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Commercial sex workers: Lives and practices

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COMMERCIAL SEX WORKERS:
LIVES AND PRACTICES

by

Sarah Jessica Knowles

Bachelor of Science
University of Georgia
2007

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the

**Master of Science in Marriage and Family Therapy
Department of Marriage and Family Therapy
Greenspun College of Urban Affairs**

**Graduate College
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December 2010**

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THE GRADUATE COLLEGE

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Sarah Jessica Knowles

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December 2010

ABSTRACT

**Commercial Sex Workers:
Lives and Practices**

by

Sarah Jessica Knowles

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Associate Professor of Marriage and Family Therapy
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Commercial sex workers epitomize a population who is both stigmatized and underrepresented in marriage and family therapy research. Through this research I hope to gain understanding about the gains of being a commercial sex worker, which many people may overlook due to their moral opposition to the occupation. I will also be exploring some of the challenges that commercial sex workers face that are unique to their line of work, especially in regards to their relationships, as many aspects of this may have been generalized or disregarded. Finally, I plan to address any implications for therapists who work with commercial sex workers, to help therapists understand barriers which may exist, or special considerations for the commercial sex worker population.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

“The oldest profession in the world” is a common quotation used to describe commercial sex work. Throughout history there has been stigma and scandal surrounding the exchange of sex for material things.

Currently, commercial sex work is illegal in every state except Nevada, yet the Kinsey Institute estimates 15.3% of men have solicited sex in their lifetime (2010). Because the majority of commercial sex work is illegal, it is considered high risk sexual behavior, with one notable risk being the spread of infectious diseases. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, rates of sexually transmitted diseases such as syphilis, gonorrhea, and HIV have increased in the past 10 years, with high risk sexual behavior as a major cause of transmittal (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2009).

A study by Alexander found that an average prostitution arrest was comprised of 70% female prostitutes, 20% male prostitutes, and 10% customers (1987). This suggests that law enforcement is eradicating commercial sex work by focusing arrests more on the men and women soliciting sex, than the customers purchasing sex. There are programs throughout the country to assist commercial sex workers who have been arrested for solicitation, such as Las Vegas, Nevada’s Women in Need (WIN) program, which is a program that addresses the addiction and

homelessness aspects of commercial sex work. These programs work with individual commercial sex workers in the context of their sex work and their recovery (Paul, 2008).

This information suggests that despite the taboo or stigmatized nature of commercial sex work, it is a relevant topic in our society. While the efforts discussed above focus solely on the commercial sex worker as an individual, gained knowledge about the relational lives of commercial sex workers can provide important information regarding common relational themes and circumstances. This understanding of these relational patterns may assist law enforcement, help with harm reduction program designs, and reduce the spread of disease. This knowledge may provide important insight to the lives of men and women in the commercial sex industry, helping professionals become better equipped to work with this population and their unique circumstances.

The purpose of this research was to gain understanding about the relational gains of being a commercial sex worker, which may be overlooked due to societal moral opposition to the occupation. Some of the challenges that commercial sex workers may face that are unique to their line of work are also explored, especially in regards to their relationships, as many aspects of their extra occupational relational lives may have been generalized. Commercial sex workers may not have adequate support networks, depending on which people are present in

their support systems, and how much information regarding the commercial sex work they are able to disclose.

The purpose of this study is threefold: a) to examine the levels of intimacy in commercial sex workers' extra occupational relationships, b) to explore the level of sexual satisfaction commercial sex workers experience with their significant other outside of their occupation, and c) to determine the level of support commercial sex workers receive.

Significance of the problem

The problem that I address in my thesis is the lack of information regarding commercial sex work and the impact that it has on the extra occupational relationships of the people in that industry. The significance of this topic is that without research which speaks to the systemic aspects of the relationships of commercial sex workers, Marriage and family therapists may not be as effective as they could be at working with this population. I am not suggesting that occupational status and outcomes must be researched to work with couples and families in all professions, but within commercial sex work, there are many unique and relevant impacts for commercial sex workers and their partners and families.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definitions and Variations of Commercial Sex Work

Commercial sex workers are persons who exchange sexual activities for material possessions, which may take on a variety of forms (Casas, 2009). These may include, but are not limited to persons performing sexual acts for money, persons selling a visual or audio production of themselves in a sexual manner, or persons working a live event or show in a sexual nature.

Commercial sex workers performing sexual acts for money include prostitutes, call girls, escorts, and dominatrices. Prostitutes are also commonly known as streetwalkers, and are considered to be the lowest rung of sex workers by the other members of the industry. These men and women are literally on the street propositioning potential customers, “dates,” or “johns.” Because of the work on the street, the lack of screening of customers, and the variability of location of the sexual act, streetwalking prostitutes face the most danger of this group (Ngo, Ratliff, McCurdy, Ross, Markham, & Pham, 2007). Call girls and escorts provide sexual services to a regular client base in another business, such as a massage parlor, hotel, or dance club. These men and women generally work with clients who have been screened and perform acts on site, which increases safety (Ngo, Ratliff, McCurdy, Ross, Markham, & Pham, 2007). Dominatrices provide specialized sexual acts to men and women

within the Bondage Domination Sado Masochism (BDSM) community. They may fall into any of the above categories.

Commercial sex workers selling audio or visual representations of themselves include pornography actors and actresses as well as erotic models. Many of the companies producing these films have regulations for their employees, ensuring they are of legal age to consent to sex and mandating STI tests (Brawn & Roe-Sepowitz, 2008). This may also include phone sex workers and persons operating web cams to sell live feed of themselves engaged in sexual acts over the Internet. This form of Internet pornography creates a unique setting for the sexual experience, as both participants have a high level of anonymity and accessibility (Hertlein & Piercy, 2005).

Commercial sex workers working a live sexual event or show is the group which includes individuals who may work at one or more pre-determined locations providing sexual entertainment for an audience in the same location. This group of commercial sex workers includes strippers or exotic dancers, burlesque show performers, and peep show actors and actresses (Brawn & Roe-Sepowitz, 2008). Although there is perceived distance for these commercial sex workers from the people consuming their services, it does not mean that these positions are completely safe. Many of these women and men suffer harassment from their agents and management, have frequent stalkers, and are violated by unruly or intoxicated patrons (Brawn & Roe-Sepowitz, 2008).

Mental Health Conditions of Commercial Sex Workers

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Diagnoses

Commercial sex workers often have endured extreme trauma in their lives before, during, and after their work in the sex industry and frequently show signs of depression, anxiety, and post traumatic stress disorder (Shoham, et al., 1983). The symptoms of these diagnoses may have specific implications to commercial sex workers. For example, according to the *DSM-IV-TR* (American Psychiatric Association, 2000), insomnia or hypersomnia, feelings of worthlessness or excessive inappropriate guilt, diminished ability to think or concentrate, and recurrent thoughts of death and suicidal ideation are all symptoms of depression (Shoham, et al., 1983). While these symptoms could be dangerous for any individual, they may pose a significant threat to the welfare of a commercial sex worker who often has to make critical decisions to keep him or herself safe while they are working (Shoham, et al., 1983). A person diagnosed with a generalized anxiety disorder has extreme anxiety that often gets generalized into several facets of their being and can make life in general seem frightening or overwhelming (Shoham, et al., 1983). The anxiety that commercial sex workers may experience due to the danger and stress in their profession may transfer into other important areas of their lives and prove hazardous to their ability to function (Shoham, et al., 1983). Post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) occurs when the trauma of an event prevents a person from

returning to their normal level or functioning after a catastrophe (Shoham, et al., 1983). Often nightmares, flashbacks, hypervigilance, fearfulness, numbness, and an inability to connect to others are symptoms experienced by people with PTSD. Many commercial sex workers, especially prostitutes, are assaulted while working (Shoham, et al., 1983). Commercial sex workers may be less inclined to report assault and consequently there is an increased probability that they may not receive care or counseling after the trauma and, because of the dangers, could be retraumatized by returning to work (Dalla, 2001). These disorders, coupled with a lack of resources (real or perceived), and frequent substance abuse offer minimal opportunities for these men and women to receive psychiatric evaluations, counseling, or therapy (Dalla, 2001).

These diagnoses also have a direct impact on the people who surround the diagnosed commercial sex worker. A depressed commercial sex worker who is also a mother may become disinterested in her children, and choose to stop caring for them appropriately. A commercial sex worker who is riddled by an anxiety disorder may struggle to connect to his or her partner because the worry they feel is so intense and overwhelming. For a commercial sex worker suffering from PTSD, the danger for themselves as well as their customers may increase, as a flashback or inappropriate perception of danger could trigger violence.

Dissociation

In Cooper, Kennedy, and Yuille's study of prostitutes in British Columbia, they were unable to find evidence that prostitutes dissociate as a means to endure their occupations (2001). It was postulated that some of the women had endured such abuse that the trauma they encountered as they worked as commercial sex workers did not seem significant to them, as many did not know life without abuse (Cooper, Yuille, & Kennedy, 2002). Contrary to the findings above regarding commercial sex workers in North America; Kuntay's study of commercial sex workers in Istanbul, Turkey had a high rate of self mutilation (2003). When the participants were asked about the self mutilating behavior, they described dissociative processes in which it occurred (Kuntay, 2003).

Substance Abuse

All of the articles consulted for this literature review acknowledged what a significant role substance abuse played in the lives of the majority of sex workers. Many of the sex workers were runaways who had been turned on to drugs by pimps or other sex workers (Kennedy, Klein, Bristowe, Cooper, & Yuille, 2007). Others began working as an economic means to acquire drugs for themselves or their significant others (Dalla, 2001). Also, many commercial sex workers may utilize illegal substances as a means to cope with common mental illnesses experienced in the field, or as a manner to dissociate from the experiences as they work (Dalla, 2001).

Commercial Sex Workers and Their Families

There was huge variability among the responses of the prostitutes in the studies used in this literature review. Very few of the commercial sex workers reported positive interactions with their families, while an equal number reported distant relationships and abusive relationships.

Distant Relationships

Many of the workers in Dalla's study reported distance from their families of origin, particularly their mothers as their most significant family experience (2001). This included abandonment, severe substance dependence, mothers giving children to another family member, or mother choosing boyfriend or step father over their children. These commercial sex workers discussed difficulty feeling connected to anyone or anything, which, several of them suggested, made their jobs easier (Dalla, 2001).

Abusive Relationships

The participants in studies in this literature review who discussed abusive relationships described them in a variety of forms. The commercial sex workers were often emotionally, physically, and sexually abused. The abusers ranged from their parents, to their siblings, to step or foster parents. Shoham et al.'s study of commercial sex workers was unique in that it compared the various forms of abuse between commercial sex workers and a control group that was specifically selected to have very similar demographics (1983). When these two

groups were compared, the amount of emotional and physical abuse did not differ, but the commercial sex worker participants experienced much higher levels of sexual abuse (Shoham, et al., 1983).

Relationships with Fathers

Another common thread in the lives of many of the commercial sex workers was the poor relationship or lack thereof with the commercial sex workers' fathers (Dalla, 2001). This varied greatly between cultures. In North America, some of the fathers pimped their own daughters out, or attempted to traffic them as a means to financial gain (Kennedy, Klein, Bristowe, Cooper, & Yuille, 2007). In Turkey, the fathers often reacted violently and homicidally at the news that their daughter was no longer a virgin, and would not accept her back into the family after finding out (Kuntay, 2003).

Parenting as a Commercial Sex Worker

A commercial sex worker's life provides some unique challenges to parenting. Commercial sex workers often put their children at risk, either by neglecting them while they leave the house to work, or endangering them, by bringing johns back to their homes (Dalla, 2001). Many of the commercial sex workers stated in their interviews that they did not wish for their children's lives to be the way that they were, but that there are no feasible alternatives for them, which speaks to the perceptions that this population has about the lack of resources available to them (Dalla, 2001).

As parents, drug use compounds these problems, and often results in these children being taken away by the government. In Dalla's study, many of the women reported utilizing drugs and alcohol while pregnant, and being unaware of the consequences (2001). Several of the women in Ngo, Ratliff, McCurdy, Ross, Markham, and Pham's study reported little to no understanding about contraceptives, which resulted for them in unwanted children as well as many abortions (sometimes several within one year) (2007).

Commercial Sex Workers' Support Systems

Dalla provides one of the only studies on commercial sex workers and their support systems (2001). The findings in it revealed that many of the commercial sex workers were currently involved in relationships, but very few of them were safe or happy (Dalla, 2001). The key component in most of these relationships was that the commercial sex worker had had a child with either a pimp or a john, who had then become her partner. The relationships with pimps were often very physically violent, with the men frequently beating the wives as well as having multiple relationships with the other commercial sex workers in his "stable" (Dalla, 2001). The relationships with Johns were often equally abusive, and the women reported receiving no respect because of their occupation, even though their partner was a solicitor at one time (Dalla, 2001).

Commercial sex workers report a competitive nature as a significant component to any of the camaraderous relationships they have while working (Ngo, Ratliff, McCurdy, Ross, Markham, & Pham, 2007). They are in competition for the same customers both on the street and in clubs, vying for roles in movies or creating the most popular website (Ngo, et al, 2007). While they may be able to commiserate about some of the superficial aspects of their lives, when it comes to sharing about safety or disease, the commercial sex workers may not feel comfortable sharing as the other workers may scare off potential customers if they know personal information (Ngo, Ratliff, McCurdy, Ross, Markham, & Pham, 2007).

Farley (2007) highlights the role isolation plays in the human trafficking aspect of commercial sex work and explains how isolating commercial sex workers prevents them from gaining power or autonomy. Farley (2007) describes a pattern common with pimps, where they switch geographical locations frequently to prevent women from becoming acclimated to their surroundings or becoming familiar with potential resources. This inconsistent lifestyle, coupled with the competitive environment commercial sex workers already often experience creates circumstances that break down relationships, instead of fostering support.

A Systemic Perspective

The research on prostitutes and the relationships they are in has not been comprehensive or systemic. While many of the studies look into issues from families of origin, there is little sense of circular causality explaining how the pattern perpetuates itself. There are strong homeostatic patterns which exist and keep the commercial sex workers from breaking out of the dangerous, abusive, degrading lifestyles they live in, which will be very hard to break down as they have often been embedded for many generations. The ecosystemic embeddedness of these problems coupled with the barriers to therapy and the judgment and fear stigmatized by the commercial sex workers often prevents the healing process from ever being started. Future research could benefit this population by looking further into the barriers to resources in the mental and general health aspects of commercial sex workers' lives. With these resources, commercial sex workers' mental health may improve, causing abuse to decline and diseases to be more controlled, thus benefiting communities as a whole.

Postmodernism

Postmodern thought greatly impacted Systems Theory as well as Marriage and family therapy as a profession. The principles behind postmodern theory were major guiding factors in the formation of the research hypotheses, the experiment itself, and the interpretation of the data collected. As Paula Boston states "Postmodernism is a term that is

omnipresent in the media, academic circles, and contemporary culture.” It is a theory present in visual art, literature, and science, which has translated it into therapeutic theory. One of the unifying features of systemic therapy is the concept of ecosystemic embeddedness and the understanding of context and interconnectedness within societies. Social constructivism was the stepping stone from traditional therapy methods to postmodern family therapy, as it explained reality as an evolving experience, created through language, interactions, and relationships (Boston, 2000).

Postmodern theory focuses on a few important principles. The therapist is a collaborator, not the expert in the room (Boston, 2000). This fits the context of this project, as the primary researcher is not an expert on commercial sex workers, and relies on the participants to impart knowledge and share their experiences. Language is considered the system instead of interactional patterns, which is also relevant to commercial sex workers and fitting to this project (Boston, 2000). As commercial sex workers describe their lives and relationships using their language, the therapist can derive meaning from the narratives the participants provide. These narratives can be interpreted from the quantitative answers the participants provide, as well as the text boxes, in which they use their own words to write to the researchers. Just as postmodern therapists often use reflecting teams in their clinical work, the primary researcher has consulted with the other researchers on the

project regarding the data to co-construct additional and alternative meanings and interpretations (Boston, 2000).

Feminism

Rachel Hare-Mustin is credited with much of the dissemination of feminist theory to Marriage and Family Therapy with her 1978 article “A Feminist Approach to Family Therapy” (Nichols & Schwartz, 2006). This movement validated the inequality experienced by women and strove to find changes to the societal assumptions which treated women and other minorities as though they were inferior (Nichols & Schwartz, 2006). The feminist model was an appropriate framework for this thesis, as the majority of the adult commercial sex population is female, and many of the women are also minorities or of low socioeconomic status (Nichols & Schwartz, 2006; Dalla, 2001). Most of the commercial sex workers in the literature reviewed were women performing sexual acts for material compensation from men, which perpetuates the inequality between men and women that feminists hope to abolish. A critique feminists have on existing therapy models is that with the notion of cybernetics and equal responsibility, there is blame placed on the victim and a rationalization of the status quo (Nichols & Schwartz, 2006). An example of this is a commercial sex worker, who was sexually abused as a child, runs away from home as a teenager, prostitutes herself as a homeless young adult, and is arrested and imprisoned for her actions. An additional translation between commercial sex work and the views of feminist family therapist

could be seen in the boss/boyfriend role that pimps often play in the commercial sex industry. The relationship between a pimp and a commercial sex worker mimics closely the patriarchal, male dominated family systems which feminist family therapists speak against. Both males hold absolute power in the system, dictating for both members, regardless of the financial or household contributions of the woman.

There is also a movement within the commercial sex industry to suggest that true feminists can be empowered while working as commercial sex workers. Organizations such as Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP) exist advocating for equality and human rights for commercial sex workers, purporting that each individual has the right to the use of their body in any format, including prostitution and other currently illegal forms of commercial sex work (Sex Worker Outreach Project, 2010). The Desiree Alliance is another feminist activist group who report their mission is to correct legislation discriminating against sex workers and denying them equal treatment and civil liberties (Desiree Alliance, 2010). Both SWOP and the Desiree Alliance explain that by having the choice to legally use their bodies for commercial sex work, that commercial sex workers can reclaim the sex industry and achieve equality within it, thus reducing violence, assault or discrimination against sex workers.

Feminist theory was used in the formation of the research design in multiple ways. The instrumentation utilized portions of surveys

instead of entire scales, so as not to use sections or questions with inappropriate gender assumptions. Participant selection was designed to include members of many realms of commercial sex work, with different sex work jobs, from different cultural backgrounds, and from different socioeconomic strata. Feminist theory was utilized in the interpretation of the data, with an understanding of the inequality the participants may face from society because of their gender, social class, or occupation. By choosing a feminist lens to view the project and the data, the social context of the sex industry is taken largely into account.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Commercial sex workers experience challenges regarding intimacy in their romantic, extra occupational relationships.

Hypothesis 2: Commercial sex workers have positive gains from the high level of sexual experience they have in their romantic relationships and may experience higher levels of sexual satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3: Commercial sex workers do not receive sufficient support regarding their commercial sex work from: partners, family, friends, or other commercial sex workers.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The targeted participants for this study were commercial sex workers from various realms of the commercial sex industry. Some of the targeted participants in the commercial sex industry were from the following occupations: pornography actors and actresses; street-walking prostitutes and high-dollar escorts, erotic massage technicians, exotic dancers, and other strip club employees, members of the bondage, dominance, and sado-masochistic lifestyle, live Internet sex workers, and other various members in the sex industry. The intent was to understand the relational experiences of commercial sex workers in multiple settings, as the environment in which the commercial sex workers work could greatly impact the experience they have with their partner. For example, a commercial sex worker who operates as a phone sex provider may do so from his or her personal residence, while completing other daily activities, with little to no concern about legal consequences for his or her lawful occupation. A commercial sex worker who works as a street walking prostitute may face rape or murder with each date, while under pressure to make enough money to pay a pimp, as well as constantly avoiding the police.

Because commercial sex work spans almost all lifespan stages, the methodology was designed to solicit the participation of people of varying

ages and phases of adult life. All participants were required to be 21 years of age or older, with the hope that the survey could gain information in regards to the relational components of commercial sex work that relate to human development lifecycle phases, such as: commercial sex work as it impacts first extra occupational relationships, commercial sex work while parenting, or commercial sex work, and aging.

The survey was designed for commercial sex workers, not their partners, to assess the challenges of commercial sex work in relationships. Because of the complete anonymity of the survey, the partners could not be matched up after they finished the survey, thus comparisons of perception of commercial sex work could not be made. Participants do not have to currently be involved in a relationship; if they are currently single, the survey asks them to report on their most recent relationship.

Instrumentation

Survey Composition

The survey was comprised of multiple choice, multiple answer, and open-ended, short answer questions (see Appendix 2). In an effort to make it convenient for the participants, the survey was created so that a moderately literate person (fourth grade reading level) could complete it in approximately ten minutes. For this survey, English was the only language provided, as the researcher is not bilingual and the answers

would have to be translated to be coded; and meaning could be lost as the items are translated, thus the coding may not be accurate, which would damage the integrity of the research. Before beginning the survey, each participant had to click a start button at the bottom of the informed consent, acknowledging that they understood the risks of the survey. The survey questions were divided into four sections.

Miller Social Intimacy Scale

The first section addressed the challenges of intimacy while working in the commercial sex industry and being in an extra occupational relationship. This section included 17 questions from the Miller Social Intimacy Scale (MSIS) (Miller & Lefcourt, 1982). This scale was chosen because it measures the current level of intimacy in a romantic relationship. The MSIS is written in an easy to understand manner and is only 6 frequency rating questions and 11 intensity rating questions long, making it appropriate for the survey. The MSIS was selected to be the first section of the survey, as it was less monotonous than a demographics section and it did not inquire about information that was highly sensitive or sexual in nature.

Partner Support Scale

In the second section, the survey questions were created to test the hypotheses purported in the beginning of this work, with distinctive language and wording directed specifically towards the commercial sex worker sample. Some of the questions focused on the impact of the

commercial sex work on the relationship, including the participant's report of the partner's approval of the commercial sex work job. Other questions dealt with the level of disclosure between the couple regarding commercial sex work as well as the partner's level of involvement within the commercial sex work industry. For the purposes of this thesis, this portion of the instrument is referred to as the partner support scale.

Derogatis Sexual Functioning Inventory

In the third section of the survey, the tenth portion of the Derogatis Sexual Functioning Inventory (DSFI), Sexual Satisfaction, was utilized as a means to further understand participant sexual fulfillment in their extra occupational relationship (Derogatis & Melisaratos, 1979). The other nine sections of the DSFI were omitted for multiple different reasons. For example, the sexual Experience section of the DSFI would potentially score a commercial sex worker in the abnormal response range because of the high frequency of sexual activity most participants experience. The Body Image section contains 5 gender specific questions which may not be gender sensitive, such as questions regarding a man's level of comfort with the appearance of his penis versus a woman's level of comfort with the appearance of her vagina. Such questions may not take into account the impact of societal norms and the media on body image and gender (Nichols & Schwartz, 2006). These questions asked for the most intimate and sexual information of the entire survey, thus they were placed later in the third section as a measure to prevent the survey

from appearing too personal or private for participants in the beginning sections.

Demographics

In the fourth section, demographic information about the participants was obtained to better understand their role in the sex industry as well as to gather additional information about their lives and histories. This section was purposefully put at the end of the survey, to avoid participant tedium at the beginning of the survey. This section gathered information about age, sex, annual income, education level, and children. Questions about culture, race, ethnicity, and religion would have been beneficial to the understanding of the sample population, however; the University of Nevada, Las Vegas's (UNLV's) Institutional Review Board (IRB) deemed that such questions, even if conducted online, may be identifying for some research participants, thus those characteristics were omitted.

Survey Protocol

Due to the highly sensitive nature of the survey, participants were permitted to skip questions that they were uncomfortable answering. After the end of the fourth segment of the survey, participants were asked to share any additional information which they believe would be pertinent regarding their relationships and the commercial sex work industry. Throughout the survey there were also multiple opportunities for participants to select "other" as an option and to write lengthy

responses in open text boxes. This was in accordance with the idea of postmodernism guiding the research. I did not take an expert stance on the research, and the open-ended text boxes are a demonstration of the collaborative nature of the survey (Boston, 2000).

The only information available regarding the participants was an IP address which was never accessed by the researcher. Each participant was given a non-consecutive survey identification number, which helped identify their answers across the spectrum of the survey. The time and date when the survey was taken was also logged, but not viewed or used in the analysis.

I provided her contact information for the participants, should any of them have questions or concerns about the study. The survey was approved by the IRB (see APPENDIX 1) as well met the requirements of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Code of Ethics standards (American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy, 2001).

Procedures

For this study, the online and printed mediums were utilized to inform participants about the online survey. There were multiple sources within these mediums from which the commercial sex workers may have learned about the survey. Five hundred business cards with the survey link and survey contact information were printed by a national office supply distributor (see Appendix 2). Approximately 200 of those business

cards were passed to female commercial sex workers to whom the primary researcher already knew or was introduced; they were met in public places such as clubs and local gyms known for having many commercial sex work members. Some women asked for additional cards to pass out to other potential participants. One hundred additional cards were given to members of the Desiree Alliance, during a pro-commercial sex work conference held to advocate for commercial sex workers' human rights.

In addition, approximately 100 cards were given to various professionals in the mental health and criminal justice fields who stated they knew potential participants through their personal or professional connections. Any commercial sex workers that the primary researcher knew because of her clinical work were excluded from the study as to maintain ethical standards and to avoid an exploitative use of power in the helping role.

The Internet was also utilized to advertise the survey, via posts and emails. The Internet provides anonymity, cost effectiveness, and accessibility (Hertlein, 2005), which makes it an ideal messenger for the survey. Sites where sex is often sold, such as craigslist.org and onlinebootycall.org were utilized for posting informative information regarding the survey, asking participants to email the researcher for the link (as these sites would not allow posting of hyperlinks or websites). The posts on both sites were flagged and terminated immediately, and no

email responses were received. Bigdoggie.net is a website advertising profiles for commercial sex workers who work independently as well as for agencies (see Appendix 3). This site was also utilized to obtain email addresses of potential participants. 200 emails were sent individually to these commercial sex workers asking for their participation with a hyperlink to the survey embedded in the email (see Appendix 4). Only 152 emails of the 200 were valid, with 48 emails returned to my inbox. The primary researcher utilized an email address specifically for this project, sadiethesis@gmail.com. This was at the suggestion of a commercial sex worker acquaintance of the primary researcher who explained that the UNLV email accounts contain last names, providing too much information to potential participants.

The faculty on the committee was also vital in distributing the survey link to potential participants. They distributed the link to prospective commercial sex work participants as well as to other faculty members who may have access to participants.

Analysis

In order to determine challenges and implications for commercial sex workers, I exported the results of the survey to a table displaying participant answers utilizing Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 17 (SPSS). The parametric data was analyzed utilizing a one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) as information was being compared across more than two conditions (Cohen and Lea, 2005). These multiple

conditions or dependent variables are the Miller Social Intimacy Scale, the Partner Support Scale, and the Derogatis Sexual Functioning Inventory. The independent variable is the presence of commercial sex work and an extra occupational relationship.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Demographics

To collect data, I distributed the Internet survey link to approximately 550 commercial sex workers via business cards, web postings, and email. It would be impossible to know exactly how many potential participants were reached via the online link postings, but the assumption could be made that since no emails were received from any of the posts, that a very limited number of participants were informed of the survey through that venue. There were a total of 127 viewings of the survey, which was approximately 21.3% of the distributed links. Eighty participants beginning the survey, but did not finish it, which was 63.0% of the participants who viewed the survey. Of those participants who began the survey, 37 finished the entire survey which was 46.3% of the participants who started the survey. Of those 37 participants, 7 participants chose not to answer any of the questions and one participant had no experience in the commercial sex industry, thus the usable completion rate was 29 participants. The 29 participants account for 36.3% of the 80 participants who started the survey, 22.8% of the participants who viewed the survey, and approximately 5.3% of the participants who received the survey.

Twenty-three of the participants answered the question regarding age, and their reported ages ranged from 21 to 45 years with a mean age

of 33 years. As Table 1 illustrates, the distribution among female age groups was somewhat balanced and polar, as the median age group, 30-35 only had 2 participants, which was 50% or less than any other age group. Since participants who identified as male were such a small part of the survey, 8.7% or 2 participants, the distribution of age was polar, with one participant in the youngest category, 21-24 years and one participant in the oldest category, 41-45 years.

Table 1

Age and Sex of Participants (N=23)

		Sex		Total
		Male	Female	
Age Category	21-24 years old	1	4	5
	25-29 years old	0	5	5
	30-35 years old	0	2	2
	36-40 years old	0	6	6
	41-45 years old	1	4	5
Total		2	21	23

Six participants did not disclose both the identified sex of their extra occupational partner, as well as their own sexual identity, thus 20.7% of participants omitted their answers to both of these questions. As Table 2 illustrates, 23 participants answered both questions about their sex and the sex of their partner. Of this sample, 5 participants, or 21.7% reported they were currently involved in same-sex relationships. Fifty percent of the male participants reported being in a same-sex

relationship, while 23.5% of the female participants reported being in a same-sex relationship. The remaining 78.3% of participants disclosed primary heterosexual extra occupational relationships.

Table 2

Participant Identified Sex and Partner Identified Sex (N=23)

		Sex of Participant		Total
		Male	Female	
Sex of Partner	Female	1	4	5
	Male	1	17	18
Total		2	21	23

The survey contained the following types of commercial sex work, for commercial sex workers to identify their occupation: pornography actors and actresses; street-walking prostitutes and high-dollar escorts; erotic massage technicians, exotic dancers, and other strip club employees; members of the bondage, dominance, and sado-masochistic lifestyle; live Internet sex workers; and other various members in the sex industry. From this list, participants were able to identify multiple occupations which described their role as commercial sex workers. Participants were also given an open text box to describe any type of

commercial sex work which may have not been listed in the choices. I took the responses and broke them into three categories, separated by the level of intimacy of the sex act. The first category was sexual intercourse, which described commercial sex work that involved having sexual intercourse for money. This included street walking prostitutes, escorts, and call girls. The second category was sexual touching, which included sexual acts and touching, without intercourse. This included exotic dancing, working in strip clubs, and erotic massage. The third category was phone sex and pornography, which was determined to be the least intimate form of commercial sex work, as the client is not in physical contact with the CSW.

Many of the participants chose multiple types of sex work across the 3 categories of intimacy. In such cases, the most intimate type of commercial sex work was how the participant's response was categorized. Three participants described their commercial sex work as occupations outside of the provided options. The participants who described "legal brothel worker" and "Domme" were grouped into the sexual intercourse group and participant who described "Phone sex, webcam" was grouped into the phone sex and pornography group. Table 3 illustrates the frequency of each of these types of commercial sex work. Six participants chose not to disclose the type of commercial sex work they engaged in, leaving 79.3% of the participants answering the question. Of the group of participants who disclosed the type of

commercial sex work they partake in, 73.9% were involved in commercial sex work where sexual intercourse was exchanged. 21.7% of participants who disclosed were involved in commercial sex work where sexual touching was exchanged and 4.4% of commercial sex work disclosing participants were involved in commercial sex work in the phone sex or pornography industries.

Table 3

Intimacy Level of Commercial Sex Work (N=29)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Type of CSW Not Disclosed	6	20.7	20.7	20.7
Sexual Intercourse	17	58.6	58.6	79.3
Sexual Touching	5	17.2	17.2	96.6
Phone Sex/ Pornography	1	3.4	3.4	100.0
Total	29	100.0	100.0	

As stated above, participants had the opportunity to select multiple types of commercial sex work in the survey, and many of them chose several answers. The answers were coded into three groups: participants who did not disclose their type of commercial sex work, participants who

reported one sex work job, and participants who reported multiple sex work jobs. As Table 4 shows, 65.2% of commercial sex workers who disclosed their type of sex work were involved in multiple types of sex work.

Table 4

Multiple Commercial Sex Work Occupations (N=29)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Type of CSW Not Disclosed	6	20.7	20.7	20.7
One type of CSW	8	27.6	27.6	48.3
Multiple Types of CSW	15	51.7	51.7	100.0
Total	29	100.0	100.0	

In the survey, I asked commercial sex workers to answer questions regarding their annual income. Again, 6 participants did not respond to this portion of the survey, leaving 23 total responses. As Table 5 shows, 6 of the 23 participants selected “prefer not to answer”, leaving 79.3% of participants who disclosed their approximate annual income. Almost half, 47.1 % of these participants reported making less than \$80,000.00 per year.

Table 5

Participant Annual Income (N=23)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
\$21,000-\$40,000	3	10.3	13.0	13.0
\$41,000-\$60,000	3	10.3	13.0	26.1
\$61,000-\$80,000	2	6.9	8.7	34.8
\$81,000-\$100,000	4	13.8	17.4	52.2
\$101,000 +	5	17.2	21.7	73.9
Prefer not to answer	6	20.7	26.1	100.0
Total	23	79.3	100.0	
Missing	6	20.7		
Total	29	100.0		

Survey participants answered questions regarding the highest level of education they have completed, from grade school to an advanced degree. Table 6 illustrates that, again, 6 participants did not answer this question, leaving 23 valid responses. Of those responses, 60.8% of the participants had achieved a bachelor's degree or higher. 52.8% of the remaining 39.2% of participants without a bachelor's degree had

Table 6

Highest Level of Education Completed (N=29)

			Valid	Cumulative
	Frequency	Percent	Percent	Percent
Grade School	1	3.4	4.3	4.3
High School Graduate	1	3.4	4.3	8.7
Associates Degree	6	20.7	26.1	34.8
Technical Training Degree	1	3.4	4.3	39.1
Bachelors Degree	8	27.6	34.8	73.9
Some Advanced Degree	1	3.4	4.3	78.3
Advanced Degree	5	17.2	21.7	100.0
Total	23	79.3	100.0	
Missing	6	20.7		
Total	29	100.0		

obtained an associate's degree, with only 8.6% of participants who responded having a high school degree or less.

Commercial Sex Workers' Nonromantic Relationships

Participants filled out open-ended text boxes, describing the relationships they have with their coworkers at their commercial sex industry jobs. This information was coded into five categories, including

1) participants who did not provide any answer, 2) participants who expressed positive relationships with their coworkers, 3) participants who expressed neutral or mixed relationships with coworkers, 4) participants who expressed negative relationships with coworkers, and 5) participants who stated that the question was not applicable to them (primarily these participants were independent workers who did not have occupational peers).

Table 7 illustrates the breakdown of reported participant satisfaction with coworkers in participants' commercial sex work job(s). 55.2% of the participants had irrelevant data either because they omitted the question or because the question was not applicable to them. Of the remaining 13 participants, 76.9% reported positive experiences with their coworkers in the commercial sex industry. 15.4% of the 13 participants reported neutral experiences, with only 1 participant, or 7.6%, reporting negative experiences with commercial sex coworkers.

Much like the section above, participants completed open-ended text boxes, describing the relationships they have with their supervisors at their commercial sex industry jobs. This information was coded into five categories, including 1) participants who did not provide any answer, 2) participants who expressed positive relationships with their supervisors, 3) participants who expressed neutral or mixed relationships with supervisors, 4) participants who expressed negative

Table 7

Coworker Relationships Within Commercial Sex Work Occupation (N=29)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No Response	9	31.0	31.0	31.0
Positive	10	34.5	34.5	65.5
Neutral	2	6.9	6.9	72.4
Negative	1	3.4	3.4	75.9
N/A	7	24.1	24.1	100.0
Total	29	100.0	100.0	

relationships with supervisors, and 5) participants who stated that the question was not applicable to them (primarily these participants were independent workers who did not have occupational supervisors).

Table 8 illustrates the breakdown of reported participant satisfaction with supervisors in participants' commercial sex work job(s). 62.1% of the participants had irrelevant data either because they omitted the question or because the question was not applicable to them. Of the remaining 11 participants, 54.5% reported positive experiences with their supervisors in the commercial sex industry. 36.3% of the 11 participants reported neutral experiences, with only 1 participant, or 9.1%, reporting negative experiences with commercial sex coworkers.

Table 8

Supervisor Relationships Within Commercial Sex Work Occupation

(N=29)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No Response	7	24.1	24.1	24.1
Positive	6	20.7	20.7	44.8
Neutral	4	13.8	13.8	58.6
Negative	1	3.4	3.4	62.1
N/A	11	37.9	37.9	100.0
Total	29	100.0	100.0	

Participants in the study responded to the question, “When you discuss your sex industry work, do you feel that people make judgments about you because of what you do?” utilizing two different response methods. Participants were able to select multiple appropriate answers using the provided options, or they were able to click “other” and type their own answer into a text box. There were five participants who typed into the open text box. Three of the responses explained that the participants do not discuss their commercial sex work with people in other realms of their lives. This answer was coded into its own section and added into the data. Two of the respondents explained that they had had positive and negative experiences with commercial sex work

disclosure and were coded to fit the “sometimes I feel judged but sometimes I feel accepted when I disclose my commercial sex work” category.

Table 9 shows the frequency that each response was selected to see which experiences commercial sex workers reported. There was missing data from 6 of the participants, leaving 23 who answered this portion of the survey. The selection “sometimes I feel judged but sometimes I feel accepted when I disclose my commercial sex work” was selected most often at 9 times which was 45% more often than the next most frequently chosen response, which was “I do not discuss my sex work” receiving 5 selections. The least chosen response was “I am never judged for my commercial sex work” which was only selected 1 time.

Participants in this survey answered questions about disclosure of their commercial sex work to their children utilizing two different response methods. Participants were able to select multiple appropriate answers using the provided options, or they were able to click “other” and type their own answer into a text box. There were 4 participants who typed into the open text box. Three of those participants stated that they did not have children and were coded into the group of participants who did not answer. One participant stated “baby is too young” and was grouped into the “My children do not know I work in the commercial sex industry” category.

Table 9

Social Acceptance and Commercial Sex Work Disclosure (N=29)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
People always judge me for my sex industry work	2	6.9	8.7	8.7
Usually I feel judged when I discuss what I do	3	10.3	13.0	21.7
Sometimes I feel judged but sometimes I feel accepted when I	9	31.0	39.1	60.9
I do not usually feel judged for my commercial sex industry	3	10.3	13.0	73.9
I am never judged for my sex industry work	1	3.4	4.3	78.3
I do not discuss my sex work	5	17.2	21.7	100.0
Total	23	79.3	100.0	
Missing	6	20.7		
Total	29	100.0		

Table 10 shows the frequency that each response was selected to see which how much disclosure commercial sex workers reported. There was missing data from 19 of the participants, leaving 10 who answered this portion of the survey.

Table 10

Disclosure to Children About Commercial Sex Work (N=29)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Participant did not answer	19	65.5	65.5	65.5
My children believe I have a different occupation than my CSW	5	17.2	17.2	82.8
My children do not know I work in the commercial sex industry	2	6.9	6.9	89.7
My children know that I am involved in CSW, but do not know specifics	1	3.4	3.4	93.1
My children know many aspects of my CSW	2	6.9	6.9	100.0
Total	29	100.0	100.0	

The selection “My children believe I have a different occupation” was selected most often at 5 times which was 40% more often than the next most frequently chosen responses, which were both “My children do not know I work in the commercial sex industry” and “My children know many aspects of my commercial sex work” receiving 2 selections each. The least chosen response was “My children know I am involved in commercial sex work, but no specifics” which was only selected 1 time.

Participants in this survey answered questions about disclosure of their commercial sex work to their significant other utilizing two different response methods. Participants were able to select multiple appropriate answers using the provided options, or they were able to click “other” and type their own answer into a text box. No participants selected the “other” option for this question.

Table 11 shows the frequency that each response was selected to see how much disclosure commercial sex workers reported. There was missing data from 4 of the participants, leaving 25 who answered this portion of the survey. The selection “Partner does not know” was selected most often at 14 times which was 42.9% more often than the next most frequently chosen response, which was “My partner believes I have a different occupation than commercial sex work” The least chosen response was “My partner knows I am involved in commercial sex work but does not know specifics” which was only selected 1 time. If the four applicable categories are streamlined into a disclosure category and non-

disclosure category, the breakdown would be 13.6% disclosure to significant other and 86.4% non-disclosure to significant other.

Table 11

Disclosure to Significant Other About Commercial Sex Work (N=29)

			Valid	Cumulative
	Frequency	Percent	Percent	Percent
Participant did not respond	4	13.8	13.8	13.8
Partner knows everything and is involved	2	6.9	6.9	20.7
Partner knows CSW, but no specifics	1	3.4	3.4	24.1
Partner does not know	14	48.3	48.3	72.4
Partner believes I have a different occupation than CSW	8	27.6	27.6	100.0
Total	29	100.0	100.0	

Evaluation of Data Distribution

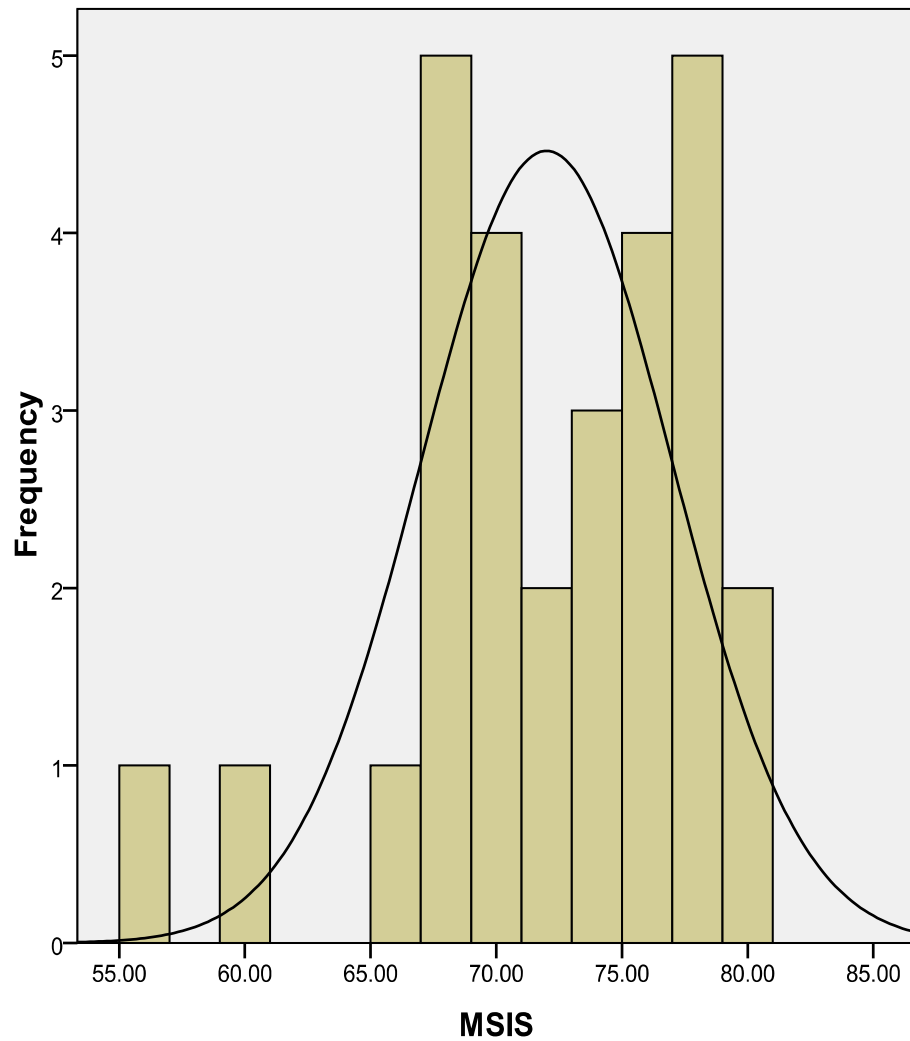
In order to conduct the ANOVA as proposed, the distribution of the data was evaluated in two ways. First, a histogram was created which would display a normal curve to evaluate normal distribution for parametric statistics. To create this histogram for the MSIS, I recoded the items MSIS 4 and MSIS 14, as the Likert scale was counterintuitive regarding those items. Figure 1 illustrates the histogram for the MSIS. Of a sample of 28, the mean was 71.71 and the standard deviation was 5.76. The second way the data was evaluated was by measuring the skew. This was done utilizing the following equation:

$$\text{Fisher's Coefficient} = \text{skewness} / \text{standard error of skew.}$$

We concluded that despite the way the histogram was presented, our calculations demonstrate that Fisher's Coefficient was within -1.96 & 1.96 ($z=1.618$).

Figure 1

Histogram of Miller Social Intimacy Scale



Therefore, the distribution is not so skewed that it would violate the assumptions of ANOVA (Pett, 1997). Table 12 describes the skew with the MSIS.

Table 12

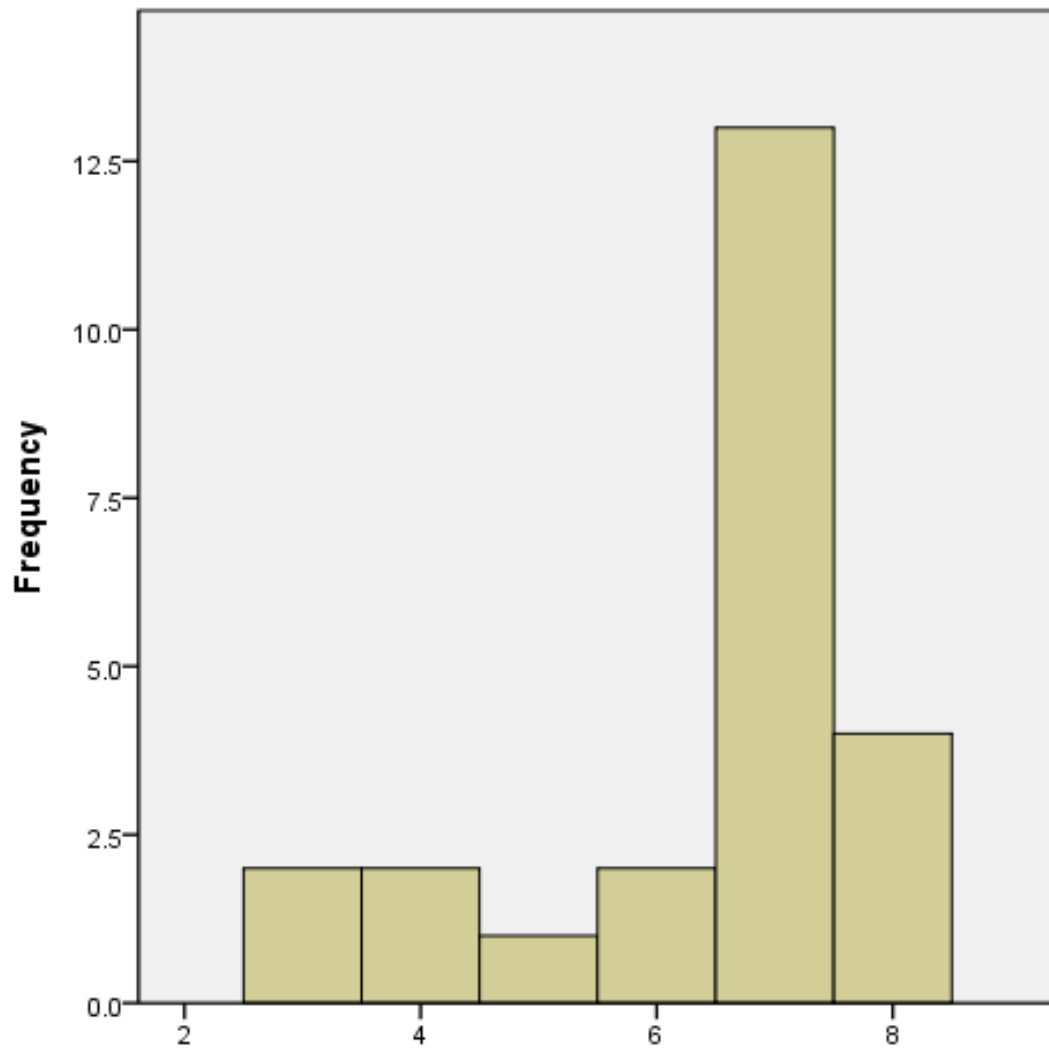
Measurement of Skew for MSIS (N=28)

	N	Range	Skewness	
			Statistic	Std.Error
Partner Satisfaction Scale	24	5	1.374	.472
MSIS	28	24.00	-.849	.441
Total	24			

Participants answered questions adapted from the DSFI to assess their sexual satisfaction in the relationship they have outside of work. Participants scaled their level of sexual satisfaction on a 0 to 8 point scale. This scale was recoded to 1 to 9, so that 0 could be used to account for the 5 participants who did not answer the question. This data was recoded for the purposes of data analysis, as the order of the scale was not congruent with the numbered answers on the scale. The histogram for DSFI is show in Figure 2. Of a sample of 24, the mean was 6.42 and the standard deviation was 1.501.

Figure 2

Histogram of DSFI



Below is a rating scale upon which we would like you to record your personal evaluation of how satisfying your sexual relationship with your partner is.

I created a measure to assess partner support within CSW extra occupational relationships, which will be referred to as the Partner

Support Scale for this study. To test the reliability of this measure, the data had to be recoded first. Items 29, 34, and 37 were recoded and the scaled answers were reversed to be congruent with the rest of the measure. Any participant who excluded any of the 11 items on the Partner Support Scale was discounted from the analysis. Table 13 shows the remaining 58.6% of the participants who answered the entire measure.

Table 13

Partner Support Scale (N=29)

N		%	
Cases	Valid	17	58.6
	Excluded	12	41.4
	Total	29	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure

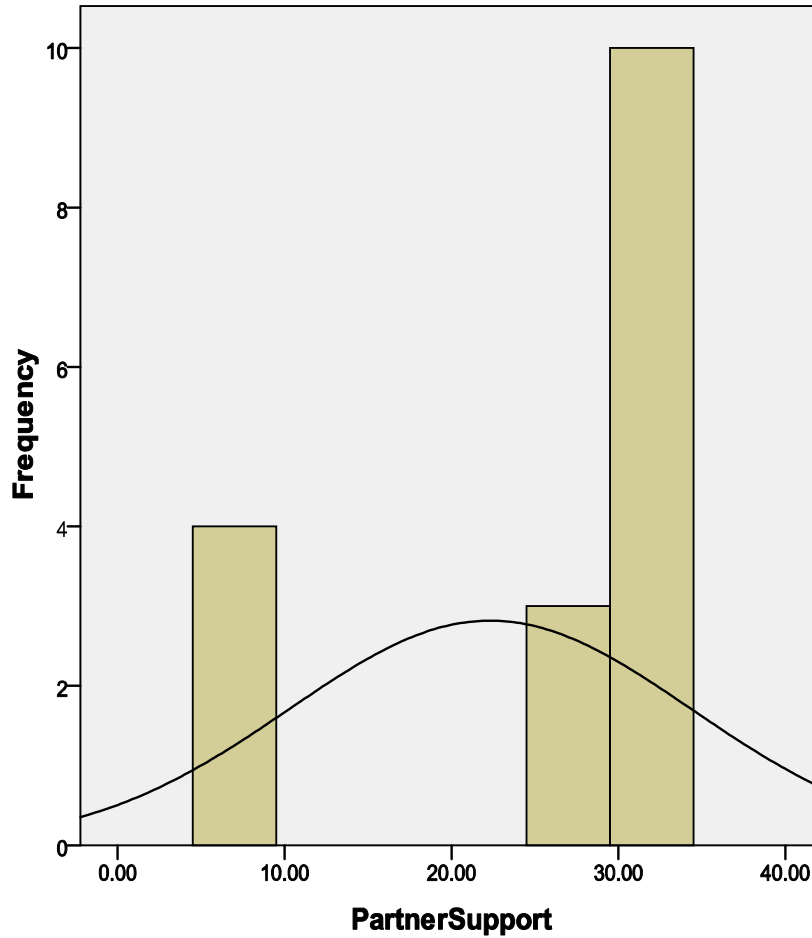
A histogram was generated to visually evaluate the skew, as shown in Figure 3, then the same equation from the MSIS analysis was utilized to measure skew.

Fisher's Coefficient = skewness/standard error of skew.

We concluded that with the partner support scale, our calculations demonstrate that Fisher's Coefficient was not within -1.96 & 1.96 ($z=2.3$). Therefore, the distribution is too skewed for parametric statistics.

Figure 3

Histogram of Partner Support Scale



Measurements of skewness and kurtosis were assessed for the Partner support scale and are shown in Table 14 below. As the result of the high level of skew demonstrated by the histogram and the additional measures, parametric statistics were not appropriate for this data, an ANOVA was not be utilized.

Table 14

Measurement of Skew and Kurtosis

	N	Range	Mean	Skewness		Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Partner Support Scale	17	27.00	25.5294	-1.265	.550	-.277	1.063

Reliability Analyses

Cronbach's alpha was used to evaluate the reliability of two of our three dependent variable scales: MSIS, DSFI, and Partner Support Scale. For the MSIS $\alpha = .69$, and for Partner Support Scale $\alpha = .961$. No reliability was calculated for the sexual satisfaction item from the DSFI, as it was only one item.

Hypothesis Analyses

Hypothesis 1

My first hypothesis was that commercial sex work would cause a lack of intimacy in extra occupational relationships. Relational impact was measured in three ways: the MSIS, the DSFI, and the Partner Support Scale. Of those three scales, these first two MSIS and DSFI met the assumptions for an ANOVA. The third did not meet the assumptions and therefore I conducted a Kruskal-Wallis test. The Kruskal-Wallis test is a one way analysis of variance by ranks, and is a method for testing

equality of population medians based among groups. Since the test is non parametric, it does not assume a normal population as the ANOVA does.

Hypothesis 1. Relational impact was evaluated utilizing the MSIS to determine extra relational social intimacy. The ANOVA was not significant, $F = .522$, $p = .671$ as shown in Table 15. This means there was no difference between the level of sex work and the level of social intimacy reported by commercial sex workers. The MSIS data results do not support research Hypothesis 1, that commercial sex work is a challenge to extra occupational couple intimacy.

Table 15

ANOVA for MSIS

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	54.844	3	18.281	.522	.671
Within Groups	840.871	24	35.036		
Total	895.714	27			

Hypothesis 2. Relational impact was evaluated utilizing the DSFI to determine reported sexual satisfaction. The ANOVA was significant, as shown in Table 16 ($F = 13.13$, $p < .001$). This means there was a difference between the level of sex work and the level of sexual satisfaction reported by commercial sex workers. The DSFI data results support research Hypothesis 2, that commercial sex work impacts extra occupational couple intimacy.

Table 16

ANOVA for DSFI

Below is a rating scale upon which we would like you to record your personal evaluation of how satisfying your sexual relationship is.		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups		135.94	3	45.31	13.13	.000*
Within Groups		86.27	25	3.45		
Total		222.21	28			

* = $p < .001$

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 purported that commercial sex workers lack support regarding their commercial sex work. The level of partner support was evaluated utilizing the Partner Support Scale to determine reported sexual satisfaction. The level of disclosure and disclosure experiences were also utilized to determine support systems under the assumption that commercial sex workers who have a more positive disclosure experiences may have a perceived larger support group.

Because there was such a small sample size of participants who completed the entire Partner support scale, the three groups who were utilized, 1) sexual intercourse (n = 9), 2) sexual touching (n= 2), and 3) pornography or phone sex (n= 1) were regrouped into dichotomous categories. The two new categories were 1) sexual intercourse commercial sex work (n= 9) and 2) non-intercourse commercial sex work (n= 2). The participant who identified themselves as a pornography or phone sex worker, however, did not complete the partner support scale and therefore this case (and, therefore, this group) was deleted from the analysis. Table 17 illustrates these ranks.

Table 17

Rank of Commercial Sex Work

	Level of Intimacy of Sex Work	N	Mean Rank
Partner Support	Type of work Not Disclosed	6	5.50
	Sexual Intercourse	9	11.06
	Non Sexual Intercourse	2	10.25
	Total	17	

The Kruskal-Wallis one way analysis of ranks can be used to assess the equality of median populations among groups. This test is identical to ANOVA with the exception that the data are replaced by their ranks (Pett, 1997). The ranking of the dichotomous categories “sexual intercourse” and “non sexual intercourse” are illustrated below in Table 18.

Table 18

Rank of Dichotomous Commercial Sex Work

Type of Sex Work- Dichotomous		N	Mean Rank
Partner Support	Intercourse Job	9	6.11
	Non-Intercourse Job	2	5.50
	Total	11	

Table 19

Test Statistics

	Partner Support
Chi-Square	4.598
Df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.100

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Level of Intimacy of Sex Work

There were no significant differences in partner support reported between the intercourse jobs and non-intercourse jobs, $\chi^2 = .0511$, $df = 1$, $p = .811$ (see Table 20).

Table 20

Kruskal-Wallis Descriptives

	Type of Sex Work - Dichotomous	N	Mean Rank
Partner Support	Intercourse Job	9	6.11
	Non-intercourse Service	2	5.50
	Total	11	

Table 21

Kruskal Wallis Analysis

N	Partner Support
Chi-Square	.057
Df	1
Asymp. Sig	.811

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The research hypotheses proposed in the earlier chapters of this thesis are the following: 1) commercial sex workers experience challenges regarding intimacy in their romantic, extra occupational relationships, and the dynamic of disclosing commercial sex work to one's partner may be difficult for fear of rejection or jealousy, 2) commercial sex workers may benefit from the high level of sexual experience they have in their romantic relationships and may experience higher levels of sexual satisfaction, as well as fewer sexual performance difficulties, 3) commercial sex workers may not receive sufficient support regarding aspects of their commercial sex work from: partners, family, friends, or even other commercial sex workers.

Challenges of Commercial Sex Work

According to the results of the Miller Social Intimacy Scale (MSIS), this research hypothesis is not supported. The scores on the Miller Social Intimacy Scale indicate that participants of the survey reported being in positive intimate relationships with their partners.

Participants responded with particularly high self reports regarding affection and intimacy, which is somewhat intuitive, as people in commercial sex work frequently demonstrate physical affection towards others as a part of their job, thus it would be logical for that to translate into extra occupational relationships. However, one of the items which

participants reported was of least importance to their relational intimacy was the amount of affection their partners demonstrated towards them. While participants still reported that this was an important part of their relationships, compared to other elements of intimacy, affection directed towards the commercial sex worker was reported to be markedly less important than most other categories. In a non-commercial sex work relationship, the assumption could be made that mismatched desired levels of affection could be problematic. In the case of relationships where one partner is a commercial sex worker, the opposite may be the case. The commercial sex worker could be receiving so much physical or sexual affection during her workday that when he or she has time with his or her extra occupational mate, a high level of affection is not needed as much as other forms of intimacy.

Another area that participants indicated was significant to their level of intimacy regarded the importance of their extra occupational partner listening to their personal disclosure. This response could be interpreted as incongruent with the responses participants gave in Partner Support Scale section of the survey regarding disclosure of commercial sex work to their partner. This could also be interpreted as incongruent with some of the open-ended answers in later sections of the survey. If the results of the MSIS are considered incongruent with the rest of the data, this suggests that there is potential social desirability bias in the MSIS within the commercial sex work population. However,

the data could also be interpreted in another way. In the MSIS, participants rated that sharing personal disclosure held a great deal of importance to the intimacy they have with their partner. These participants may have stated that personal disclosure was a highly valued aspect of their relationship because it was also a challenge to attain, as stated in the Partner Support Scale and open-ended data.

In another question on the MSIS, most participants noted that they very rarely kept information from their significant others. This information was incongruent with much of the information regarding the disclosure of commercial sex work in the Partner Support Scale section of the survey. It was also incongruent with the survey item which asked if participants could share their work struggles and successes with their partners, which had less of a positive response. This could be explained using one of the same theories Cooper, Kennedy, and Yuille used in their study about dissociation and sexual trauma in commercial sex work (2001). These researchers purported that commercial sex workers could be underreporting violence and abuse because it was so commonplace in their lives, that their perspective on violence could be quite different from a person who had not experienced the commercial sex environment for an extended period of time. This same assumption could be made regarding why commercial sex workers reported in the MSIS that it was important not to hide information from their partners, yet in the responses to the Partner Support Scale, many stated that they did not

disclose to their partners that they were commercial sex workers or that they told their partners about other fictitious means of employment. It could be possible that the participants, who have been involved in the sex industry for a long time, may not consider concealing their commercial sex work to be withholding information. For some of these commercial sex workers, deceiving their occupation may be an automatic response, which they do not consider detrimental to the level of intimacy they experience with their partner.

Almost one third of the participants responded that their partner either currently works in the commercial sex industry or that they previously worked in the commercial sex industry. This could greatly impact the way that the partner reacts to the participant's commercial sex work. This may also provide information regarding the disclosure of commercial sex work and the impact that disclosure has on intimacy. For two partners who are currently working in the commercial sex industry, either as a dyad or individuals, there may be a greater understanding of the commercial sex work and less of a stigma about it. However, as Farley's research states, if the partner was involved in the commercial sex industry as a partner, they may not be able to accept the commercial sex worker's role with other clients or may still experience negative judgments about the commercial sex work (2007). In heterosexual relationships where the commercial sex worker is female, this also may relate to some of the feminist principles that women are

held to different standards sexually than men, thus a woman as a commercial sex worker could be looked down on more than a man who solicits commercial sex (Nichols & Schwartz, 2006).

Many participants responded positively to the statement “my partner wants me to quit my job” as well as the statement “neither myself or my partner think it is possible for me to quit my job, because there are no other options for me.” These two statements fit well within the postmodern way of thinking, and explore how alternatives and the way they are perceived are relative to unique individual circumstances. Over half of the participants who responded to their level of education had a bachelor’s degree or more. This may lead to the assumption that there are more options available and less reason to continue working in the commercial sex industry if it is a detriment to the participant’s relationship. However, as postmodern theory suggests, reality is grounded in perception of alternatives as they are specific to each person’s experience (Boston, 2000). Therefore, even with a college degree, a couple may not perceive other options to working in the commercial sex industry for multiple reasons. First, an entry level position, even with a bachelor’s degree, may bring in far less income than escort or call girl work. Second, for many commercial sex workers, there is instant financial flow when needed through commercial sex work. An exotic dancer could pick up an extra shift for spending money or a streetwalker could pick up a few clients in an afternoon to pay for groceries. Third, the

stigma which surrounds commercial sex work often leads the people involved in the sex industry to believe they are less capable of holding non-commercial sex work jobs after working in the sex industry. This could be for fear of seeing past clients in the new work environment or because they feel incompetent starting a new job if they have achieved success in the sex industry (Farley, 2007).

Participants stated it was important for them to be encouraging and supportive of their significant other when their significant other was unhappy. In the commercial sex work literature, many commercial sex workers stated that they were often emotional nurturers for their clients in addition to performing sexual acts (Dalla, 2001). One woman responded via email to the primary researcher stating that she could not take the survey as she was not currently involved in an extra occupational relationship. However, she stated that many of her “dates” were primarily seeking emotional support, and did not have a physical aspect to them. With commercial sex workers fulfilling emotional and sexual nurturance roles, it could be an assumption that sometimes their own need for care and support are not met. This could be especially true if some of the participants are currently involved in primary relationships with pimps or ex-Johns, where the relational foundation was not built on mutuality, but significant hierarchy (Dalla, 2001).

Positive Gains from Commercial Sex Work

The second research hypothesis regarding sexual satisfaction and commercial sex work appears to be supported by the data collected in this thesis. Participants responded that their sex lives were very satisfying, stating that they enjoyed foreplay, had satisfying orgasms and had a lot of variety in their sex lives. These high satisfaction ratings made with the use of section 10 of the Derogatis Sexual Functioning Inventory (DSFI) may exist for multiple reasons.

Commercial sex workers who are actively working in the sex industry as well as maintaining relationships outside of their occupation may be engaging in more sex than a person who is not involved in the sex industry. If this is the case, this heightened level of sexual experience could aid in satisfaction in one's personal relationship. For example, if a commercial sex worker has had sex with multiple partners, multiple times, with that experience comes an increased awareness of what that commercial sex worker desires during intercourse. This awareness may increase sexual satisfaction for that person.

Some commercial sex workers are paid by the minute or hour instead of by the sexual act, for example, an exotic dancer may charge for a 20 minute lap dance, or an escort may charge for one hour of his or her time. Because of the financial benefits of prolonging the sexual act, the commercial sex worker may become more adept at foreplay or at the induction of the sexual act. According to Hertlein, Weeks, and Sendak,

many couples complain of a lack of foreplay, leading to quick monotonous sex which is less satisfying (2009). Because some commercial sex workers may be in the practice of foreplay from their sex industry jobs, they may be less likely to rush sex. This is also evidenced by the response participants gave to the statement “Usually, sex does not last long enough”, which was described as false by the majority of participants.

The item participants responded positively with the least consistent answers regarding sexual satisfaction and frequency of sex. Some participants did not feel that they engaged in sex frequently enough, which could be the result of physical exhaustion from working in the commercial sex industry. The physiological impact of having intercourse multiple times throughout a day or week could cause pain in the muscles or genitals of the commercial sex worker, causing them to abstain from sex in their extra occupational relationship. Psychological fatigue may be present as well, as commercial sex work may often be dangerous. Commercial sex workers may also be expected to engage in intellectual communication during their sex work jobs, or be expected to emotionally nurture their client or customer. This may be mentally taxing on the commercial sex worker, who may not be able to come home and be intimately present with his or her partner during sex. There is also the postmodern component that commercial sex workers may not consider themselves to be having sex frequently enough in their extra

occupational relationships because they may have intercourse or perform sexual acts with such high frequency in their sex industry job. Thus they may be reporting a desire to have more sex in their extra occupational job to meet the abnormally frequent sexual patterns of their commercial sex industry work.

When asked to rank their sexual satisfaction level from 0, or could not be worse, to 8, could not be better, over half of the participants selected 7, excellent, with the second highest portion of the sample selecting 8, could not be better. The above mentioned explanations of high levels of sexual experience or social desirability could be cited as reasons for such high scales.

Commercial Sex Workers and Support

The third research hypothesis suggests that commercial sex workers lack relational support regarding their commercial sex work. At first glance, this hypothesis may appear to be unsubstantiated, however; there are multiple factors to consider. The majority of participants stated that their partner knows many aspects of the commercial sex work, but is not involved in the occupation. This sounds congruent with the way most partners disclose their work with each other; however, when reviewing the survey item referring to partner approval of commercial sex work job, a higher percentage of participants reported that their partners did not always approve of their commercial sex work. Therefore, the assumption could be made that though the amount that commercial sex

work dyads and non commercial sex work dyads discuss work may be similar, the commercial sex work dyads may not discuss work because one of the partners may not approve of the occupation.

Approximately half of the participants reported that their partner fears for their safety while they are at their commercial sex work job. This may inhibit the commercial sex worker from receiving support regarding his or her job and may prevent them from disclosing rape or assault to their partner. As Dalla found in her study of commercial sex workers and support systems, the commercial sex workers are often in extra occupational relationships with pimps, which could impact the level of financial support the commercial sex workers receive, as well as increasing their perception of a lack of resources due to the controlling nature of the pimp (2001).

In regard to the intra occupational relationships within commercial sex workers' lives, the responses regarding their superiors and coworkers were of a wide range. Many of the independent sex workers did not have coworkers or supervisors so they reported that their only support from colleagues was when they communicated over the Internet or at conferences with other independents. Of the respondents who worked in agency or club settings, the highest grouping was of positive responses regarding relationships with both coworkers and supervisors. The women described the positive experiences with business-oriented terms such as "professional" or "efficient", which suggest that while the relationships

are mostly positive interactions, they are also not friendships and do not function off of camaraderie.

Commercial sex workers also discuss the impact of disclosure of their commercial sex work to non commercial sex workers outside of their dyad. The majority of the respondents reported that they were selective in who they disclosed the information to, with many participants stating that they did not disclose the information to anyone outside of their relationship. For some commercial sex workers, this may be because they are engaging in criminal activity selling sex, while for others it may be to protect themselves from judgment or ridicule of people who do not understand their circumstances. One participant described getting to know people well before deciding if they were appropriate for disclosure. "People who will accept me know. I don't discuss it with people who would judge me."

Many of the respondents did not disclose their commercial sex work to their children, primarily stating that their children were too young to understand. The participants who did choose to disclose to their children all partook in legal realms of the commercial sex work industry, such as pornography or exotic dancing, and had children who were at the youngest adolescents. The decision not to disclose to children could be for fear of repercussions with Child Protective Services, who may investigate the home if claims are made that commercial sex work is occurring.

Commercial sex workers have many potential causes for not seeking support from the people in their lives regarding their commercial sex work. Given this information, it may appear counterintuitive that the commercial sex workers in this study primarily report being supported by their partners. This could be related to a perpetual lack of support throughout their childhood, causing low expectations of support as adults (Dalla, 2001). It could also be assumed that for many of these participants who have achieved goals in other realms of their lives, such as education, that a lack of support for commercial sex work is not problematic because they compartmentalize it as a single portion of their lives, “which does not define my [her] success or relationships.”

Clinical Implications

The results of literature review conducted in Chapter 2 and the subsequent research from this thesis may indicate some common themes experienced in therapy with commercial sex workers. One such theme was communication difficulties with sex work disclosure.

Communication with partners was explored both in the literature review and the research questions. These challenges were described by the research participants regarding their partners, with some participants reporting they were unable to discuss aspects of their commercial sex work with their extra-occupational partners. This difficulty could present in therapy with a couple engaging in distant behavior, or jealousy issues could arise within the dyad because of the secrecy.

A common theme from the email responses was infidelity within the extra-occupational dyad. This was not explored in the quantitative data; however it was relevant with some of the information collected in the literature review. Several email responses from people who were not willing to or did not meet the requirements of the survey reported infidelity from their partner outside of the commercial sex work. The literature review stated that a common pattern was for commercial sex workers to become involved romantically with sex industry patrons. These patrons may then begin to solicit additional commercial sex outside of the dyadic relationship, as the experience of soliciting sex, which may have been enticing, changed once the patron entered a relationship with the commercial sex worker. As one participant said, "I met my husband in the game [commercial sex work] and, surprise! He cheats." These scenarios could bring commercial sex workers into therapy to work through the infidelity or to set boundaries.

The implications for therapy may be somewhat unique with commercial sex workers. For the many reasons, some of which are covered in the literature review, this is a population who experiences stigma because of their population. Because of this stigma, individuals, couples, or families who present to therapy may contain a commercial sex worker, but their occupation may not be disclosed to the therapist. To maximize joining and trust with this population, the tenants of postmodern theory could be considered. For example, the context of the

couple could be explored to understand what unique circumstances they are in, and then normalizing certain aspects of their relationship to help them feel comfortable sharing. In the research, the majority of the responses about social disclosure of commercial sex work stated that the participant or couple disclosed their involvement to people in the sex industry after becoming comfortable with them. An individual, couple, or family may share their involvement in the commercial sex industry after evaluating the level of acceptance they anticipate receiving from their therapist. The reaction of the therapist is very important as the couple may be sensitive to the responses they receive regarding their commercial sex work.

It is important for the therapist to identify if they are unable to work with this population because of their own counter-transference issues. Subsequently, if the therapist is unable to provide commercial sex work clients appropriate treatment, referring the individual, couple, or family to another provider may be necessary. For the referral process to be most beneficial, it should be sensitive, with an explanation of why a new professional would be a better fit for the client(s). The process may also be less damaging if the current therapist explains they are referring the client(s) to another professional for the good of the individual, couple, or family, so they may receive the best care possible, not because they are unfit or inappropriate in any way.

Limitations

Sample Size

The primary limitation for this survey was the small sample size. To conduct a generalizable study, using quantitative data, with the lengthy instruments utilized, a much larger sample size would be needed. Many participants responded through email and face to face conversation that they would be willing to have an in-person interview with the primary researcher, but they would not be willing to take the online survey. At first, this was somewhat perplexing, as the Internet provides far more anonymity than a personal interview, with fewer implications for illicit material. In addition, many of these participants advertise the sexual services they exchange on Internet websites which contain intimate pictures and contact information. As one declined participant explained to the primary researcher, "I know you. I see you ask me questions and I see your reactions. If you abuse the information I share with you, you are accountable. If I type it into a survey, I don't know where it goes. I don't know who sees it, or how they'll portray me." Several women shared that they are solicited for books, interviews, and blogs frequently, and have been exploited by researchers who have unethical intentions. Some declined participants suggested that without in-person contact, there was no way for them to determine whether or not the researchers were members of law enforcement who could potentially utilize the survey information to incriminate them.

Technology

As mentioned in the procedures section, a separate email was created to send and receive information from potential participants. While the initial reasoning behind the second email was protection of the data and responses, as the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) does not have a very reliable “.edu” email system; the second email protected the primary researcher’s identity as well. The second email address was both a benefit and a hindrance; it was a benefit as the primary researcher received some threatening emails, and understood that very little data could be obtained about regarding her identity through the sadiethesis@gmail.com account. Unfortunately, several participants replied to the initial email, stating they were concerned about taking the survey knowing such little information about the researcher. For those participants, the contact information for the Department of Marriage and Family Therapy was provided, as well as a copy of the Informed Consent for the survey. These documents through were then resent through the researcher’s UNLV rebelmail account, knowle16@unlv.nevada.edu, which provided those potential participants with the access to the .edu suffix.

Several of the participants who were given business cards shared with the primary researcher that the survey host site, questionpro.com, was not iphone compatible. The primary researcher had not previously considered that some of the participants would have their only Internet access through their smartphones. The primary researcher offered to

bring her laptop to a public place for some of the potential participants to take the survey, but to prevent duplicate participants, questionpro.com would only allow the laptop's IP address to be utilized one time. This meant that the participants would have to seek out a computer to take the survey, increasing the inconvenience, and potentially decreasing the security even further if they were to go to a public place such as a library. With no financial or other incentives to take the survey, the lack of convenience for participants without computer Internet access proved to be prohibitive.

Low Socioeconomic Barriers

The need for a computer and Internet access may also have prevented lower socioeconomic status subpopulations of commercial sex workers from participating in the survey. Many commercial sex workers live below the poverty line and are unable to get their basic needs met each day (Shoham, 1983). These people make up a large portion of commercial sex workers in the United States as well as abroad, and are unlikely to be represented in research designs such as this one. Other research concerning the life experiences of commercial sex workers utilize in-depth qualitative interviews with commercial sex workers to gather information. An example is Cooper, Yuille, and Kennedy's study on trauma and dissociation in commercial sex workers, which provides an interview model to obtain qualitative research within the streetwalking prostitute commercial sex work population (2002). Another

benefit of the spoken interviews is that it includes illiterate commercial sex workers, whose experience of commercial sex work may be much different than a commercial sex worker who attended college.

Systemic Research with Individual Participants

An additional limitation of the survey was that it was designed for only the commercial sex worker member of the relationship, which only provides one piece of the dyad and one perspective on the relationship. It would be beneficial to see both members of the couple to better understand the means in which they interact regarding the commercial sex work and understand the ways in which it relates to them as a unit as and individuals. To utilize both members of the dyad would provide benefits regarding a systems theory perspective, but may provide some challenges for the feminist theory components of the design. Because so many commercial sex workers are involved in abusive or violent relationships, research utilizing both parties may not be as accurate as research with one member of the dyad. The abused participant might not self-report information accurately for fear of the reaction from his or her partner. This could reflect on the data negatively, or jeopardize the safety of the participant (Nichols and Schwartz, 2006).

Self-Report of Education Level

The self-report aspect of this survey is relevant with the data gathered about education. Participants could mark that they had completed any level of education, and with the anonymous nature of the

survey, there is no way to validate their responses. Because of the stigma that surrounds commercial sex work, it is possible that some participants may have marked a higher level of education than they have actually achieved. This discrepancy would cause an inaccurate representation of the participants, as the motivation to partake in sex work may be different across education levels.

Self-Report of Relationship Satisfaction

Participants for this survey reported on their own relationships from their own perspectives. Commercial sex workers are a stigmatized population within society, thus they may be more likely to self-report socially desirable characteristics regarding their relationships, in hopes that by doing so, they will be able to elude the stigma associated with their profession (Brawn & Roe-Sepowitz, 2008). It is also possible that survey participants would self-report high relational satisfaction in relationships which non-commercial sex workers would not rate as high, because they are accustomed to the environment of being a commercial sex worker and being in a relationship, thus they have acclimated to the challenges and consider themselves to have achieved the reported high levels of relational satisfaction while in the sex industry.

Stigma of the Researcher

There were some challenges to the collection of data during this project that appeared to be inherent difficulties in collecting data on sexual topics. As a researcher of sexual topics, stigma of the researcher

can be experienced in more than one form. Other professionals in the mental and behavioral health fields may not understand the validity or importance in sex research, as evidenced by the lack of literature discussed in Chapter 2.

The participants for sex research projects may experience a stigma towards the researcher, as well. One reason for this could be perceived differences between the researcher and the participant, which could cause a lack of relation between the two parties. The participant could fear that the researcher was eroticizing their commercial sex work culture because of these perceived differences and may believe that the researcher was gaining knowledge for their own curiosity, or as part of their own fantasies. One commercial sex worker explained to the researcher that she gets approached at her commercial sex work job by people frequently, asking her to be part of their book or to outline some of her most exciting sexual experiences for articles. She explained that this lead to her feeling exploited and wanting to avoid interviews or research altogether.

Another cause for this stigma or separation could be negative prior experiences with research. During the Desiree Alliance, the primary researcher asked to leave a pile of business cards on the promotional table, in addition to the cards which had been passed out during to attendees. One of the members of the Desiree Alliance asked to read the entire survey, as well as the Institutional Review Board's approval

information. When she discovered that the survey was completely online, as was the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) protocol review number, she stated that UNLV had collected sex research data previously using questions she considered offensive and inappropriate. She asked that no additional cards for the survey be displayed or handed out to conference attendees.

A lack of trust or stigma to the researcher may exist because participant may be engaging in illegal activities. The participant may feel that the researcher is attempting to entrap them or disclose their illegal activity to the public or to law enforcement. This could be the reason that many of the response emails reported statements like these. "I do not accept payment for sex- that is illegal" or, "I am paid to go on dates, but do not engage in sexual activity as that is against the law." These stigmas presented a barrier to research collection from participants working in the commercial sex industry.

Future Research

The primary researcher hopes to continue to work with this population in the future to gain additional knowledge about the extra occupational relational experiences of commercial sex workers. With the information gained in this study, the research design would differ significantly. The studies of commercial sex workers which utilized qualitative data seemed to get a breadth of information, and with a semi-structured interview, the research is both directed and dynamic. This is

a good fit with the principles of postmodern theory, as the context of the research would be fluid with the interview instead of the rigidity of a quantitative interview. The collaborative nature of such research would demonstrate the ideals of both postmodern thought and feminism.

In the future, the primary researcher would take steps to increase the number of participants providing data. If the goal was to continue with a cross section of all types of commercial sex work, the original email methods, as well as the high dollar clubs and expensive boutique gyms would still be utilized. There would also be more collaboration with various mental health centers, halfway houses, and first offender programs to solicit participants. The participants of the current study have emphasized the importance of having a “trusted presence” within the sex worker industry, which would reflect feminist thought on working with oppressed populations. Participants in these settings make up a different socioeconomic realm of commercial sex work, which was not addressed as closely in this study. To research within the postmodern framework, the context of participants with low socioeconomic status is vital to consider. The recruitment and the research must be conducted in a way that encompasses participants with a low socioeconomic status. This means that the Internet cannot be the primary source of recruitment of participants, nor can it be the medium in which data is collected, unless there are mechanisms in place to accommodate the lower socioeconomic participants. To be more inclusive of the span of

commercial sex work, it would be helpful to be able to include participants who speak multiple languages. Recruitment strategies which allow participants to meet the primary researcher may be beneficial as well, increasing the “trusted presence” when the research is actually conducted. Incentives for participants may increase participation level as well. The incentives could be monetary or material, such as financial compensation or items to exchange, such as bus passes or gift cards. The incentives could also be more abstract, such as clearing a participant of a commercial sex related charge, counting time spent with the researcher as community service hours, or reducing a fine for a commercial sex worker who participates in research. These types of incentives will probably be more appealing to commercial sex workers performing illegal sex acts or of low socioeconomic status. These incentives take into consideration the circumstances of the participants, which is true to postmodern thought and feminism.

Narrowing the recruitment pool to specific types of commercial sex work may focus the research in a positive way. As stated in the discussion section, the implications of commercial sex work vary greatly by the acts performed and the nature of the sex work job. The findings of future research may be far more conclusive if they are focused to a specific type of sex work, such as streetwalking prostitutes or exotic dancers. Focusing the participant pool would help focus the questions

and make them more pertinent to the select group of sex workers, thus providing more specific results.

In future research, the goal of the interviews would be to further understand and interpret the data collected during the quantitative process of the current study. A goal would be to understand the reasons for the differences in the participant survey answers.

APPENDIX 1

IRB APPROVAL



Social/Behavioral IRB – Exempt Review

Deemed Exempt

DATE: July 29, 2010

TO: **Dr. Katherine Hertlein**, Marriage, Family and Community Counseling

FROM: Office of Research Integrity – Human Subjects

RE: Notification of IRB Action by Dr. Ramona Denby Brinson, Chair
Protocol Title: Commercial Sex Workers: Lives and Practices
Protocol # 1004-3432

This memorandum is notification that the project referenced above has been reviewed by the UNLV Social/Behavioral Institutional Review Board (IRB) as indicated in Federal Regulatory statutes 45CFR46.

APPENDIX 2

PROMOTIONAL PARAPHERNALIA

Business cards for distribution with survey info



APPENDIX 3

WEBSITES UTILIZED TO RECRUIT PARTICIPANTS



craigslist **san francisco bay area** stc sbt sbv pen nby

post to classifieds
my account
help, faq, abuse, legal
search craigslist
 for sale

event calendar (3122)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10

avoid scams & fraud
job boards compared
lawsuit dismissed
defend net neutrality
weather quake tide
Katrina Relief
best-of-craigslist
craigslist factsheet
craigslist movie & dvd
craigslist T-shirts
craigslist foundation
progressive directory

system status
terms of use **privacy**
about us **help**

© 2007 craigslist, inc

community (14592)
 activities lost+found
 artists musicians
 childcare local news
 general politics
 groups rideshare
 pets volunteers
 events classes

housing (31443)
 apts / housing
 rooms / shared
 sublets / temporary
 housing wanted
 housing swap
 vacation rentals
 parking / storage
 office / commercial
 real estate for sale

for sale (137188)
 barter auto parts
 bikes baby+kids
 boats cars+trucks
 books cds/dvd/vhs
 free clothes+acc
 furniture collectibles
 general computer
 jewelry electronics
 nvs garage sale
 sporting household
 tickets motorcycles
 tools music instr
 wanted

services (24588)
 computer automotive
 creative household
 erotic labor/move
 event skills trade
 financial real estate
 legal sm biz ads
 lessons therapeutic

jobs
 accounting+finance
 admin / office
 arch / engineering
 art / media / design
 biotech / science
 business / mgmt
 customer service
 education
 government
 human resources
 internet engineers
 legal / paralegal
 marketing / pr / ad
 medical / health
 nonprofit sector
 retail / food / hosp
 sales / biz dev
 skilled trade / craft
 software / qa / dba
 systems / network
 technical support
 tv / film / video
 web / info design
 writing / editing
 [ETC] [part time]

gigs (4498)
 computer event
 creative labor
 crew writing
 domestic talent
 adult

resumes (6770)

us states
 alabama
 alaska
 arizona
 arkansas
 california
 colorado
 connecticut
 delaware
 dc
 florida
 georgia
 guam
 hawaii
 idaho
 illinois
 indiana
 iowa
 kentucky
 louisiana
 maine
 maryland
 mass
 michigan
 minnesota
 mississippi
 missouri
 montana
 nebraska
 nevada
 n.hampshire
 new jersey
 new mexico
 new york
 n.carolina
 north dakota
 ohio
 oklahoma
 oregon
 pennsylvania
 puerto rico
 rhode island
 s.carolina
 south dakota
 tennessee
 texas
 utah
 vermont
 virginia
 washington
 west virginia
 wisconsin
 wyoming

ca provs
 alberta
 brit.columbia
 manitoba
 n.brunswick
 newf & lab
 nova scotia
 ontario
 pei
 quebec
 saskatchewan

ca cities
 montreal
 toronto
 vancouver
 more ...

us cities
 alabama
 alaska
 arizona
 arkansas
 california
 colorado
 connecticut
 delaware
 dc
 florida
 georgia
 guam
 hawaii
 idaho
 illinois
 indiana
 iowa
 kentucky
 louisiana
 maine
 maryland
 mass
 michigan
 minnesota
 mississippi
 missouri
 montana
 nebraska
 nevada
 n.hampshire
 new jersey
 new mexico
 new york
 n.carolina
 north dakota
 ohio
 oklahoma
 oregon
 pennsylvania
 puerto rico
 rhode island
 s.carolina
 south dakota
 tennessee
 texas
 utah
 vermont
 virginia
 washington
 west virginia
 wisconsin
 wyoming

countries
 argentina
 australia
 austria
 bangladesh
 belgium
 brazil
 canada
 caribbean
 chile
 china
 colombia
 costa rica
 czech repub
 denmark
 egypt
 finland
 france
 germany
 great britain
 greece
 hungary
 india
 indonesia
 ireland
 israel
 italy
 japan
 korea
 lebanon
 malaysia
 mexico
 micronesia
 netherlands
 new zealand
 norway
 pakistan
 panama
 peru
 philippines
 poland
 portugal
 russia
 singapore
 south africa
 spain
 sweden
 switzerland
 taiwan
 thailand
 turkey
 UAE
 UK
 venezuela
 vietnam

APPENDIX 4

PARTICIPANT REQUIREMENTS AS DESCRIBED VIA EMAIL

It's a survey for commercial sex workers and/or their partners. For this survey, a commercial sex worker is defined as anyone who exchanges sexuality for material things. This includes, but is absolutely not limited to: any personnel at strip clubs, escorts, adult film actors/actresses, doms or subs, nude models, rent boys, brothel employees, phone sex operators, etc. If this sounds like you or your partner (or anyone you can forward this to)- your time to fill out this survey is appreciated!

APPENDIX 5

INFORMED CONSENT

UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH

TITLE OF STUDY: Commercial Sex Workers: Lives and Practices
INVESTIGATOR(S): Katherine M. Hertlein, Ph.D. & Sarah Knowles, B.S.
CONTACT PHONE NUMBER: 702-895-3210

Purpose of the Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to better understand the challenges and implications of working in the commercial sex industry.

Participants

You are being asked to participate in the study because you are over 18 and in a relationship.

Procedures

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete an online survey inquiring about the challenges of working in the commercial sex industry as well as some of the implications of your occupation.

Benefits of Participation

There may not be direct benefits to you as a participant in this study. However, we hope to learn more about the lives of commercial sex workers, as well as the impact your job has on your relationships.

Risks of Participation

There are risks involved in all research studies. This study may include only minimal risks. Specifically, we will be asking questions about your occupation and relationships.

Cost /Compensation

There will not be financial cost to you to participate in this study. The study will take approximately 10 minutes of your time. You will not be compensated for your time.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns about the study, you may contact

Katherine Hertlein at 702-895-3210. For questions regarding the rights of research subjects, any complaints, or comments regarding the manner in which the study is being conducted you may contact the UNLV Office for the Protection of Research Subjects at 702-895-2794.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study or in any part of this study. You may withdraw at any time without prejudice to your relations with the university. You are encouraged to ask questions about this study at the beginning or at any time during the research study.

Confidentiality

All information gathered in this study will be kept completely confidential. No reference will be made in written or oral materials that could link you to this study. All records will be stored in a locked facility at UNLV for 3 years after completion of the study. After the storage time the information gathered will be shredded and/or deleted.

PARTICIPANT CONSENT: I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study. I am at least 18 years of age.

I understand that by proceeding with this inventory and following the link below to the questionnaire that I am giving my consent of participation.

APPENDIX 6

PARTICIPANT SURVEY

Survey Link is the following:

<http://commercialsexandrelationships.questionpro.com>

Section 1

Gender of your closest romantic significant other:

- ☐ Male
☐ Female
☐ Transgender

Is this friend you describe your:

- ☐ Friend
☐ Partner
☐ Spouse
☐ Other

	Very Rarely		Some of the Time		Almost Always	N/A
When you have leisure time, how often do you choose to spend it with your significant other alone?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How often do you keep very personal information to yourself and do not share it with your significant other?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How often do you show your significant other affection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How often do you confide very personal information to your significant other?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How often are you able to understand your significant other's feelings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How often do you feel close to	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

your significant other?

	Not Much		A Little		A Great Deal		N/A
How much do you like to spend time alone with your significant other?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
How much do you feel like being encouraging and supportive with your significant other when he/she is unhappy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
How close do you feel to your significant other most of the time?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
How important is it to you to listen to your significant other's personal disclosures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
How satisfying is your relationship with your significant other?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
How affectionate to you feel towards your significant other?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
How important is it to you that your significant other understands your feelings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
How much damage is typically caused by a disagreement in your relationship with your significant other?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
How important is it to you that your significant other be supportive and encouraging when you are unhappy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
How important is it to you that your significant other shows you affection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
How important is your relationship with your significant other in your life?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

You have just described the relationship you have now with your closest significant other. We are interested in knowing how long this person has been your closest significant other. Please check the appropriate category:

☐ Less than 1 month

- ☐ 1-4 months
- ☐ 5-8 months
- ☐ 9-12 months
- ☐ Over a year
- ☐ Other

Section 2

Are you currently involved in a romantic relationship?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Other

Does your partner work in the commercial sex industry?

- ☐ Yes, currently
- ☐ No, but they used to
- ☐ No, they have never worked in the commercial sex industry.
- ☐ Other

To what extent does your romantic partner know about your work in the commercial sex industry? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ My partner knows everything about my commercial sex work, and is involved in my occupation
- ☐ My partner knows many aspects of my commercial sex work occupation, but is not involved in my work
- ☐ My partner knows that I am involved in the commercial sex work industry, but knows no specifics (i.e. where I work, what my duties are, etc.)
- ☐ My partner does not know that I work in the commercial sex industry
- ☐ My partner believes I have a different occupation than my work in the commercial sex industry
- ☐ Other

Below are some statements about your romantic relationship and your commercial sex occupation. Please indicate whether each statement is true, false, or not applicable for each item *in regards to your sex industry job*.

	True	Sometimes	False	N/A
My partner approves of my occupation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My work benefits my partner financially.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If my partner knew what my job was, they would probably not approve.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My partner fears for my safety while I am at work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My partner is proud of my job.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My job makes my relationship better.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can discuss work freely with my partner, including my struggles and successes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My partner wants me to quit my job.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neither myself nor my partner think it is possible for me to quit my job, because there are no other options for me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My partner helped me find my job.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My job makes my relationship worse.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section 3

Below are some statements about sexual satisfaction. Please indicate whether each statement is true of you by checking either true or false for each item.

	True	False
Usually I am satisfied with my sexual partner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel I do not have sex frequently enough.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

There is not enough variety in my sex life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Usually, after sex I feel relaxed and fulfilled.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Usually, sex does not last long enough.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am not interested in sex.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Usually, I have a satisfying orgasm with sex.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foreplay before intercourse is usually very arousing for me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often, I worry about my sexual performance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Usually, my partner and I have good communication about sex.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Below is a rating scale upon which we would like you to record your personal evaluation of how satisfying your sexual relationship is. The rating is simple. Make your evaluation by placing a check in the appropriate box that best describes your present primary sexual relationship.

- ☐ 8 Could not be better
- ☐ 7 Excellent
- ☐ 6 Good
- ☐ 5 Above average
- ☐ 4 Adequate
- ☐ 3 Somewhat inadequate
- ☐ 2 Poor
- ☐ 1 Highly inadequate
- ☐ 0 Could not be worse

Section 4

What is your age?

Sex:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Transgender
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Current relationship status:

- ☐ Not dating anyone
- ☐ Casually dating multiple partners
- ☐ Seriously dating one partner
- ☐ Seriously dating multiple partners
- ☐ Engaged
- ☐ Married

Are you living with your partner?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

How many children do you have?

- ☐ 0
- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4 or more

How many of these children live in your home?

- ☐ 0
- ☐ 1

- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4 or more

How old are your children? Please select all of the ages that apply.

- ☐ Less than 4 years old
- ☐ Between the ages of 5-8
- ☐ Between the ages of 9-13
- ☐ Between the ages of 14-18
- ☐ Over the age of 18

What is the highest level of education you completed?

- ☐ Grade school
- ☐ High School Graduate
- ☐ Associates degree
- ☐ Technical Training degree
- ☐ Bachelor's degree
- ☐ Some training toward Advanced degree
- ☐ Advanced degree

Are you currently a student?

- ☐ Yes, full time
- ☐ Yes, part time
- ☐ No

If yes, do you have a job outside of your schooling?

- ☐ Yes, part time
- ☐ Yes, full time
- ☐ No

Income:

- ☐ 0-20k
- ☐ 21-40k
- ☐ 41-60k
- ☐ 61-80k
- ☐ 81-100k
- ☐ 101k+
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Have you ever worked in the following professions?

- ☐ Counseling, Psychology, or related field
- ☐ Law Enforcement
- ☐ Public Education
- ☐ Advertising or Marketing
- ☐ Hospitality
- ☐ Public Healthcare
- ☐ Government Position (otherwise unspecified)

What kind of commercial sex work are/ have you been involved in?

- ☐ Adult/ Erotic Movies
- ☐ Escorting Services
- ☐ Call Girl
- ☐ Exotic Dancer
- ☐ Erotic Massage
- ☐ Prostitute
- ☐ Bartender/ Cocktail Server/ Shot Girl (at adult club)

- ☐ I have not been involved with commercial sex work.
- ☐ Other

How would you describe your relationships with your superiors at work?

How would you describe your relationships with your coworkers?

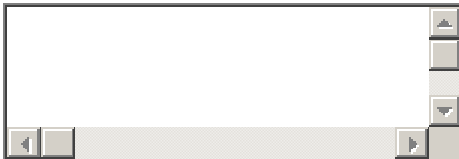
To what extent do your children know about your work in the commercial sex industry? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ My children know everything about my commercial sex work, and are also involved in my occupation
- ☐ My children know many aspects of my commercial sex work occupation, but are not involved in my work
- ☐ My children know that I am involved in the commercial sex work industry, but do not know specifics (i.e. where I work, what my duties are, etc.)
- ☐ My children do not know that I work in the commercial sex industry
- ☐ My children believe I have a different occupation than my work in the commercial sex industry
- ☐ Other

When you discuss your sex industry work, do you feel that people make judgments about you because of what you do?

- ☐ People always judge me for my sex industry work.
- ☐ Usually I feel judged when I discuss what I do.
- ☐ Sometimes I feel judged, but sometimes I feel accepted when I discuss my job.
- ☐ I do not usually feel judged for my commercial sex industry work.
- ☐ I am never judged for my sex industry work.
- ☐ Other

How do people in other realms of your life (school, other jobs, social settings, spiritual communities, etc.) treat you when you discuss your commercial sex work?



What would you like us to know about working in the commercial sex industry and the impact it has on your relationships?

APPENDIX 7

ADDITIONAL TABLES

Table 22

Type of Commercial Sex Work (N= 24)

What kind of commercial sex work are/ have you been involved in?		
Adult/ Erotic Movies	7	12.28%
Escorting Services	12	21.05%
Call Girl	6	10.53%
Exotic Dancer	12	21.05%
Erotic Massage	3	5.26%
Prostitute	9	15.79%
Bartender/ Cocktail Server/ Shot Girl (at adult club)	5	8.77%
I have not been involved with commercial sex work.	0	0.00%
Other	3	5.26%
Total	57	

Table 23

Professional Experience (N=26)

Have you ever worked in the following professions?		
Counseling, Psychology, or related field	5	19.23%
Law Enforcement	1	3.85%
Public Education	4	15.38%
Advertising or Marketing	9	34.62%
Hospitality	2	7.69%
Public Healthcare	4	15.38%
Government Position (otherwise unspecified)	1	3.85%
Total	26	

Table 24

Sex of Participant (N=22)

Sex:		
Male	2	9.09%
Female	20	90.91%
Transgender	0	0.00%
Prefer not to answer	0	0.00%
Total	22	

Table 25

Relationship Status (N=22)

Current relationship status:		
Not dating anyone	0	0.00%
Casually dating multiple partners	0	0.00%
Seriously dating one partner	13	59.09%
Seriously dating multiple partners	0	0.00%
Engaged	2	9.09%
Married	7	31.82%
Total	22	

Table 26

Cohabitation (N=20)

Are you living with your partner?		
Yes	16	80.00%
No	4	20.00%
Total	20	

Table 27

Number of Children (N=22)

How many children do you have?		
0	13	59.09%
1	2	9.09%
2	5	22.73%
3	2	9.09%
4 or more	0	0.00%
Total	22	

Table 28

Number of Children in Home (N=22)

How many of these children live in your home?		
0	13	59.09%
1	3	13.64%
2	5	22.73%
3	1	4.55%
4 or more	0	0.00%
Total	22	

Table 29

Age of Children (N=9)

How old are your children? Please select all of the ages that apply.		
Less than 4 years old	3	17.65%
Between the ages of 5-8	3	17.65%
Between the ages of 9-13	3	17.65%
Between the ages of 14-18	5	29.41%
Over the age of 18	3	17.65%
Total	17	

Table 30

Level of Education (N=22)

What is the highest level of education you completed?		
Grade school	1	4.55%
High School Graduate	1	4.55%
Associates degree	6	27.27%
Technical Training degree	1	4.55%
Bachelor's degree	8	36.36%
Some training toward Advanced degree	0	0.00%
Advanced degree	5	22.73%
Total	22	

Table 31

Student Enrollment Status (N=22)

Are you currently a student?		
Yes, full time	4	18.18%
Yes, part time	3	13.64%
No	15	68.18%
Total	22	

Table 32

Extra-curricular Employment

If yes, do you have a job outside of your schooling?		
Yes, part time	5	38.46%
Yes, full time	1	7.69%
No	7	53.85%
Total	13	

Table 33

Annual Income (N=22)

Income:		
0-20k	0	0.00%
21-40k	2	9.09%
41-60k	3	13.64%
61-80k	2	9.09%
81-100k	4	18.18%
101k+	5	22.73%
Prefer not to answer	6	27.27%
Total	22	

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