worry, I’m making money. That’s how we’re getting our bills paid”….But then I’d get my welfare check and my foodstamps and I’d blow it with the dope man in my own house….I was using my foodstamps to buy it and everything else. But I didn’t see how bad I was myself. And then
the kids kept saying, “mom, I’m hungry,” and I’d cry and shit, but I’d still hit the pipe. I’d hide in my bedroom and hit the pipe, tell em I was changing clothes or something. And I’d sit in there for like 20 minutes to an hour. “Ma, it don’t take you that long to change your clothes. What are you doing in there?” That’s when my kids started hating me....And then there’s other times working these streets where I’d be high or I’d just get out of a car from a date and I’d see my kid. Or I’d just come out of the dope house, buying dope and I see my kids. And I’d be trying to hurry up and turn around and go the other way. There’s plenty of years I hid from my kids. And I think that’s why they hated me so much....They weren’t angry. They despised me (Cara).

I have full intentions on going home to the children, but somehow none of that matters. Before I get home I say that I’m going straight home, but the first person I see was the dope man. Ok, I say I’m taking the rest of the money home. I take the first blast-dope man end up having it all. He’s in the store buying his kids something (Beth).

Shame and guilt are pervasive among seasoned workers. The difference between shame and guilt is one feels guilty for doing something wrong. One feels shame for being something wrong (Whitfield, 1989). Shame is evidenced in these women’s experience:

I get into relationships and I know I love the guy and I knew they loved me, but I couldn’t do it because I knew that I was a prostitute and I couldn’t be with somebody. I was scared that they would find out what I was....I use to be afraid you know, that they would hold it against me....I have always been ashamed. I am ashamed of being a prostitute (Elaine).

There’s been some things I’ve done that I’m very ashamed of, because I felt I should have been a better mother and a better person not to do the things I did....I cry at night asking God to forgive me (Carol).

This stage is summed up in a blur of experiences consisting of physical abuses and emotional pain. The physical deterioration from life on the streets and chronic mental and emotional exhaustion from the hurt women have endured and the hurt they have caused
their children, their parents, and siblings become overwhelming. The women are brought to the brink to contemplate life and face the fundamental choice: freedom from prostitution or eventual death. They realize that their demise is near, through their own devices or at the hands of another.

**Chronic Conditions and Accumulating Burdens**

The most prominent characteristics of this stage concern accumulating burdens as a result of persistent daily hassles, repeated acute traumas, and the development of chronic depression and drug abuse. Daily hassles continue, acute traumas remain episodic, but during this stage, chronic depression and drug abuse become the most salient issue.

Chronic conditions consist of intermittent emotional burdens that are conflict filled events which may occur weekly, daily, or several times a day and persist for a long period of time (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Depression is the most common chronic condition for women at this stage. Drug use, initially used as a protective strategy and intended solution to depression, now becomes the source of chronic stress in and of itself. Whereas crack cocaine was a “means to a particular end, now is an end in itself” (Waldolf, 1973 p.17). For most women, drugs and prostitution become enmeshed by this stage.

Drugs and prostitution go hand in hand....There’s ones that spend it on drugs, because they want to cover up what their feeling and that’s the only way they go do what they want to do out there, is to be high. So it’s like a big cycle- drugs, work, get high, drugs, work, get high (Michelle).

The result is a constant need to serve the addiction. Regular risk taking and forgoing protective strategies are common and women become non-selective about with which men they will engage. During this stage, there is a lack of meaningful attention to daily hassles
and minimal, if any, efforts to prevent trauma. Equipped with the belief that neither problem-focused nor emotion-focused strategies are effective, women seek to focus their efforts on that which is of immediate importance, depression and drugs. That is, women seek to alleviate the pain of depression and to satisfy the craving for drugs. All else is left to chance.

Optimism and opportunity for material pleasures do not enter into a crack addicted woman's life. Women at this stage have few expectations for a better life and few interests in any future success. Whereas in the Social Immersion Stage, they distance themselves from conventional family and friends because they are committed to street life, here they practice distancing through avoidance because of shame felt in what they have become. The goal is to work, get high, and work again in an incessant attempt to alleviate the pain from abandoning one's children, disappointment in oneself, the violence and degradation endured, and society's persistent rejection. The cure for this chronic persistent pain was the drug, but now the drug has become the source of pain. Life becomes a desperate plea to turn more dates, get more drugs, and feed the addiction. Soon the need for drugs becomes the driving force and the reason to get up in the morning.

...if I made 50 dollars, I ate...and then bought cigarettes and go to the dope house. Ya eat on the way to the dope house. By the time you get to the dope house, you done eatin...that was the consistency of my day (Cara).

More often than not, women at this stage neglect basic hygiene care.

One of my regular tricks picked me up. He took one look at me and
told me I didn’t look good. When I got in the car to where I was close enough to him, he told me I smelled. He ended up taking me to a motel and letting me take a shower. He didn’t even want to have sex with me that’s how bad I was. I hadn’t combed my hair, brushed my teeth in awhile. I stunk from not having nowhere to live and um not being able to wash, really not wanting to wash or take care of myself (Patrice).

**Prostitute Types**

Most drug addicted women at this stage, when given the opportunity, report manipulating and robbing customers. The key to understanding women at this stage is to understand the role of addiction in the lives of street prostitutes. At this stage, the central focus for all women was to alleviate depression. For those who used drugs, getting the money to get high was their only interest.

When I first started out, I wanted to keep good customers. So I would always turn a date. Then when I got on drugs something changed real quick. I was robbing them. I was “money up front.” I didn’t want to do prostituting. They would hand me the money and I would dive out of the car (Nina- Renegade).

From this perspective, the appearance of prostitution types becomes enmeshed. This can be confusing and appears to dilute the appearance of the different types of street prostitutes. As was pointed out, Outlaw prostitutes entered prostitution manipulating, exploiting, and robbing customers whenever possible, the other types begin using these strategies during this stage more often than providing the agreed upon service at the agreed upon price. Outlaws, by this stage, report using robbery techniques more often than previously reported and more often than did other types. They were also more apt to use strong arm tactics when necessary.

That’s when I started robbing people all the time. Every time I seen a
person, I robbed them....I would say 90 percent of the time....I tried everybody, some worked out some didn’t....we was into drugs so hard, you would be surprised what your body can take. I had bricks thrown at me, I’ve been beat down. It’s just your body can take so much as a drug addict, you just don’t know. It’s like you’re a walking zombie. It’s weird. I been shot at. I’ve had guns pulled on me. I’ve had my kids’ father take guns from [customers]....He shot a guy in the face one time....We ran, took his money and ran (Carol-Outlaw).

In addition to violence from customers, Conventional Prostitutes suffered the periodic wrath of pimps. Over time, the pain began to outweigh pleasure as women report severe and persistent depression from working very hard and seeing little reward.

I was in the game for eight years....I never did drugs...but after awhile....when I would work the streets, I would be walking or standing what seemed like forever and all I would be thinking is “I wish someone would pick me up. I don’t want to be standing out here.” And then someone would pick me up and the whole time I’m doing the date I’m thinking, “I wish this was over with, I don’t want to be here.” And then when he would drop me off, I would think, “man, I wish I wasn’t out here. I hate this.” So then I found out I didn’t want to really be anywhere. I didn’t want to be (Massi, Conventional Prostitute).

When asked to explain to me why a woman, not addicted to drugs, would continue to prostitute and give her money away to a pimp, it was explained as a circumstance of being “caught up” in something that was bigger than the single decision to leave.

I don’t know why. I mean, thinking about it, it sounds crazy....I’m the kind of person, I get caught up into something. I get caught up and don’t know how to get out....You know, there was a point I said, “well maybe I shouldn’t do it,” but I was already caught up into it. And I think being already caught up in the whole game...it’s hard to get out. Once you get caught up in it, it’s real hard to get out. Drinking, sober, smoking crack, however, it’s real hard to get out (Tracy- Conventional Prostitute).
At this stage, Renegades and Outlaws go from being independent entrepreneurs to being dependent on drugs with little or no money to buy essential items like clothes and food.

When I was on the verge of craziness, every single cent that I got, I was spending it on drugs. I was staying here and there. Sometimes all night I would be on the street....Walking or sitting or whatever. Sometimes I would get lucky and a date would come by and they would take me to a hotel and I would get it for the night. They would buy me food and stuff too (Nina-Renegade).

No longer obtaining enjoyment from the drug, excitement from the lifestyle, or easy money from working the streets, she finds she has to give up more and more to get the drug. She must give up her dream of sending money home to her children. She must give up her dignity as she is asked by dates to do things that are degrading and demeaning. She must endure the stigma of society and the depreciated social standing in her own community. She must contend with the way she is treated by the police. Even when not incarcerated her freedom is limited, as her only mission becomes to feed her addiction. There are windows of time when she longs for the freedom to move about attending to life. Sometimes homeless and unable to attend to basic necessities, she dreams of a normal life in which basic needs are met and concerns lie in acquiring and maintaining the comforts of life. At this stage most family members have given up and the crack-addicted female alone must decide to continue in prostitution or to reach out and try something else. She is aware that the next car she steps into may be her last.
RE-EVALUATION & EXIT

Central Focus

The Re-Evaluation & Exit period consists of an intense re-evaluation of the women’s lives and what they have become. At this stage they are disillusioned with a lifestyle that now consists of chronic depression. They remember taking a prospective view of their lives, and now contemplate what will happen to them if they continue to live as a crack-addicted prostitute or a prostitute with chronic depression. They report reviewing their lives retrospectively and concluding that they have wasted their years. Women realize that what they have accumulated as a result of their financial dream amounted to little but a collection of arrest records, a blur of experiences, and a path of abandonment by those they cared about. They realize that the skills they have learned while in prostitution aren’t marketable anywhere.

Finally, women make a decision that they can no longer hurt themselves and their family. They experience intense remorse that their prostitution activities have hurt their children and other loved ones, and they set out to repair broken and abandoned relationships. Working the streets has become too dangerous and degrading to them and they can no longer tolerate their lives, nor themselves. Some develop a disdain for customers. All develop a disdain for themselves and what they have become. Accounts of feelings at the end of a life in street prostitution are no clearer than Sonya’s thoughts after only six days as an ex-prostitute:

My daughter...they took her from me. I started into drugs and now I’m tired. I’m tired of living this life. I’m tired of being a piece of meat and men slobberin all over me. It’s nice money, but it’s not worth losing my life over.
And you know I mainly gotta do it for myself, because I’m my worse nightmare. I turned into someone I always told myself I would not be....I mean I was totally against drugs. I was strictly against drugs you know. And I mean I totally turned into somebody that I told myself I would never turn into (Sonya).

Women know they have to leave three major components of their lives behind, sex for money, the use of drugs, and the prostitution lifestyle (Mansson & Hedin, 1998; Mathews, 1986; National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, 1992).

Exit Factors

Analysis of the data pertaining to exit revealed three factors that precipitated the emotional and cognitive decisions to exit prostitution. These include cumulative burdens, restrictive factors, and relational factors.

A fundamental theoretical claim of the experience of street prostitution over time is the accumulation of emotional and physical burdens to explain emotional and physical deterioration leading to exit. In prostitution, it is the sum total of daily hassles, acute traumas, and chronic conditions. These experiences precipitate a woman’s decision to exit prostitution. Over time, the accumulations of emotional burdens are such that they exceed a woman’s ability to successfully endure. The process is additive. Cumulative burdens come to a head and women decide they must choose a different path in life. For Maureen, this process took place in a psychiatric ward.

I worked for three years. I been shot at, tried to be stabbed, choked, was kidnapped for three days. I got tied up and stuffed in a trunk. They kept me there for about 12-13 hours. I’ve been raped. I’ve had customers take their money back. I’ve been beat in the head to where they just keep hitting you. I had to put my head through a window to get out the car because the door won’t open or the window wouldn’t roll down. So I literally had to throw myself through a car window and
shatter it. I have stitches in my lip for that. I just had a lot of traumatic experiences. I've got acute, no, it's called Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome. Because of it, I have flashbacks. But they say, that eventually I'll start coming back to myself. It's just I had so many bad experiences....I stay depressed.

In addition to the cumulative effects these burdens produce and sustain, there is some evidence that structural pressures have an effect on women's decisions to leave prostitution. The two most common structural pressures include law enforcement and child protective services. A combination of arrests, time in jail, and probation mandates such as dropping urine and reporting to the probation office on a regular basis puts pressure on women to consider exiting the life. "Nowhere is the gendered relation between women and the law more apparent in America at the moment than with respect to the current 'war on drugs'" (Maher & Curtis, 1992 p.221). This pressure is successful when it is tempered with a desire to exit the life. However, without her desire to quit, these restrictive measures serve only to be temporary and when these restrictions lift, the individual returns to business as usual. The second form of structural pressure is the involvement of child protective services which threatens to gain temporary or permanent custody of the prostitute's children. According to Binion (1979), women drug abusers tend to have fewer supports and greater familial responsibilities than their male counterparts. Drug abuse carries with it a social stigma for women that is unlike that for men and increases the likelihood of interaction with child protective services. Women involved with child protective services most often spoke of working to get their children back. Of the fourteen women involved in the study who had children, seven had been involved with child welfare agencies. Six of the seven were still not living with their
children at the time of the interview. Reclaiming their families was most often a long term goal and what motivated some women to want to make a change.

...I have a three month old baby. He’s not with me. I have to try and get him back and stuff. Bowling Green Children’s Services have him....I gotta get my kid back. I couldn’t have kept prostituting and my baby out there (Elsie- Conventional Prostitute).

Not only are outside forces applying pressure, but over time one’s own body begins to undermine intention and provide its own form of restrictive pressure. Physical deterioration and degeneration as a result of the lifestyle led some women to decide they could no longer physically continue to meet the demands of the profession. It became harder for wounds to heal on a body that lacked proper nutrition and has suffered months, sometimes years of neglect and abuse.

Relational factors were also evident in women’s decisions to end prostitution activities and include the threatened or actual end of a valued relationship. This may include the permanent severance of a close relationship through death, court order in the case of children, or the discontinuance of family ties. This may also include the end of a valued sexual relationship with a companion including, but not limited to, one’s pimp.

The characteristics of the most successful and long-lasting exits have consisted of multiple system interventions in succession such as arrest, jail time, counseling services in jail, ongoing intensive services after jail and continued support services from a 12-step program. However, these system attempts were futile if the woman had not made the decision to quit. Perhaps the most graphic illustration is presented in two identical scenarios of a multiple system intervention. An arrest takes place, jail time and services
are ordered while incarcerated, probation and community services are mandated after release. In one instance, Nina goes back to street prostitution shortly after arrest and time served. In another almost exact instance, Nina gets sober, quits prostitution, and gives up the lifestyle. The difference? Systems interventions were coupled with the severance of a meaningful relationship. In addition, the accumulation of prior factors led her to make a decision to try to open her ears and heart and be receptive to the message she was receiving while in group therapy during incarceration. When asked about what was different the second time, Nina responded;

I decided it aint the life I need. There's other ways to get money....It was hard, [giving up] the money part. I didn't want to do no drugs anymore after my uncle Sal died anyway, because that made me feel bad....[he died] from doing drugs. That put me to thinking that could happen to me and I don't want that to happen to me....I had already had it in my mind before I went to this group, because my uncle had died and “look what’s gonna happen to me.” So he died from that shit. Then when I got up there these people started taking about you’re gonna get skinny, you’re gonna die, you’re gonna be in jail, you’re gonna be in an institution for the rest of your life, or you just gonna keep going around in circles, jail, institutionalized, and then death....I heard that, I did. I heard it. I don’t want to be in the hospital for the rest of my life (Nina).

Nina has been sober and not prostituting for six months when interviewed. She has been involved in Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous where she is establishing a new lifestyle with a new group of friends.

I like it a lot....[I have] new friends. Because when I was out there, I forgot how friends are really suppose to be. I thought my friends was somebody who’d give me a rock. But now I see friends is someone you can talk to, someone you can go to a movie with, someone who won’t be like, “hey you gotta joint”(Nina, 1998).
Nina and others describe the presence of various types of social supports that entered their lives immediately after or prior to exit that helped be their mainstay as they attempted to quit. These important others may have been social workers, friends, family, or sponsors from self help groups. The key is that they were helpful, concerned, consistent, reliable, and stable in the eyes of the study respondents.

To reiterate, the probability that an exit will remain successful, however, is contingent on giving up three fundamental elements of street prostitution, the lifestyle, drugs, and sex for money. These elements are so interconnected, it is necessary to quit all three at the same time.

When I quit. I quit drugs, I was gone for five years. I moved off the north end....You aint gonna quit smokin crack and keep prostitution. Cause that’s money in your hands to buy drugs. You aint gonna quit prostitution and still be on drugs. How you gonna buy em? (Cara).

Prostitute Types

For Conventional Pimp Controlled prostitutes, the relationship with their pimp is an often valued union. Demise of that relationship can be quite dramatic and most often consists of a series of violations and betrayals. Infidelity is a betrayal of obligations or responsibilities and may include emotional betrayal, physical or sexual betrayal. Some who felt betrayed conspired to leave their pimp. Ending a pimp-prostitute relationship was most often akin to an escape. None of the women interviewed notified their pimp that they were leaving. Leaving a pimp who controls your every move requires that a plan be initiated and carried out with quickness. Debbie explained her escape plan:

...I had gotten four calls that day. And I hadn’t seen him so I had all the
money on me and I just took it. I mean, none of my clothes, none of my
nothing. I just took a cab to the bus station and I went into the Amtrak
police and told them what was going on. Cause I knew, he knew I wasn’t
[coming to him] because he had his own driver. And he knew when I didn’t
get in the driver’s car, that something was up. Cause he knew I was mad
anyway. So I took a regular cab and I went to the Amtrak police. And I
knew he was coming, so I told em what was going on and they let me sit
there in the little Amtrak police office. And um, then the Amtrak police
gave me $50.00, cause they didn’t know I had any money. So he gave me
the money and paid the cab driver to take me to the airport and I caught a
plane home (Debbie- Conventional Prostitute).

Occasionally encounters with customers led to the development of a relationship where

Renegades or Conventional Prostitutes exited prostitution to move in with a customer.

I lived [with David] for over a year. Then I moved back here, cause livin
out there I got to sneakin and drinkin and shit. I mean, he didn’t mind if I
drank because he bought the beer and everything. And he had a liquor cabinet.
Nothing but liquor, any kind of liquor I wanted. But he’d get mad if he came
home and I smelled like I had been drinking....I was fucking up and gettin black
outs from drinking so much....I would steal his truck in the middle of the night.
We packed some of my shit and he brought me back....I cried and I cried and I
cried and he took me back....About 6 months later, I did it again....And he’s a 63
year old man, he couldn’t take it you know so he brought me back. But David
is the sweetest person I could ever meet. I love the man (Cara).

Unable to follow the mundane script of a day-to-day life in conventional society, Cara
ended up back out working the streets.

At 14 years old, Nina decided to get off the streets and live with one of her
customers.

Well I met this man off the streets and we used to mess around. He was
really good to me. I didn’t have to do nothing. He was just a sweet person....
I put drugs aside and everything just to be with him....Well he was a lot
older than me. He used to be an anesthesiologist. Like a doctor that puts
people to sleep....I felt like he was like, I don’t know the strength of it, you
know what I’m saying. Like when he was around, it was like I felt that I
didn’t have no need to go out there and do what I was doing because I have someone that can give me everything that I need....He not only gave me money, but he’d give my mom money (Nina).

However, her provider and lover got involved with drugs and lost everything. Shortly after, Nina moved back out to work the streets again.

Although these relationships have some healing aspects to a woman’s psyche, these relationships rarely work out. Women don’t exactly report falling in love, they fall in gratitude, they fall in relief, they fall in comfort. They can exhale, meaning risk, vulnerability, and uncertainty are decreased and they are not continually on guard or concerned about getting money, food, clothes or shelter. This arrangement, however, is fraught with problems. Gratitude, relief, and comfort are not enough, but care, concern, and love are necessary for a lasting relationship.

Over time, conformity to a new lifestyle can seem monotonous. Root problems surface such as drug or alcohol addiction and depression. These conditions can no longer be concealed. Life becomes increasingly viewed as restrictive instead of stable. The restrictive atmosphere proves too much, and the costs and demands for intimacy conflict with the pattern of independence and emotional distance that have been the essence of survival for many since childhood and thus begins the demise of the relationship. She may even sabotage the relationship. He in turn may not be able to separate who she is from her former occupation. Street affiliations once again enter the picture like a dam that can no longer hold back water, and she is once again immersed in the familiar life of a street sex worker.
Whatever means prompted women to exit, without help and support, the most gallant
tries often resulted in re-entrance into the life following a stressful event. Acute traumas
may propel women back into the life. After exiting prostitution and moving in with an
abusive boyfriend, Cara finds herself beat up and eventually homeless, sleeping on a porch
with no family support.

My eye was swollen up and all cut open....The police and ambulance came.... The next morning after attending my mom’s funeral, I showed up at [my sisters] house with a patch on my eye and stitches in my face. She wouldn’t let me stay. I got all beat up and didn’t have no where to go. [My sister] didn’t want me to stay with her. [My brother] didn’t want me to stay with him. Mom was dead and [my other brother] was dead....So I just went from there. I walked down to the bar and ran into a couple friends. They seen I was down and out and let me sleep on their porch. And my family knew it. And do you think that one of them would say, “come on Cara.” Nope, so I said, “fuck it, my life is this damn bad? I didn’t do this bad when I was smoking and prostituting.” And I started again (Cara).

As women reflect back on their life in prostitution, they report the most difficult to give
up was the money. With the exception of Outlaws, women report they would go back to
work if they could do so without becoming involved in drugs and the lifestyle. However,
they realize the futility of such a fantasy. For some, this thought is the very thing that gets
them back into the game and eventually back into the lifestyle and the drugs that follow.

To someone who has lived in poverty most of her life, a small taste of what it is like to
be able to make a sufficient amount of money brings with it a unique set of interpersonal
conflicts. Cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally, most everyone wants money. Society
supports this notion of getting all the money one can, often by any means necessary. So
the woman who gives up prostitution has to go against her desires and be willing to once again live in dire poverty.

The lifestyle and its social aspects at the time were fun, rewarding, and adventurous. Women adopted the social behaviors and the rules of the streets posses a certain familiarity. In familiarity there is comfort. It is very easy and perhaps desirable to slip back into what is familiar. But attached to money and a lifestyle are the risks to emotional and physical well-being. The former two are very inviting, but the latter can be deadly. Indeed, some women have traveled many times back through social immersion, being caught up, and once again re-evaluating their life before exiting prostitution permanently. These women represent the lucky ones. For others, circumstance did not allow them a second chance. Of the twenty-one women who lived to tell their story, many mentioned friends and acquaintances who were not so lucky. Stories of women murdered while involved in prostitution echo behind these pages.

It’s real dangerous out there, no matter how you look at it. With a pimp or on your own. You don’t know if you’re gonna make it home alive or not. I seen a girl die in this life. Thrown out a truck and ran over. And left for dead. I seen it happen. I loved her to death. If I could have done something to save her life that night, I would have done it (Monica).

I was in the motel room when they killed my friend. And I was the only one to walk out of that room not dead and not shot. I’ll never forget that, never. She was a good friend of mine (Brenda).

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC INFLUENCES AND CUMULATIVE BURDENS**

The relationship between socio-economic influences and cumulative burdens are inextricably linked. The growing realization of the undeniable influences of socio-
economic structures on street prostitution has been recently apparent in the literature (Reynolds, 1986; Maher & Curtis, 1992). Influences at the socio-economic level have been demonstrated through the boundaries and barriers of the formal economy, the informal economy, the pimping game, and the prostitution lifestyle. These socio-economic influences are presented at each stage and shape the direction and choices made while in prostitution and are represented at each stage from entrance to exit. At entrance, these are demonstrated through women’s inability to successfully participate in the formal economy, opening a pathway into informal economy activities and the rules and boundaries of such. Although threaded throughout, intense learning of the rules of the game largely takes place during the social adjustment stage. Social Immersion brings women deeper into the world of street prostitution where they become fluent in the dictates of the lifestyle. Exit decisions rest on a re-evaluation of life in the game and the lifestyle.

On an interpersonal level, cumulative burdens are those physical and emotional disturbances which occur in the form of daily hassles, acute traumas, and chronic conditions. These burdens accumulate over time and work to decrease the bio-psycho-social well-being of the individual involved in street prostitution. The idea that many women, per chance, follow down the same road of destruction and addiction is now understood as a structured force of circumstance. It is best explained as a patterned set of circumstances influenced by larger socio-economic structures with extreme interpersonal consequences resulting from a series of cumulative burdens. By using the framework of socio-economic influences and cumulative burdens, we understand that women who want
to leave prostitution, must exit the informal economy, the lifestyle, the rules and boundaries of the game. It is not simply stopping the sale of one’s body, in a “just say no” mentality, it is understood as a severance of ties on many levels from interpersonal to economic and social structural.

The material discussed in this section has practical implications for social work and other helping professions. This study suggests women are at risk for various emotional and physical traumas which, over time, accumulate to create deteriorated emotional and physical damage. It is ironic that although street prostitution centers on issues of interpersonal conflict, social issues of drug abuse, homelessness and child protection and societal issues of poverty, vulnerability, and oppression, little attention has been given to this area in social work practice or research. Thus, we turn to an issue of great concern, social work’s lack of attention to this population.
PART FOUR:

THE MISSION OF SOCIAL WORK: PROFESSIONAL MALICE OR PROFESSIONAL IGNORANCE?
According to prior research, it is not uncommon for a [street] prostitute to have been molested as a child, coerced at first intercourse, and raped prior to involvement in prostitution (Boyer & James, 1983 p. 117). Once involved in prostitution, women experience a loss of status, negative labeling (Boyer & James, 1983), increased risks for violence (Miller, 1993), HIV (Pyett & Warr, 1999), drug abuse (Inciardi, Lockwood, & Pottieger, 1993), decreased emotional and physical health (Vanwesenbeeck, 1994) and decreased societal protection (Weiner, 1996). To this I add socio-economic influences and cumulative burdens consisting of daily hassles, acute traumas, and chronic conditions which over time cause emotional and physical deterioration. When assessing social work's response to this phenomenon, I find the social work profession to have contributed little to the service provisions for or theoretical understanding of this population. If we accept the conclusions above describing street life as a series of environmental influences and cumulative factors, then we must agree that vulnerability to violence, poverty, and oppressive conditions characterize street work in its present form.

It is interesting, then, that the primary purpose of social work is to "enhance the well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed and living in poverty (National Association of Social Workers NASW, 1996 Code of Ethics p.2 Preamble). "This code is intended for all social workers and social work students, regardless of their professional functions, practice settings, or clientele" (NASW, 1996 p.1).

"‘After I graduate, I want to go into private practice.’ That’s what students are saying to their social work professors with increasing frequency” (Barker, 1992 p. 108). In fact,
statistics from a recent survey reported that 29.5% of master level social workers now indicate that their primary job is private practice (Choi, 1990). According to Borenzweig (1971), clients of private practitioners tend to be middle and upper class young white adults or the “worried well.” Today, growing numbers of social workers continue to move into private practice (Gibelman & Schervish, 1996). This presents an increasing gap in the number of professional social workers remaining in positions of both interpersonal attention and social activism on behalf of the vulnerable, poor and oppressed. It is conceivable that of those bachelor level agency workers who do work with the poor, most do not engage street prostitutes.

Perhaps this lack of meaningful engagement can be explained by the a) the social worker’s ignorance, lack of empathy, and the invisibility of street prostitution, b) the historically antagonistic relationship between social workers and sex workers, and c) the profession’s race toward professionalism.

It is my contention that we as a profession facilitate counseling programs for those who were abused as a child, we offer parenting classes for those with questionable parenting skills, and we encourage those who have drug and alcohol problems to seek out our services, but when or if a woman possesses all three of these problems and in addition, prostitutes herself, we determine with an absence of empathy that our energies should be best spent helping others in need. In fact many street workers have been involved in child sexual abuse (James, 1978; Silbert & Pines, 1983), grew up to exhibit poor parenting skills with their own children (Williamson, 1993), and have become drug and alcohol dependent in the process (Inciardi, Lockwood, & Pottieger, 1993; Ratner, 1993). Perhaps we are
truly innocent in our ignorance regarding the issues of street prostitution. We didn’t know. We couldn’t see it?

It has been reported that prostitutes do not make compliant clients (Weiner, 1996). They often are not visible clients. Why then have street workers remained invisible to a profession that’s mission is to help the poor and oppressed.

The historical relationship between helping professionals and street sex workers has been antagonistic at best (Weiner, 1996). The system has been designed to foster negative and punitive views of prostitutes. The fact that prosecution of street prostitutes is primary and access to health and social services secondary (Jolin, 1994) lends credence to the belief that sex workers do not trust institutions and therefore will not seek out these services. The few times engagement occurs in which prostitution activities become visible to workers are via emergency room services or hospital clinics, the corrections system (adult and juvenile justice systems), and child protective services. Needless to say, the interface of prostitutes with the latter two systems has not been harmonious, requiring punitive responses, and the former is usually expedient and isolated to improving the physical complaint at hand. Often having been threatened with incarceration, or the removal of their children (Shedlin, 1990), street sex workers remain distant and purposely invisible. Effective approaches, which aren’t manifested in punitive interventions, are needed to foster relationships and create an atmosphere of trust. Professionals with experience in working with this population discuss the necessity to conduct outreach and provide services that encourage the establishment of trusted relationships, are flexible, and involve both basic needs and social services. Building a relationship is key to effective
work with clients (Weiner, 1996). Education, research and dissemination of knowledge could potentially remedy ignorance, shift prostitution from invisible to visible in the eyes of social workers, and provide workers with the knowledge and skills to approach the problems associated with sex work in a meaningful way. Ignorance always requires education as a solution. However, the largest barrier to effective and therapeutic work in prostitution is the profession's race toward professionalism to the detriment of the poor and oppressed. In an incessant pursuit for professionalism, social work has encouraged individual casework over social reform, grounding its knowledge base in narrowly defined person in environment perspectives and away from the inequality found in class stratification and societal barriers (Ehrenreich, 1985 p.7; Abramovitz, 1993). Throughout historic debates between "individual casework-social reform," the movement toward work with the poor and oppressed has been weakened (Ehrenreich, 1985; Gibelman, 1999). It is hypothesized that this struggle has enabled the profession to become susceptible to the outside influences of the government and the middle class with a vested interest in supporting the profession's move toward increased individual casework and away from social reform. The 1930s and 1960s are presented as case examples.

Large scale organized social work became prominent in the 1930s to stabilize the American industrial society that was in deep economic, social, and political crisis (Ehrenreich, 1985). Government and big business, also known as the elites of the country, had a vested interest maintaining social order and a vested interest in the direction of social work to help maintain social order. Elites are defined as those members of society who by virtue of their wealth, privilege, and important leadership positions exercise power
in society (Hellinger & Judd, 1994). Therefore, elites benefit most when social work focuses on individual casework and individual deficits as opposed to class issues and social reform (Ehrenreich, 1985).

Once the creation of the welfare state was established, the government could control social work by becoming one of the largest employers of social workers in the U.S. The ethical question posed by group worker and social activist VanKleeck in 1934 was “does this reliance upon the government commit social workers to preserve the status quo? Can a profession place its faith in the public sector without serving that sector’s interest?” (as cited in Ehrenreich, 1985). The opinion of this author is indeed it cannot.

Indeed, the underlying motivation for the creation of the welfare state was not altruism, but the need to reestablish and maintain social control. Social work became the tool used by the elites to control the poor. The 50s and 60s paralleled the 30s with the development of the War on Poverty Programs (Ehrenreich, 1985 p.98). What is interesting is that during both these times in history, social work was not central to the struggle and, in fact, had not been a prominent force in social reform since the days of Jane Addams. Individual casework-social reform divisions have left social work unable to harness its power enough to challenge larger institutions with the vigor necessary to create equitable changes for the poor (Ehrenreich, 1985).

Largely replacing the old middle class made up of independent businessmen of the pre-1920s, the ”new middle class” emerged as college educated and salaried employees. They responded to the class struggles of the 30s by initiating reforms that included regulations on working conditions, hours, wages, and the activities of corporations. The middle class
had two main interests. First they needed to secure a stable occupational base for themselves. This was accomplished through the development of a consumer driven, consumption rich society. The middle class needed to market a “mass culture” that valued spending over saving. By creating a consumer society, they could stabilize their occupations as supervisors and middle management in factories and businesses. Advertisements and the mass media were used to create the image of a consumer society; and teachers, social workers, and domestic scientists, in propagating the ideas of “right living” did their part (Ehrenreich, 1985 p. 49).

Next they needed to ensure that their class values would remain the dominant force in a country that was quickly becoming populated with immigrants. The development of the “public interest,” a vehicle through which “appropriate” values could be maintained, was widely accepted. “Of course the public was none other than the new middle class, representing itself as the entire society” (Ehrenreich, 1985 p.40). To illustrate this point, during the progressive era education was increased and expanded in order to better serve the “public interest” and convey appropriate values. Also, during the 1930s, it was thought to have been in the “public interest” to promote social reform. In fact, these dual ventures served the middle class in two ways. First as the country became more industrialized, it began to develop machines that could produce quality goods at an accelerated rate. This type of production required fewer workers and child labor was no longer essential. Second by educating children, especially immigrant children, the middle class could ensure that the country would engender the “appropriate” values. Social workers, along with teachers, became the tool through which to instill appropriate values
to immigrant families and the poor (p.30-31). These “appropriate values” include a moral
code that prostitution violates. It has always been in the “public interest” to develop
punitive approaches against this social evil.

Finally, social work has been actively awaiting its place in line to acquire the
respectability desired through professionalization. In 1915 Abraham Flexner, the man
known to have contributed to the professionalization of physicians, concluded that social
work was not a profession because it lacked an identified body of knowledge. “It was
instead a mediating occupation, coordinating the activities of other professions”
(Ehrenreich, 1985 p. 58). Since the early 1900s social work education has been obsessed
with becoming a respected profession. In efforts to become more professionalized, social
work has attempted throughout history to divorce itself from the prospects of social
reform and has become increasingly attracted to individual casework. Psychoanalysis,
now psychosocial casework, was believed to be the vehicle through which
professionalization could be achieved (Ehrenreich, 1985; Specht & Courtney, 1994;
Towle, 1987). Of course pursuing the advancement of the profession was in actuality in
the best interest of the powerful players involved in social work and not necessarily for the
benefit of the poor. With professionalization, social workers could gain bargaining power
with larger institutions, request more money, and command the respect attained in other
professions. In turn, we would teach “coping” to our clients and take our place as the
buffer between the elites and the poor.

The internal struggles toward professionalization and emphasis on individual casework
left social work virtually out of the construction of the welfare state in the 30s as well as
the social movements of the 60s. Whereas social workers could have been the progenitors of such social reform, we were instead relegated to implementing new deal programs without significant input into their construction.

Therefore, we see that social work has been pulled in many directions in order to serve the self-interests of many groups. These have included the government, wanting to restore social order and maintain the status quo, and the middle class vested in maintaining their position while ensuring that social work instilled the appropriate values in those outside of the middle class realm. Both of these sectors rewarded social work for espousing an individual casework-individual responsibility focus in lieu of social reform and rebellion.

In the final analysis it appears that the profession itself, concerned with reaping the benefits from the two larger sectors (middle class and government elites), focused on the individual deficits of its clients, and the rewards of chasing psychotherapeutic enterprises over issues of social justice and social reform (Specht & Courtney, 1994). Prostitution became a phenomenon connected to individual pathology and more pervasive issues such as vulnerability, poverty, and oppression were ignored.

Today, many social workers may become involved in community organizing, social policy, or even macro level advocacy, but rarely are they committed to the type of social justice that would upset the status quo and provoke redistribution of power and resources, the magnitude of which would jeopardize social work's professional stance, endangering both credibility and position. Climbing into bed, so to speak, with social reform issues involved in prostitution is too risky a venture. This, coupled with the ignorance of the prostitute phenomena and the historically negative interface between sex workers and
social workers, offers a reasonable explanation as to why this seemingly perfect union
between the oppressed, vulnerable and poor and the resistors of such conditions has not
occurred.
PART FIVE:

RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, & SUMMARY
IMPLICATIONS FOR THEORY & RESEARCH

To remedy this disconnect, social workers and health providers need to understand the phenomenon of street prostitution. The point to be emphasized here is that helping professionals continue to lack basic knowledge regarding street work. For example, as helping professionals, we currently understand the cycle of domestic violence and we understand the progression of alcoholism. With this basic information as our foundation, researchers and practitioners are able to develop assessments, sponsor treatments, and make policy decisions that can benefit clients. Very little information on basic prostitute progression exists. The result is a lack of sufficient and appropriate responses to women involved in prostitution. The task of effectively dealing with women involved in street prostitution requires that we develop research that presents an even clearer and more forthcoming picture of the phenomenon of street work. Information for the sake of understanding by itself is inadequate.

The need to operationalize these understandings is social work researchers' next task. Identifying general types and stages of street prostitutes is helpful, but may remain too global. In the future, the need to move away from such global assessments will be necessary to facilitate advancement from theory to practice and translate theoretical findings such as these into concrete assessments. Finally, and perhaps most important, basic research needs to be conducted surrounding issues of death rates in this population, which include death by murder and suicide. The simplicity of this vital research is deceptive, for with this type of straightforward information alone, we would be able to
create the saliency needed to encourage others to devote research energies and funding to this much needed area.

Considered in broad perspective, the concepts of prostitution types in street work and prostitute progression, in terms of stages, have implications for providing readers of prostitution works with a new lens in which to increase their understanding of prostitute literature. Some of the current confusion arises because researchers have failed to provide basic information on movement from entrance to exit that reflect current risks. This new theoretical approach to progression and types of street prostitutes provides the framework in which to ground data on prostitution process. Thus, some of the variability found in the literature can be explained using this added knowledge. Examples are presented using this theory on types and stages to better understand the literature.

Nonetheless, the women described, at least initially, feelings of intoxication; they earned a lot of money, made new contacts and lived a hectic life of pleasure. Everything seemed new and exciting. However, not all of the women reported such feelings. Some of the women never had a ‘honeymoon’ period in prostitution, but instead found it to be a repulsive and degrading business from the very beginning (Mansson & Hedin, 1998 p.13).

Viewing street work through the lens of types and stages, it is clear that Mansson & Hedlin had in their midst Renegades and Outlaws, probably interviewed at an early stage in their career, most likely at the entrance or social adjustment stage.

In 1995, Miller writes:

The physiological effects of crack, in combination with the short duration of its high, led to an ongoing daily pattern of turning tricks and getting high. Sometimes, this also involved robbing tricks for drug money. Pepper a 22-year-old African American woman, explained, “When you on drugs, you be
like, you won't finish and you'll...take the money, tell them to pull over right here and I'm gonna do this, and then jump out of the car. And I don't be worried about if they behind me....When you're in that kind of state of mind, you don't care" (p.7).

It becomes obvious that Pepper is in the "caught up" stage where drugs are in control of her life. She exhibits a general lack of concern for the outcome of her efforts and is obsessed with the need to secure money to buy drugs.

The progression of street prostitution, therefore may be used as a lens enabling the reader to better interpret prostitution literature. From the findings of this study, particularly negative stressful experiences that occur are crucial and over time lead to depression, learned helplessness, and drug abuse. These findings raise other important research needs in terms of this population. First, researchers need a clearer understanding of depression and other long term emotional consequences of stress in this population. This may include research that takes into consideration both the emotional antecedents and the degree of resiliency of the individual prior to entrance into prostitution. Finally, research on the effects of stress on prostitutes in legalized settings is needed to compare and contrast the basic social process of both legal and illegal sex work.

POLICY & PRACTICE PERSPECTIVES

The progression of street prostitution is but a process perspective offered to explain the experience of street prostitutes. The findings of this study suggest that women who entered and learned the code of conduct (social adjustment stage) felt empowered by their ability to make money and financially sustain themselves. The social immersion stage saw
women become immersed in their work and the lifestyle. It was not until they suffered violence at the hands of customers and/or pimps that they felt the need to use drugs beyond that of recreational use. Even Outlaws did not move from simple conversational manipulation to attempts at robbery until they had been victimized. Now we must ask ourselves, if prostitution were legal and protected by conventional society as other occupations are, would women seek to use drugs as a functional means of coping? Would women shift from problem solving coping at Entrance and Social Adjustment, to emotion focused coping during the Social Immersion stage and Caught up stage? Excluding the moral issue connected with prostitution and concerning ourselves with the safety, health, and the well-being of prostitutes, should our response entail creating stiffer, swifter penalties to deter women from advancing stages? Should we seek to decriminalize prostitution and rescue women from prostitution by opening doors into other occupations? Should we seek to legalize prostitution and regulate its activities making it a safer occupation?

It will come as no surprise that no research can remain apolitical. Once written, research findings become political as they are interpreted by those with a political agenda or a vested interest in the issue. The political lens used to view prostitution therefore, will have a direct effect on how these findings are interpreted in policy and practice.

Three paradigms for viewing prostitution currently exist. These include the legal-moral paradigm, the sexual equality paradigm, and the free-choice paradigm. Embedded in each paradigm are ideologies, polices that are generated from the particular discourse, and practice implications for appropriate interventions.
LEGAL-MORAL PARADIGM

Discourse

Prostitution is a predatory evil which, by preying upon society...feeds the insatiable appetite of organized crime, fosters all manner of criminality, spreads venereal disease, and victimizes and depraves the prostitute.... [From it] flows a stream of murder, suicide, accidental death, disease, disorder, violence and corruption. Uncontrolled...it is a quick route to a deteriorated quality of society ...[therefore] the public must continue to protect itself by insisting on the maintenance of sufficient legal sanctions ...in order that the criminal justice system may be afforded the ability to protect society (E. M. Davis, 1973 p.13,19 & 20).

The Roper Poll (as cited in Weitzer, 1991) revealed that when asked, 69% of Americans stated it was important to enforce the prohibition of prostitution. The visibility of prostitution in a community is said to attract other crime and pose health hazards that may reverberate throughout neighborhoods. Notwithstanding reported acts of robbery and swindling schemes directed at customers, prostitutes and customers place themselves at increased risk for sexually transmitted diseases in which severe consequences could occur (Sternberg, 1983). Intravenous drug use exacerbates risk of transmission (Cohen & Alexander, 1987). The drug needs of addicted prostitutes often cannot be met through prostitution alone. Drug-addicted women may introduce additional crime into a community to support their habit (Inciardi, Lockwood, & Pottieger, 1993).

Moral religious codes condemned prostitution as a predatory evil (E.M. Davis, 1973). Religious leaders view prostitution as sinful and immoral. Through this lens, sexual promiscuity damns one to a ill-gotten fate. Therefore women involved in prostitution are believed to have fallen from the grace of God and are thought of as “fallen women” who
have drifted from the path of virtuousness and righteousness. "Supporters of moral and religious perspectives... come in all denominations, classes, races, and demographic groups" (Flowers, 1998 p 159). Their agenda is clear; to clean up society by eliminating amoral sexuality and immoral sex industries. Moralists support the legal sanctions established by law makers.

With the exception of 12 rural counties in Nevada, prostitution continues to be illegal in all 50 U.S. states. According to the law, sex workers may be arrested for loitering with the intent to commit an act of prostitution, and for offering and agreeing to an act of prostitution. The prostitute may be arrested if she mentions trading sex for money with a customer or an undercover officer (Boyer & James, 1983; James, 1978).

Legal definitions of prostitution have historically encompassed a double standard by largely focusing on female prostitutes and not male customers. In the early 1900s, for example, the law read, "any female who frequents or lives in a house of ill-fame or associates with women of bad character for chastity, either in public or at a house which men of bad character frequent or visit, or who commits adultery or fornication for hire shall be deemed a prostitute" (Flowers, 1998 p 7-8).

Current law varies from state to state. "Payment for sexual acts is strictly prohibited in 38 states. Solicitation laws are enforced in 44 states. In other states, prostitution is banned through vagrancy, curfew, and loitering statutes" (Flowers, 1998 p 146).

Current enforcement of the law reflects old stereotypes as arrest rates suggest women continue to bear most of the blame for the prostitution industry. For example, of all
prostitution arrests in 1995, 53,570 were prostitutes, while fewer than 7,000 were suspected customers (Flowers, 1998).

Legal definitions and enforcement practices have been influenced by the way society views women in the sex industry. Negative connotations such as fallen women, street walkers, and drug addicts color the way society perceives women's participation in the industry. Women involved in the sale of sex are thought to encompass defects in character, psychological disorders, and maladaptive lifestyles (Greenwald, 1958; Maerov, 1965). These scientific conceptualizations are congruent with social interpretations. Social interpretations of women who sell sex are translated into that of a "whore," a stigmatized social status that threatens societal position and social standing. Moreover, women involved in prostitution are thought to bear responsibility for the moral decay, social disorder, and criminality associated with prostitution. These interpretations are not afforded to men. The role of "sex client" is not viewed as a social status, but rather an activity (Flowers, 1998). A male client remains largely separated from social stigma. At worst, he may be pitied for not having the talents to attract female companionship independent of payment. However, the terms customer, client, john, or trick are divorced from his personal make-up and do not define his personal identity. His social identity may temporarily suffer as he may be seen as using poor judgment in a moment of weakness. Legally, there will be a blemish on his record. However, the likelihood that a customer will even be arrested is improbable as approximately two customers are arrested for every eight prostitutes arrested (Flowers, 1998). Therefore, the prostitution industry is far less legally and socially detrimental for male clients than it is for female sex workers.
One can, of course, question the reason for this imbalance in perceptions and arrest rates. According to Lazarus & Folkman (1984), beliefs are personally formed, scientifically tested, and culturally shared. Reality has traditionally been tested and legitimized by those in the center. Center people may be defined as white, male, able-bodied, heterosexual, youthful, and Christian. The center refers to the center of political, economic, and social power and resources as well as dominance over the scientific structure of knowledge building (VanVoorhis, 1998). Those who benefit are those who define it, fit well in it, enforce it, attribute perspectives, standards, and ways of relating as a result (Schriver, 1998 p.68). Prostitutes represent those at the margin. To be at the margin is to be at the fringe, partial to the whole, lacking in power and resources, to be defined by those at the center. It is the position of being the object of study as opposed to the participant of study. The female identity, in general, is therefore at a scientific disadvantage. The prostitute identity, more specifically, violates the beliefs that espouse male sexuality as _active_ and _initiatory_ and female sexuality as _passive_ and _responsive_. The prostitute identity therefore defies logic as she is often an active and initiatory participant. This dissonance in science necessitates the need to develop models of pathology and deviance as we must create explanations that coincide with a unidimensional reality of women as sexually passive. This scientific reductionism fueled the need to sanction such activity.

Those in the center create a world that is an extension of their desires and interests. Therefore, in a country dominated by patriarchy, literally translated to mean rule of our fathers (Polit & Hungler, 1995), and because men are the very ones who visit prostitutes,
man becomes a walking contradiction. Consequently because those at the center are protected, those at the margins are prosecuted. Because these women violate the constructed reality of sexual passivity, they become the instrument through which moral disintegration occurs and that which must be sanctioned over the actions of male customers whose constructed reality normally displays him as sexually active. Thus within the dyad of sexual exchange, women become both the focus for research, the result of which is often pathology, and the focus for sanction, the result of which is prosecution.

It is important to note that as long as discrimination in arrest rates continue to occur, prostitution will continue to be a challenge for legal-moralists. Following the tenets of the legal-moral paradigm, controlling the industry of prostitution holds little promise so long as the majority of offenders (men) continue to remain largely outside the prosecutorial powers of the law. However, some states are working to penalize those men who purchase sex. Efforts to seize and impound vehicles, publish customers names in local newspapers, and charge stiff fines are among the few approaches cities have used to curb the demand for prostitutes.

There is variability in the types of laws and how those laws are applied from state to state for women involved in prostitution. In general, prostitution is a misdemeanor charge. Prostitution related charges may include vagrancy, curfew, loitering, solicitation, pandering, and procuring females for prostitution purposes. Various approaches toward enforcement of prostitution laws are presented below.
Policy and Practice

The legal-moral paradigm is implemented using four models of enforcement, the laissez faire model, the control model, the regulation model, and the zoning model. The Laissez Faire Model often develops in large cities with overburdened police forces and scarce resources. Because other crime rates are so high, the futility of trying to enforce a law that is impossible to enforce effectively leaves the police to make a conscious choice not to enforce. Furthermore, the economic well-being of the city depends upon adult tourism and conventions. City officials do not wish to suppress prostitution because of the revenue it indirectly brings to the city (Reynolds, 1986 p.37). In other words, tourists expect to find these luxuries during their stay and may be attracted to the idea of booking conventions, meetings, and vacations in those particular cities. Examples of these cities include San Francisco, Miami and Las Vegas.

Because they are supported by the courts and city officials, the Control Model emphasizes enforcement. "The main support for repressing prostitution comes from the community, as the citizens express their displeasure over any public activity that offends the community standard of decency" (Reynolds, 1986 p.39). These communities are usually homogenous urban neighborhoods, small towns, or middle class suburbs. They are made up mostly of families, some of whom morally condemn the idea of prostitution and others who just prefer it be conducted in someone else's neighborhood. This model forces prostitution underground and out of sight. As long as community pressure on police is consistent, prostitution will remain underground. When pressure lifts, so will enforcement (Reynolds, 1986 p. 41).
The Regulation Model operates in cities where there exists a noticeable amount of legal prostitution. These include massage parlors and escort services, or in the case of Nevada, a legal brothel. This model dictates that those engaged in such activities be licensed (Legal Situation in Nevada, 1996). These licenses do not permit carriers to engage in prostitution, but are ways to regulate activities. For example, officials can institute health standards and severely fine any agency, massage parlor, or brothel that hires unlicenced workers. The most beneficial factor to officials is that they can collect taxes on such activities.

The zoning model may incorporate the other three models. In the zoning model, adult entertainment is concentrated in specific areas away from residential neighborhoods. Within these concentrated areas, establishments are regulated and police assume a laissez faire position, while at the same time adhering to a strict control model type enforcement in residential areas. Examples include the French Quarter in New Orleans and the Sunset Strip in Los Angeles.

Since the Legal-moral paradigm is concerned with social control, enforcement and deterrence are the key approaches used to contain and suppress prostitution. In this approach, progressive cities are attempting to tighten zoning laws while conservative cities are calling for stricter laws and penalties (Stephanian, 1996; Toledo City Council, 1993). By opting for stricter zoning laws, proponents of social reform are hoping to contain the sex industry within designated zones and relieve neighborhoods of problems associated with street prostitution such as traffic congestion, noise, cruising, and the exposure of children to prostitution (Stephanian, 1996).
In communities where imposing stricter penalties are prominent, prostitution can be summed up in one word, prosecution (San Francisco Task Force, 1996). Deterrence theory, a popular approach among classic criminologists, depicts crime as that which can be deterred by creating a judicial atmosphere that guarantees certain, swift, and severe punishment of the criminal. By concentrating energies on prosecution, conducting prostitution sweeps and assigning undercover officers to vice, cities have been able to suppress some street prostitution. However, the financial burden of such an assertive attempt can be economically staggering for these cities. A case example can be found in Toledo, Ohio where a single prostitution arrest costs the city $2920 (Williamson, 1993). This cost estimate includes the total fixed cost to operate the police division, municipal courts, probation and regional jail divided by the number of prostitution arrests.¹ More specifically these estimates include the cost of arresting, booking, detaining, and probationary procedures of prostitutes arrested under the charges of loitering and prostitution. These estimates do not include those suspected prostitutes arrested under related charges. Also not included are the capital costs of constructing additional jail space, pre-trial detention, and other recent criminal justice construction projects.

In 1993, The Toledo Police Department petitioned the city council to pay the nearby city of Bowling Green $50,000 for use of temporary jail space to house prostitutes arrested over the weekends or during sweeps. Thus, efforts to rid the streets of prostitution for this city imposed unforeseen structural and financial burdens related to ¹The statistics ruled out all but misdemeanor offenses that constitute 80% of all Toledo Police Department cases.
manpower and space. The irony of assertive prosecution of street prostitutes is that
prostitution is a nonviolent misdemeanor in the eyes of the law. Criminals charged with a
nonviolent misdemeanor are arrested, booked and released in order to save jail space for
more serious offenders. Thus when a prostitute is arrested, she is booked, released and
given a court date for sentencing. This process takes approximately 20 minutes. Of
course, street smart prostitutes who are released never show up for court. If she is
arrested again, the process repeats itself until she has accumulated enough charges to be
held overnight in the local jail. When arraigned the next morning, she will plead not
guilty, be given a trial date and released. The perpetual cycle continues. It is not
uncommon to find street prostitutes with 30 or more charges, each one costing the city
approximately $2920. In fact, one prostitute in Toledo's criminal justice system had sixty-
seven charges of loitering and prostitution costing the city $195,640 not including the cost
of the six-month jail sentence she finally did receive (Williamson, 1993).

Despite the exorbitant cost of enforcement, deterrence theory appears to be the
approach adopted nationally. The following psychological scenario is expected to occur
in the mind of the criminal; You know Sue got nine months for that crime, I’d better not
do it. Deterrence theory neglects the complexity of individual lives and assumes that the
pressure to commit a crime is fairly constant. It doesn’t take into consideration that
different offenders experience different pressures and that criminal behavior, like all
behavior, is subjective and determined by need and desires relative to many variables
including opportunity, group norms, formal and informal sanctions, and pleasure versus
pain (Webb, 1980). According to deterrence theory, the risk of being caught will lower
the probability for violation when, in fact, risk is said to be subjectively calculated by the individual (Webb, 1980 p.29). Finally, deterrence theory assumes individuals are rational and therefore make choices based on rational decisions. Most law abiding citizens are law abiding because they have “internalized the socialization process- not the written law and its sanctions” (Webb, 1980 p.24).

Criticisms of the legal-moral perspective have pointed to its failure to resolve problems associated with prostitution (Shaver, 1994). In direct contrast to the Legal-Moral paradigm are the Free Choice and Sexual Equality paradigms. Whereas the legal-moral model functioned from an ideology of the criminalization of prostitutes, the sexual equality paradigms calls for decriminalization of prostitution.

SEXUAL EQUALITY PARADIGM

Nowhere is woman treated according to the merit of her work but rather as a sex. It is therefore almost inevitable that she pay for her right to exist ...with sex favors. Thus it is merely a question of degree whether she sells herself to one man, in or out of marriage, or to many men (Goldman, 1917 In S. Bell, 1994 ).

Discourse

Equality of women depends directly on their ability to eliminate male sexual oppression. It is believed that equality cannot exist so long as sexual subordination to men continues to exist. Prostitution is therefore intrinsically abusive. Within the customer-prostitute relationship, males break few societal rules in visiting a prostitute but prostitutes break many rules in selling sex.

Women in prostitution defy social control and therefore threaten the basic structure of society (James, 1978). Society regulates sexual activity and reproduction through the
institution of the family (Jesson, 1993). Pateman (1988), in her book "The Sexual Contract", surmises that marriage is a private contract and prostitution is a public contract delineating male’s sexual ownership of women. Therefore, women cannot divorce themselves from sexual regulation by society. Historically, women who were not considered male property, such as divorcees and sexually active women, had a considerably more difficult time obtaining legal protection than did married women and virgins (Miller & Schwartz, 1995). As marginalized women, prostitutes are not afforded the same privileges and protections as other individuals in a democratic society including the fundamental recognition of value as a human being (Shaver, 1994) and the protection of the full extent of the law when victimized (Fairstein, 1993; Frohmann, 1992). Prosecutors typically do not prosecute cases involving prostitute complainants (Frohmann, 1992), and, in many cases, automatically dismiss sexual assault complaints initiated by known prostitutes (Fairstein, 1993). To further worsen their plight, very few street workers report their victimization to authorities (Silbert & Pines, 1982).

Despite widespread evidence to the contrary, societal attitudes concerning prostitutes continue to be that they are unrapeable, do not suffer physical attack, deserve the violence inflicted upon them, or that no harm is done when prostitutes are hurt or killed (Miller & Schwartz, 1995). Because prostitution is a deviant activity that is illegal and viewed by many as morally wrong, prostitutes are forced underground and hidden from view (Weiner, 1996). The alternative for street prostitutes is to find non-conventional ways to protect themselves from physical violence.
Advocates for the sexual equality paradigm suggest prostitutes are victims and that victimization occurs in three ways. Sex workers are viewed as victims of the psychosocial determinants involved in street prostitution, such as violence, drugs, and HIV risks, they are victims of societal shaming, namely, outcasting and labeling, and they are victims of negative childhood experiences including physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.

WHISPER (Women Hurt in Systems of Prostitution Engaged in Revolt), a group comprised of former prostitutes, explains that prostitution is exploitive, oppressive and dangerous. It is sexual abuse and is the vehicle through which women’s social and economic inequality continues. Because it is a violation of human dignity, it is a violation of human rights. Giobbe (1991 as cited in Bell, 1994) argues:

The process of becoming a prostitute entails the systematic deconstruction of an individual woman’s beliefs, feelings, desires and values. Upon entering prostitution a woman typically acquires a new name, changes her appearance, and creates a fictitious past....To be a prostitute is to be an object in the marketplace: a three dimensional blank screen upon which men project and act out their sexual dominance. Thus the word prostitute does not imply a deeper identity; it is the absence of identity: the theft and subsequent abandonment of self. What remains is essential to the job: the mouth, the genitals, anus, breasts...and the label (p. 128).

Although WHISPER leaves no room for alternative constructions or conflicting perspectives, their message is clear: prostitution is abuse to women. Even when challenged by women who say they choose prostitution, sexual equality activists attribute the notion of free choice to the tenets of domination theory. Women who live under the oppressive conditions of patriarchy have no real free choice but are victims of false consciousness:
According to domination theory, sex workers who claim to have chosen sex work are victims of false consciousness. False consciousness suggests that oppressed persons unconsciously internalize the dominant ideology. Domination theory states that women who claim to enjoy and freely engage in heterosexual sex have been shaped by the practices and ideology of male dominance....Women that are taught to eroticize domination and while they may believe they are giving consent, in reality,...are engaging in ritualized forms of domination which have become...familiar. (Wahab & Sloan, 1997 p.5).

Many women involved in prostitution have suffered sexual and physical assault, robbery, beatings, stabbings, and kidnaping (Miller, 1993). Sexual equality proponents suggest that prosecution actually exacerbates problems associated with street prostitutes and does little to rid society of the prostitution problem other than to force it underground where it becomes even more risky to the victims involved.

Feminists suggest that we focus on the realities of street life, which lends credence to claims that prostitution is victimization. By studying the lives of women and allowing the female voice to be heard, science would be inclusive, yield increased accuracy, and provide society a more informed knowledge base upon which to judge human behavior (Harding, 1991).

Critical Theory

Critical Theorists believe that a reality exists but that we may attain stronger objectivity by focusing on knowledge obtained from and by those marginalized by society. Within this conception, the oppressed have the ability to understand both the oppressed view and the view of the dominant culture. For survival, the oppressed have had to learn the culture of the oppressor but the dominant culture has not been forced to learn from the oppressed. Therefore, science dominated by men is science that is biased. The assumptions within the
legal-moral paradigm that good girls trade it and bad girls sell it are assumptions that are inherently flawed (Harding, 1991). What is believed to be known a priori, becomes questionable. When the voices of marginal women are sought out and heard, knowledge begins to more accurately reflect reality.

A critical examination of history is needed to rectify distorted scientific conclusions on prostitution. Women as prostitutes are not inherently pathological nor are they solely responsible for the moral decay of the country. They are victims of historical patriarchy and oppression. Critical theorists believe in one reality for prostitution. Prostitution is domination and victimization.

Policy and Practice

According to sexual equality proponents, rescue, rather than enforcement, should be at the forefront of social policy and programs regarding prostitution. Not only should social policy favor access to health care and social services, interventions and preventions should be geared toward aiding the street prostitute to escape or avoid prostitution. Escape is the only way to empower women. Criteria for intervention should address bridging the gap between those most vulnerable and effective social services. Currently across the country there exist three types of program models, outreach by use of mobile van, case management and residential treatment. All of these programs promote the same fundamental philosophy of a non-traditional, flexible approach of building relationships, working through indigenous networks and meeting the physical and emotional needs of clients.
The Mobile Van Project in New York City that began in 1989 uses a van equipped with HIV prevention information and testing, condoms and clean needles. The goal for this program as with similar outreach programs is harm reduction. Case Managers and HIV counselors conduct outreach into poor neighborhoods, known as “ho strolls,” to provide counseling and referrals for service. Funded by the state, city and federal grants for AIDS projects, the van makes several stops covering the five Boroughs of New York City (Weiner, 1996).

A more comprehensive project called “Second Chance” began in Toledo, Ohio in 1993 and ended in 1998. It operated out of an inner city community center that had been in the neighborhood for more than 100 years with well established roots in the community. A case manager worked intensively with street prostitutes wishing to leave prostitution. The program included a 12-step, drop-in prostitutes anonymous group, a sexuality group, one on one counseling, advocacy, goal setting, basic needs, and emergency money available for material necessities. This project was funded by the city and churches, and worked closely with the informal street network as well as the court system and women’s shelters.

Yet another approach can be found in Chicago at Genesis House. Here the women are housed in a residential facility where they participate in the same type of groups, including 12 step programs and sexuality groups. For those not involved in the residential program, groups and basic services are still available including food and clothing along with the use of the phone to contact worried family members or make appointments with providers. Both Second Chance and Genesis House emphasized a spiritual component, believing that
involvement in street prostitution and the problems associated (i.e., drug use, childhood sexual abuse, and violence) injure one's emotional, physical and spiritual health, which all require healing (Genesis House, 1992; Second Chance, 1998).

Prostitutes Anonymous (PA) groups operated at both Genesis House and Second Chance. Prostitutes Anonymous was formed in 1987 in Los Angeles by Renee LeBlanc, an ex-prostitute, and follows the traditional steps and principles of Alcoholics Anonymous. PA does not condemn the sex industry; it is the addictions associated with those caught up in a life that are destructive. Prostitution is a symptom of the deeper problem of addiction. Just as Alcoholics Anonymous makes the distinction between the alcoholic and alcohol, PA believes that prostitution is not a disease, it is the addiction to prostitution that is a disease. It becomes a disease when the person's life becomes unmanageable. Unmanageability is related to the obsession and compulsion rooted in addiction. According to Kasl (1989), what prostitutes become addicted to is the ritual of putting on make-up, getting dressed, going out on the hunt, capturing the prey; knowing that a woman can hit the streets and men would come running to pay money. It is an addictive power that has been described as an adrenaline rush similar to a high. To be asked to give up prostitution is to ask women to give up their power. In any other addiction the addict begins to lose money, but in prostitution the more addicted one becomes the more money one makes. Requirements for success in the program include regular attendance at meetings, personal testimony, recognition of recovery for those with considerable time spent out of the sex industry, a sponsor, phone therapy and a requirement to provide service to others (Bell, 1994).
Although each approach to assist victims of prostitution uses different modes of service delivery, all agree that work with street prostitutes requires a non-traditional, flexible approach, believing that street prostitutes are not easily served through traditional agency service delivery mechanisms. "The nature of prostitution is such that [these individuals] do not always present themselves as 'acceptable' clients for agencies" (Weiner, 1996 p. 103).

According to Weiner (1996), working with street prostitutes challenges social workers to operationalize their values of self-determination and acceptance. Of course, to proponents of the Free choice paradigm, operationalizing the value of self determination takes on a whole new meaning. To this group, self determination means advocating for the legalization of prostitution. The free-choice proponents supply us with a different construction of the prostitute.

FREE-CHOICE PARADIGM

Discourse

Choice is at all times linked to full personhood. Restricting a woman's choice, for any reason, reduces her status as a full and equal human being. Making choices for others always implies having control over them. Thus, the freedom to choose is an inalienable precondition of equality. By saving a woman from herself we restrict her choice, deny her equality, and minimize her status as a full human being (Jolin, 1994 p.77).

Some prostitutes are attempting to shift the rhetoric from prostitution as sinful and deviant to sex as work. The term "sex work" was first coined by performer and activist Carol Leigh (Alexander, 1987). Local groups banded together during the 1980s to form...
an international coalition of grass roots organizations called The International Committee for Prostitute Rights (ICPR). Two World Whores Summits were held in the 80s that connected Third World women with First World women. The key themes were, women sell their services, not their bodies, and it is a woman’s free choice to prostitute in as much as free choice can be achieved in a patriarchal, racist and sexist society (Bell, 1994).

In the U.S., COYOTE (Call off Your Old Tired Ethics) and PONY (Prostitutes of New York) are two vocal groups active in the struggle. Although membership is open to all, leadership remains in the hands of prostitutes. Prominent figures are Norma Jean Almodour, spokeswoman, and Margo St. James, president of COYOTE.

Free-choice proponents attempt to connect the struggle of prostitution rights with the struggle for women’s rights in general. They argue that the feminist struggle is about:

...obtaining independence, financial autonomy, personal strength, female bonding, and sexual self determination as in the right to have an abortion, the right to choose a same sex intimate relationship, [the right not to receive female circumcision], and the right to sell sexual services. In sum, the right over one’s own sexuality and the assumption of control over one’s own body... women should have the right to have sex for reproduction, recreation, or remuneration (Bell, 1994 p.106).

The struggle should focus on prostitution, since prostitution is where society inflicts the most oppression and control (Bell, 1994). According to this perspective, assessing the rights of those regularly deprived and most marginalized in our society is a measure of our future struggle.
Postmodernism

Free-choice proponents are postmodernists. In postmodernism, reality is subjective and is therefore rooted in the subjective experience of the individual or group in question. Truth is variable, complex and unique. Postmodernism accounts for the contradiction found in people’s lives (Harding, 1991).

The researcher’s stance is one of open interactivity with study participants. The notions of researcher bias or researcher’s values are acknowledged. It is an interpretive paradigm, one that is inductive and process oriented. Meaning making requires the use of qualitative methods. The overall goal with qualitative research is to understand. When contemplating epistemology, Harding (1991) asks a series of questions:

Who can be agents of socially legitimate knowledge? (Only men in dominant races or classes?). What kind of tests must beliefs pass in order to be legitimised as knowledge? (Only tests against the dominant group’s experiences and observations? Only tests against what men in the ruling groups tend to think of as reliable experience and observation?) What kinds of things can be known? Can “historical truths,” socially situated truths, count as knowledge? Should all such situated knowledge be regarded as equally plausible or valid? What is the nature of objectivity? Does it require a “point-of-viewlessness”?... What is the appropriate relationship between the researcher and her or his research subjects? Must the researcher be disinterested, dispassionate, and socially invisible to the subject? What should be the purposes of the pursuit of knowledge? Can there be “disinterested knowledge” in a society that is deeply stratified by gender, race, and class? (p. 109).

Prostitution rights groups do identify the existence of both negative and positive consequences regarding prostitution but recognize that post-positivist epistemological claims have viewed reality through the eyes of the dominant culture that has largely distorted perceptions of women. In addition, negative experiences may be attributed to an
oppressive society that helps to create negative consequences by lack of social acceptance and societal protection.

Free-choice activists respect the complexity and pluralism found in women’s lives. To these proponents, those who were objects of theory must now be participants of theory. Postmodernism rejects the idea of reduction to the singular, with the singular being concluded from the abstract view of man. The construction of the prostitute according to prostitutes’ rights groups is multiple, prostitute as healer, sexual surrogate, teacher, therapist, educator, and political activist (Bell, 1994). This paradigm rejects notions of Domination Theory, stating that this ideological orientation has shaped the interpretations of many researchers who refuse to believe that the words of sex workers are true (Wahab & Sloan, 1997 p. 7).

Thus a prostitute’s work can be seen as both empowering and dehumanizing. The assertion is made that not only does reality differ across women but may conflict and differ within one woman. Just as one’s job can be viewed at times as both empowering and dehumanizing, so it is the case with sex as work.

Policy and Practice

For proponents of the Free-choice paradigm, prosecution and zoning laws have done little good and a great deal of harm. Reports show that street prostitutes are disproportionately prosecuted over prostitutes in other areas of the industry (San Francisco Task Force, 1996). Furthermore, because street prostitutes are more likely to be poor, and women of color are arrested seven times as much as white women (Flowers, 1987),
arrest rates erroneously suggest that prostitution is a black and poor phenomenon (Wahab & Sloan, 1997).

While zoning laws appear to be an equitable response to the prostitution problem in communities, these laws only force women into congested and unprotected areas where they fall prey to victimization by pimps, extortionists and rapists. Because neighborhood residents do not want zones near them, zoning is pushed back into industrial areas that are dangerous and isolated. In addition, zoning does not remove the criminalized stigma and associated ramifications, nor does it protect basic human rights. For example, being labeled a criminal places woman at risk of losing custody of their children (San Francisco Task Force, 1996).

In San Francisco, a multi-disciplinary task force was formed to look at the issue of prostitution and legalization. Committees included those that researched the areas of health, safety and services, legal and fiscal impact, neighborhood issues, and general research including youth issues and immigrant issues. Each committee researched the history of patterns and practices in their particular area, the current social and legal responses, and conducted interviews with law enforcement, residents, prostitutes and activist groups. A summary of the recommendations given to city officials is presented below:

- Establish a review program to assure that sex trade venues comply with fair practices including health and safety codes according to OSHA; Provide sick leave, workers compensation and disability insurance according to the labor commission- and other labor and safety regulations. Monitor working conditions
as required by law.

- Performers should only be classified by management as independent contractors when the work performed fits into guidelines for independent contractors based on labor standards. Performers should be paid hourly wages, provided benefits and not charged stage fees and be forced to give up a percentage of their earnings to management.

- Ensure those who provide direct contact service and/or fantasy service the right to advertise and work from their premises.

- Change current policy and modify current contracts to provide access to a full range of health services including drug treatment programs by using previous enforcement dollars.

- Provide adequate resources for social services including battered women shelters, homeless shelters, youth shelters and rape crisis services by using enforcement dollars.

- Provide a wide range of social services including mobile outreach, drop in centers, transitional housing and programs for those who want to continue to work and those who wish to transition to other occupations, funded by previous enforcement dollars.

- Ensure that services available for adults will also be available for youth.

- Change parental custody regulations so that prostitutes would not be denied custody solely on the basis of sex worker status.
• Grant asylum or immunity to those who are brought into the U.S. for the purpose of prostitution and protect them from being prosecuted or deported. This requires the removal of prostitution related crimes from the Immigration and Naturalization Services list of moral turpitude offenses.

• The task force recommends that the city of San Francisco establish a staffed committee to implement task force recommendations and investigate arrest procedures, conditions of incarceration, suspected incidents of misconduct, and civil rights violations of prostitutes and suspected prostitutes. It further recommends the provision of a venue through which prostitutes can file grievances.

The final phase of this on-going mammoth project will be to research possible effects of the city’s economy and structure, as well as the well-being of neighborhoods, residents, and prostitutes as a result of social reforms. Thus far, no further significant action has taken place. However, prostitution advocates continue to rally, write, and politicize the idea of prostitution as work. The Prostitutes’ Education Network and Whoreact are two sites that provide on-going literature on this issue and are available on the Internet.¹

The controversy over prostitution is one that has been grounded in three dominant and diverse paradigms reflecting various philosophies on the issue. In light of the findings of this study, the implications for future policy and practice will be discussed in the next section.

The controversy over prostitution is one that has been grounded in three dominant and diverse paradigms reflecting various philosophies on the issue. In light of the findings of this study, the implications for future policy and practice will be discussed in the next section.

**IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE**

The significance and distinctions surrounding differing ideological positions that flow from these paradigms have implications for both policies and practices. Findings from this study on prostitute progression, therefore, will be filtered through the value lenses of the three already established paradigms discussed above.

Proponents for the criminalization of prostitution might be inclined to use these findings to justify not only stiffer, swifter sentences, but to advocate for intervening early before women become heavily involved in drugs and crime. Although stiffer, swifter sentences have been criticized as bearing little connection to crime prevention and deterrence (Webb, 1980), criminalization proponents may use this information to advocate for stronger penalties hoping to force women out of the prostitution business. More often than not, diversion programs for those arrested early in their prostitution career may be the path that criminalization proponents take. However, for those arrested later in their career, my findings suggest multiple criminal justice interventions, e.g., time in jail, probation, mandatory 12 step meetings, regular urine testing, when coupled with sanctions from child protection services and the individual’s desire to leave prostitution, did have an effect on women’s motivation to leave prostitution.
Decriminalization activists may use this information on prostitute stages to develop assessments and treatments that are congruent with specific stages. An assessment tool for health and social work professionals practicing in the field could potentially be developed that will enable workers to make appropriate assessments. Once the tools and capability to appropriately make assessments are complete, professionals will have the ability to make more appropriate referrals. This natural progression of knowledge building will illuminate gaps in services and precipitate the need to develop and expand existing services to accommodate new assessment information. Program developers and advocates will be needed to create prostitution specific programming in order to provide service to address particular needs according to assessments. Thus social workers would be filling the gaps between need and service, while serving social work’s mission of service to the poor, vulnerable, and oppressed.

To this I add the voice of social justice that one might find in a Free Choice argument. Free Choice proponents argue that legalization will decrease the amount of violence and risk suffered as a result of the lack of societal protections afforded other professions. To this group, it is a matter of oppression and distorted perceptions. While others view the stages through the lens of problems and issues, free-choice advocates see prostitution as work. Entrance may be viewed as a choice and social adjustment may be seen as the time to learn one’s role in a new, however dangerous profession. By regulating the profession and providing benefits and protections under the law, prostitution will become a safer enterprise. It is also expected that Social Immersion may be perceived as nothing more than commitment toward obtaining the capitalistic fruits of a dedication to one’s career,
much like that of any other dedicated professional who seeks the financial fruits of her labor. Free Choice proponents may view the “caught up” stage as a response to repeated violence, degradation, and stigma, all of which are caused by environmental conditions that with legalization would be minimized. The recourse prostitutes have would be the right to prosecute to the full extent of the law any customer who assaults them, much like any other hard-working citizen in the U.S.

It is clear that for several reasons, be it criminalization, decriminalization, or legalization of prostitution, when a group is marginalized and locked out of the mainstream economy, its members are forced to participate in an underground economy. Although the implications for policy and practice approaches differ according to paradigm, the goal remains the same, to enable street prostitutes to participate in mainstream society.

LIMITATIONS

The novelty and the complexity of a study on prostitution process from entrance to exit carries with it some limitations. Work such as this requires choices, sometimes difficult ones, regarding how much to cover and in what detail, and which factors are essential to an explanation of the basic social process of street prostitution. While I have chosen to emphasize socio-economic influences and cumulative burdens, I have chosen to exclude other topics such as the contribution of antecedent factors. This study does not take into account antecedent conditions prior to entrance. Such information would be helpful in determining the effects of previous burdens, types of protective strategies, and the level of problem solving and emotion focused responses prior to entrance. Another issue of concern is the presence or level of depression one may have had entering street work and
how that may or may not have contributed to eventual exit. The study also is limited with respect to one’s interpersonal appraisal of a particularly negative event. The appraisal process is subjective (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The interpretation of an event is known to vary among individuals and, while to these women repeated arrest appeared to be more representative of a hassle, to others the appraisal may be one of a series of acute traumas. In a related area, one’s individual level of resiliency may be a factor in the effectiveness of coping with particular burdens. These factors were not taken into consideration throughout this study, but would be helpful in explaining how and why some can live under extremely negative conditions for long periods of time, while others cannot. In sum, these questions may be viewed as largely “quantifiable” questions that allow for increased precision and refinement in analysis and seek to answer “how much” is present, i.e., “how much resiliency” or “how much depression existed prior to entrance” in mathematical measurement, and may best be understood using quantifiable methodologies and measurement approaches. My purpose in conducting this study was to delineate, in broad strokes, the presence of stages and to refute the implication that street life is a random, disorganized, and an unordered phenomenon devoid of a basic social process.

A limitation in the overall study of prostitution process is the relative inadequacy of information about the exit stage. Researchers studying aspects of prostitution exit suggest that women exit street sex work with the help of social service programs (National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, 1992; Weiner,1996). This notion is inherently biased, since we do not have knowledge or contact with those sex workers who have exited without the help of social services. Although all the women in the study did
not exit with the help of social services, this study lacks information on those women who exited through such avenues as marriage, long term prison sentences, or death.

Unfortunately, gaining knowledge of a person’s experience is limiting if a call to action does not occur. As in the case of social work’s lack of sufficient attention to this population, without further inquiry this research will perish and serve little real purpose beyond a dissertation requirement. The events I have discussed in this paper would therefore serve at best as interesting reading, at worst as a painstaking task of an overworked research committee. The importance of getting theory into action, then, is the concern of those practitioners involved in the peer review component of this grounded theory work. Peer reviewers are concerned with university scholars who are good at assessing, but do not follow through with plans or funding that may lead to any significant changes. While excited about the potential action that could come from this knowledge, practitioners are skeptical both about the profession’s accountability, commitment, and implementation of further steps with regard to this research and about identifying funders who would be concerned enough to sponsor efforts such as these.

SUMMARY

This paper delineates the progression of street prostitution using Grounded Theory Methodology. Prostitution here is viewed as a series of socio-economic influences and cumulative burdens. It is multidimensional in that the study integrates the perspective of street life from entrance to exit coupled with the influences of socio-economic structures.
The socio-economic structure of street prostitution includes the influences of the formal economy, including blocked opportunities, stigmatization of prostitution, and gender discrimination. The underground economy is capitalistic and mirrors the formal economy in that the goal is to produce and distribute goods and services in order to make a profit. Segregation from mainstream society and social isolation creates a “cut off” between mainstream influences such as jobs, health, resources, and role models” (Coulton & Chow, 1995 p.1874). Long term joblessness and social isolation creates a situation in which some participation in the underground economy is necessary (Wilson, 1996). In the underground economy, men are those higher up the food chain with the most power, prestige, and respect and they set the rules. In the prostitution industry, pimps traditionally determined the rules. They represent the root beginnings of inner city street prostitution.

The prostitution lifestyle is one that is socially and psychologically fast paced. The lifestyle includes prostitution work, entertainment, and socialization. The lifestyle shapes one’s identity, structures interpersonal relationships, and maintains the values, norms, and expectations for appropriate behavior. At each stage in prostitution life, women are influenced by these otherwise abstract socio-economic layers. On the basis of analysis and more immediate to daily living as a street prostitute is the central focus or dominating theme that consumes women’s energies while in the life. Connected to these themes of central focus are issues of emotional and physical burdens and the strategic responses to these burdens.
The central focus for entrance into prostitution was hope of financial gain. Women had to shed moral objections. Prostitution was viewed as a necessary response to poverty and family dysfunction. The Social Adjustment stage involved adapting to a new environment while engaging in intensive street learning. Women focused on the rewarding aspects of prostitution. Women reported experiencing daily hassles such as avoiding and preventing arrest and violence. At this stage, women believed they could control events related to prostitution activities and could avoid customer-related violence by practicing protective strategies. The social immersion stage brought women deeper into the lifestyle of street work which included both sex for money and social inclusion in street networks. Women developed an emotional attachment to the lifestyle of the streets and chose to assume the full persona of a seasoned street worker. Because of increased time spent in prostitution activities, women engaged a broader range of clients with diverse sexual interests. Increased time in prostitution led to increased risk of customer-related and pimp-related violence. This study found that by this stage respondents had experienced daily hassles and acute traumas including rape and/or assaults. Women were therefore forced to acknowledge the existence of some “chance” in their encounters with men. The futility of repeated attempts at using problem solving as a strategic response propelled women to focus on emotional strategies. The aftermath of a traumatic event often led one to use depression as a dominant response. By this stage women begin to shift from problem focused to emotion focused responses. The “caught up” stage finds women heavily involved in bouts of depression. To combat these, most women began using drugs as a strategic mechanism to ward off depression. The cure for depression then becomes
the source of chronic stress itself as women’s activities consist largely of drug taking or drug seeking. There is an acceptance of both skill and chance conditions. Women practice protective strategies, but these have little real meaning or substance to them. They are aware that customers may act in violent ways and they have few resources to prevent it, control it, or seek retribution for it. The accumulation of daily hassles, acute traumas, and chronic conditions overwhelm the psyche’s attempt to effectively deal with problems adequately enough and women sought to exit prostitution. A re-evaluation of one’s life prior to exit confirms one’s decision to leave. Coupled with various systems responses, physical deterioration of their body from years or months of neglect and abuse and/or the demise of significant relationships whether they be from conventional society or prostitution lifestyle, leads them to exit.

The legal-moral paradigm seeks to protect communities and neighborhoods from prostitution and the associated crime, violence, and drug influx associated with it. The prostitution debate within feminism represents a dichotomy of the “woman enslaved” perspective versus the “woman empowered” perspective. The sexual equality paradigm suggests that prostitution is victimization. The prostitute is selling degradation and the customer is buying power, the right to have power over another human being. In an attempt to sanitize prostitution, Free Choice proponents call for legalization of prostitution, arguing that women sell their services and that sex work is employment that should be subject to the same set of privileges and protection afforded any legitimate employment. It is poverty and lack of societal protection that demeans the prostitute, not prostitution itself (Leigh, 1996).
Whether a Renegade who desires to be a successful entrepreneur, a Conventionally Controlled prostitute who is promised the good life, or an Outlaw concerned with survival, this is a story of disappointment, a story of unfulfilled dreams. The prostitute has been subjected to prison, public “shaming,” and “ghettoization” from society (N.J. Davis, 1993) and rape, robbery, and murder by the lack of society’s protection. The primary role of social work is work with the poor, vulnerable, and oppressed. Social work’s involvement in issues of prostitution is needed. Ignorance regarding prostitution issues, punitive interactions with prostitutes, and individual casework efforts in lieu of social justice advocacy stifle meaningful involvement with this population. By understanding the progression of street prostitution from entrance to exit, we will be better equipped to appropriately respond with health, social services, and policy recommendations.

Applying this new theoretical approach to intervention means that prostitution must be viewed from both a person and environment perspective. Problems associated with prostitution, namely cumulative burdens, must be viewed as a product of both person and environment and not based solely on deficiencies in the individual or individual pathology alone.

From an economic perspective, it appears that prostitution is a fruitful endeavor. But prostitution life isn’t purely economic; life in general involves being in relationship with others. The money earned in prostitution is substantial, despite obvious risks. The money is immediate and ample. However, as this study reveals, when a woman sells her body for money, she may have a difficult time maintaining both her most cherished relationships and her own emotional well-being. In hindsight, the price paid for destroyed relationships with
loved ones and deteriorated emotional health is too great a price to pay, and, in these
women’s opinion, a price that not even they could afford.
References


Frohman, L.G. (1992). *Screening sexual assault cases: Prosecutorial decisions to file or reject rape complaints.* unpublished doctoral dissertation, Los Angeles,
CA: University of California.


http://www.webgrrls.com/eva/feminism.html [access date: May 3, 1998]


Second Chance (1998). Friendly Center, Inc (Available from Friendly Center, Inc. 1324 N. Superior St. Toledo, Ohio 43608)


Appendix A

Study No:
9810-04-B

IUPUI INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT FOR STUDY ON THE
PROGRESSION OF STREET PROSTITUTION

for

Project
Title: Progression of Street Prostitution

You are invited to join in a research study, entitled the Progression of Street Prostitution. In this study we hope to get a better understanding of how women enter prostitution, how they maintain themselves in the lifestyle, and how and why they exit prostitution. If you agree to be in the study, you will be one of about 20 women in Toledo and Chicago helping in this research.

Being in the study means spending some time talking about your life including your childhood, the time you spent in prostitution, and your life after prostitution. If you decide not to join the study, that is OK. Not joining will not affect any services you now receive or want to receive.

With your permission, the interview will be audio tape recorded and transcribed at a later date. This is so the researcher will be able to remember what was said. You may, however, choose not to be tape recorded. With your permission, the researcher will take notes.

Before deciding to be in the study, you will need to think about the risks and benefits. Sometimes talking about past experiences can be upsetting. Many questions are personal and you may refuse to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable. We have arranged for a social worker to offer counseling, free of charge, to you if you so decide.

With this information, health and social service professionals may be able to understand and make better assessments of women in street prostitution. We may then be able to provide better services to women at risk of becoming involved in prostitution, to women involved, and to women wanting to exit or who have already exited. Benefits to you include knowing that by your participation, you may be helping other women involved or who may become involved in prostitution in the future. Also if desired, you may get a referral to the Second Chance program in Toledo or Genesis House in Chicago. It should be stressed however, that if you are already involved in one of the programs stated above, your participation in the study or your refusal to participate will not affect the level of social services you now receive. In turn, if you are not involved in any of the programs

Participants Initials ___
stated above, your refusal to participate in the study will still afford you a referral for services, if desired.

Before the interview, you were given a copy of the interview guide that listed all the possible categories to which you may be asked to talk about. The entire interview will last no more than two hours. You may however, be asked to be involved in a second interview. A second "one on one" interview will last no more than one hour and is used as a follow up interview to the first interview.

To protect your privacy, all information you talk about in the interview will be kept confidential. Your name will not be used in any report, publication, or voluntarily given to law enforcement or criminal justice agencies. You should know that the researcher must report any activity that you tell her that may be dangerous to you or others. The researcher must also report any information regarding suspected or actual child abuse that the researcher sees or hears you report. This includes any information on past or present abuse. You should also know that even though this information is confidential, any document including this study information, could be subjected to subpoena. You may take the time now to consider if there is anything in your past that you may discuss that would be subject to subpoena. You may decide now to end your conversation with the researcher.

The research will be conducted by Indiana University doctoral candidate, Celia Williamson. Specific interviews will not be released to any participating agency, although overall study findings will be shared. All research information will be kept in secure files in Michigan.

You may call at anytime to request information or ask questions about the study and its procedures. General results of this study will also be made available to you. You may get them by calling Celia Williamson at Western Michigan University's School of Social Work (Kalamazoo, Michigan). The phone number is 616-387-3189.

If you are unable to call long distance, you may contact Gayle McCoy at Genesis House in Chicago at (773) 281-3917 or David Morris at Second Chance in Toledo at (419) 243-1289 and they will either get you the information, answer your questions, or connect you to the researcher.

I have thought about the information given to me on this consent form. I know that I may drop out of the study any time and that leaving the study will not change any services I am getting now or want to get now or in the future. I agree to be in the research study.

Signature of Participant ____________________________ Date ________

Signature of Witness ____________________________ Date ________
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Prostitution</th>
<th>Abuse</th>
<th>Violence</th>
<th>Prostitution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When did you first find out?</td>
<td>Who?</td>
<td>What?</td>
<td>Where?</td>
<td>When?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What did you learn about?</td>
<td>How did you learn about it?</td>
<td>What did you learn about it?</td>
<td>Where did you learn about it?</td>
<td>How did you learn about it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did you feel about it?</td>
<td>Who?</td>
<td>How did you feel about it?</td>
<td>Where did you feel about it?</td>
<td>How did you feel about it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe your experience.</td>
<td>Who?</td>
<td>Describe your experience.</td>
<td>Where did you experience it?</td>
<td>How did you experience it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What did you learn about it?</td>
<td>How did you learn about it?</td>
<td>What did you learn about it?</td>
<td>Where did you learn about it?</td>
<td>How did you learn about it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did you feel about it?</td>
<td>Who?</td>
<td>How did you feel about it?</td>
<td>Where did you feel about it?</td>
<td>How did you feel about it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe your experience.</td>
<td>Who?</td>
<td>Describe your experience.</td>
<td>Where did you experience it?</td>
<td>How did you experience it?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Explain your experience.**

**Describe any experiences with violence.**

**List any experiences with prostitution.**

**Prostitution or prostitution-related.**

**Interview on.**

**Appendix.**

Street Prostitution 200
### PROGRESSION OF STREET PROSTITUTION OUTLINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Central Focus</th>
<th>Well-Being</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Entrance</strong></td>
<td><strong>Enticed by prospects of financial gain</strong></td>
<td><strong>Problem-focused strategies</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Shed moral objections</strong></td>
<td><strong>Prostitution activities initiated</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>to alleviate the stressors</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>associated with poverty, structural barriers, and family dysfunction</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Adjustment</strong></td>
<td><strong>Adapting to new environment</strong></td>
<td><strong>Problem focused strategies</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Modification of one's behavior to accommodate personal &amp; social needs</strong></td>
<td><strong>(learning and using protective strategies)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Intense street learning focusing on the code of conduct including</strong></td>
<td><strong>Belief in their ability to control events related to prostitution</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>protective strategies &amp; introduction to the lifestyle of prostitution</strong></td>
<td><strong>activities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Focus on rewarding aspects of prostitution</strong></td>
<td><strong>Presence of daily hassles</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Immersion</strong></td>
<td><strong>Assumes full persona of street prostitute</strong></td>
<td><strong>Presence of daily hassles &amp; acute traumas</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>(seasoned street worker who is committed to street life)</em></td>
<td><strong>Emotion-focused responses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Immersed into the lifestyle</strong></td>
<td><em>(denial, dissociation, depression)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Emotional attachment to the lifestyle</strong></td>
<td><strong>Acknowledgment of skill &amp; chance conditions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>(addicted to lifestyle)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Movement from conventional society into prostitution lifestyle</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Increased drug use for functional purposes- to fight depression</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Broader range of client encounters</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Caught Up</strong></td>
<td><strong>Chronic depression</strong></td>
<td><strong>Daily hassles, acute traumas, and chronic conditions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Feelings of shame</strong></td>
<td><em>(namely, depression and drug addiction)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Drug abuse- reaction to depression</strong></td>
<td><strong>Acceptance of skill &amp; chance conditions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Drug taking &amp; drug seeking activities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Emotion-focused responses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluation &amp; Exit</strong></td>
<td><strong>Re-evaluation of life (prospective, retrospective, and current)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Accumulation of stressors</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Restrictive factors (pressures from law enforcement &amp; child protective</strong></td>
<td><em>(daily hassles, acute traumas, chronic conditions) exceed the persons ability to meet the demand and they exit prostitution</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*<em>services)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Physical deterioration</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Relational factors- threatened end or demise of a valued relationship</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix D

Grounded Theory Model of the Socio-Economic Structure of Street Prostitution: Multiple Layers of Influence

Socio-Economic Factors of the Formal Economy
- Blocked Opportunities
- Stigmatization
- Denial of prostitution as legitimate work

Socio-Economic Factors of the Underground Economy
- Segregation from Mainstream America & Social Isolation creates & sustains underground economy
- Mirrors the formal economy in that the goal is to produce & distribute goods & services for profit
- Prostitution is but one industry within the illegal underground economy

The Pimping Game
- Represents the Roots of Inner City Prostitution
- Men with the most power, prestige, and respect in the industry of prostitution

Prostitution Lifestyle
- Shapes identity, structures interpersonal relationships, and establishes the values and norms for behavior
- Socially & Psychologically fast-paced and addicting

Street Prostitution
- Entrance
- Social Adjustment
- Social Immersion
- Caught Up
- Evaluation/Exit
Progression of Street Prostitution

Entrance
- Enlisted by
  Prospects of financial gain
- Shed Moral Objections

Social Adjustment
- Adapt to new environment
  - Intense Street Learning
  - Focus on Rewarding Aspects
  - Daily hassles occur

Social Immersion
- Commitment to street life/Immersed in the Lifestyle
  - Emotional attachment to the lifestyle
  - Broader range of customer encounters
  - Increased drug use for functional purposes
  - Daily hassles & Acute Traumas occur
  - Acknowledgement of skill & chance

Caught Up
- Chronic Depression
  - Feelings of Shame
  - Drug Abuse
  - Consumed by drug taking & drug seeking activities
  - Acceptance of skill & chance

Evaluation/Exit
- Accumulation of stressors exceed person's ability to cope
  - Re-evaluation of life
  - Structural Pressures
  - Physical deterioration
  - Relational Factors

I. IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

Office Address: Western Michigan University
School of Social Work

Office Phone: (616) 387-3189

Home Address: 6384 Independence Drive
Portage, MI 49024

Home Phone: (616) 329-2836

Email: celia.williamson@wmich.edu

II. EDUCATION

AAS University of Toledo, Scott Park 1979-1982 Social Services
BSW University of Toledo, Main Campus 1984-1988 Social Work
MSSA Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland 1991-1993 Social Work
Ph.D. Indiana University 1995-present Social Work

III. PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS

A. ACADEMIC

1998-present Instructor — Western Michigan University, School of Social Work, Kalamazoo, MI

1997 Instructor — Indiana University School of Social Work, Indianapolis, IN; Course: Human Behavior & the Social Environment

Guest Lecturer — “African American Culture” for Women & Health Course, School of Nursing, 1997

Guest Lecturer — “Researching Street Sex Workers,” for Riley Adolescent Medicine Team, 1997

Guest Lecturer — “Paradigms & Surviving the Doctoral Program” for Philosophy of Science Course, School of Social Work, 1997
III. PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS — Cont'd

A. ACADEMIC — Cont'd

1996-1998
Interdisciplinary Adolescent Medicine Team Fellow, Riley Children's Hospital, Indianapolis, IN

- Journal Club, Weekly Critique of Adolescent Research Literature
- Interdisciplinary Case Study, Diagnosis of Treatment of Adolescents
- Interdisciplinary Outcomes Assessment
- Research Mentoring

1995-1998
Team Facilitator, Social Work Field Unit, Arsenal Tech High School, Indianapolis, IN

- Developed Model of Collaboration between School of Social Work and Urban High School
- Presented Monthly Educational Seminars
- Facilitated Weekly Debriefing with Social Work Interns
- Directed Monthly Team Building Sessions with Social Work Staff
- Advocated for Structural Changes

1994
Instructor — University of Toledo School of Social Work, Toledo, OH; Course: Introduction to Social Work

B. PRACTICE

1994-1995
Director, Family Resource Center
Friendly Center, Inc, 1324 N. Superior Street, Toledo, OH
(419) 243-1289

- Program, Planning, and Coordination of the Department of Family Services
- Supervision of professional in-house staff, outreach workers and visiting on-site staff from 7 area agencies
- Responsible for ongoing team building, collaboration, and strength-based training and procedures
- Conducted staffings, evaluations, marketing, and strategic planning
- Provided direct counseling supervision to social workers and outreach staff on how to work effectively with and advocate for low-income African American and Appalachian clients
III. PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS — Cont’d

B. PRACTICE — Cont’d

1989-1994

Director Family Services
Friendly Center, Inc., 1324 N. Superior Street, Toledo, OH
(419) 243-1289

- Program Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
- Responsible for small professional staff and volunteers
- Coordinated and supervised all basic needs programs for low income families, Information and Referral, Advocacy, and Informal Education Programs
- Developed departmental goals, objectives, and measurements
- Developed Second Chance Program for street prostitutes and facilitated the Prostitutes Anonymous Program; Responsible for the supervision of staff and contract workers for the program
- Coordinated various ongoing groups including the Parent’s support group, Young Mom’s group, Senior Nutrition Program, Adult Moms group, Foster Grandparent Program, and adult recreation
- Led a political campaign to protest City Council’s vote against the funding of prevention based recreation programs
- Led campaign to boycott a local grocery store for poor service to low income families in the area
- Worked in a team to challenge the Department of Human Services for indiscriminately penalizing low-income women who wanted to attend college resulting in the department’s efforts to rewrite and retrain front-line workers on appropriate procedures

1988-1989

Adolescent Services
Friendly Center, Inc., 1324 N. Superior Street, Toledo, OH
(419) 243-1289

- Worked in high crime, low-income neighborhood facilitating groups of preteen and teen girls for three years working on issues of sexuality, socialization, relationships, and future vision
- Supervised teen summer youth workers who were hired to work as camp aides in our summer day camp program
- Conducted home visits to the homes of teens to work on communication and rules via family contracts
- Worked closely with area schools, facilitating groups in classrooms, connecting students to tutoring programs, and accepting referrals from teachers on students who were exhibiting problem behaviors
IV. PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

A. RESEARCH

Phenomenology; Code of Conduct: Violence Through the Eyes of Two Inner City Adolescents, 1997-1998.
Qualitative study which involved uncovering the essential experience of two adolescents that have experienced violence as a perpetrator, witness, and victim.

Qualitative study on a court ordered initiative to reunify 75 families in Marion County and the effects on reunifying families with children previously placed in institutional settings for extended periods of time.

Qualitative Content Analysis; Violence, Risk, and Protective Strategies of Street Prostitutes, 1995-97.
Qualitative study of street prostitutes. This study was concerned with the violence found in the culture of street work, the risks in which workers were exposed, and the protective strategies women used to reduce risk.

B. SCHOLARLY PRESENTATIONS

“Street Prostitutes,” Indiana University Ph.D. Program Research Symposium, Indianapolis, IN, June 1997.


V. CONSULTATION/TRAINING


VI. PUBLICATIONS


VII. VIDEO AND MAGAZINE INTERVIEWS


In-depth interview on the Family Resource Center as a successful model for the collaboration of agencies to improve Ohio families. This video was shown to Governors across America during an annual Governors Association Meeting, 1995.


VIII. SERVICE

A. INVITED PRESENTATIONS, 1994-1998

Small Audiences, 7-200 in attendance
Center for Change — Strength Based Perspective and Collaboration
Sylvania United Methodist Women — Women on Assistance
Rossford United Methodist — Determination over Genius
Aldersgate United Methodist — Hope and Inspiration
Broadway United Methodist — Ask, Seek, Knock
Point Place United Methodist — Building a Bridge
Aldersgate United Methodist — Working through the Barriers
Fostoria United Methodist — Loving Anyway
Aldersgate United Methodist — Choosing the Unknown
First United Methodist — Now and Then
IUPUI and CSWE — Collaboration between Tech High and IU
VIII. SERVICE — Cont’d

A. INVITED PRESENTATIONS, 1994-1998 — Cont’d

- Friendly Center Alumni Association — Working Toward a Dream
- Survival Skills for Women — How to Overcome Barriers
- Survival Skills for Women — Determination over Genius
- Survival Skills for Women — The Persecution and The Resurrection
- Field Instruction Orientation — If I knew then what I know now
- Field Instruction Panel — Collaboration Between Interns & School Social Workers

*Large Audiences, 750-5000*
- West Ohio Conference in Columbus, OH — Determination over Genius
- West Ohio Conference, Lakeside, OH — Working through the Barriers
- General Conference on Ministries World Conference — Determination over Genius

B. POLITICAL APPOINTMENTS

Appointed by Mayor, City of Toledo, to serve on the General Board of Directors, North River Development Corporation, 1993.

C. COMMUNITY AFFILIATIONS

- NTN North Toledo Network
- WON Women’s Opportunity Network
- LCFCF Lucas County Families and Children First Council

IX. GRANT AWARDS

City of Toledo, $16,000.00

United Methodist Women, $8,000.00
- Researching the needs of street prostitutes, 1993.

Educational Enhancement Grant, Graduate Student Organization, $225.00
- Travel expenses to present at a conference

X. HONORS AND AWARDS

- Council on Social Work Education Graduate Fellow, 1995-96
- James C. Riley Childrens Hospital, Adolescent Medicine Fellow, 1996-present
- Friendly Center Alumni, Scholarship, 1996
X. HONORS AND AWARDS — Cont’d

- Institute for the Advancement of Social Work Research, Competitive
- Scholarship to receive technical training and individual assistance on how to secure
  NIMH grants, Washington, DC, 1997

XI. PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS/LICENSURE

- CSWE, Council on Social Work Education
- NASW, National Association of Social Workers
- LSW, Licensed State of Ohio, 1989
- Black Graduate & Professional Students Association, Steering Committee Member