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**Women Sex Workers' Embodied Experiences of Sport, Exercise
and Physical Leisure in Aotearoa New Zealand**

A thesis
submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree
of
Doctor of Philosophy
at
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Abstract

This thesis focuses on women's bodies that occupy and move in and between spaces of sex work and sport, exercise and physical leisure. Extending the literature that continues to describe women sex workers as victims, this thesis gives voice to women's everyday lived experiences, capturing the complex and multilayered realities of their lives.

Adopting an ethnographic approach, I provide space for women sex workers to share their experiences of sport, exercise and physical leisure. Drawing on interviews with 17 women sex workers living in Aotearoa New Zealand, and observations at sex work places including clubs, brothels and New Zealand Prostitutes' Collective (NZPC) centres, I explore how women sex workers negotiate their moving bodies in spaces of sport, exercise and physical leisure.

Findings are organised into three empirical chapters, each engaging with a different theory to inform the analysis. The first empirical chapter offers a feminist engagement with Pierre Bourdieu to provide an intersectional mapping of the diverse experiences of sport, exercise, and physical leisure that have impacted women's embodiment from childhood through to adolescence and adulthood. The second chapter draws upon Michel Foucault's theories of power, technologies, and discourses to examine how institutions of sex work and sport influence bodies, and how women sex workers embody multiple, shifting, and sometimes contradictory subject positions in relation to discourses of sex work and wider social discourses of femininity. The third chapter engages with feminist theories of emotion and affect to understand how disgust, shame,

and pride construct affective bodies and spaces that are (inter)personal, collective, and political.

The combination of feminist poststructuralist theories and reflexive, embodied methodologies provides a platform for accessing women sex workers' knowledges and experiences of gender and sex across work and sporting spaces. This research is situated at the intersections of sport, sex work, and women's bodies, with insights and knowledge that promote inclusion and understanding of the mutually constitutive relationships between them.

Dedication

To my grandmothers, Wikitoria Lydia O’Leary nee Tawhai and Isobel Ann Clayton nee Cloughley. Two mana wahine who got things done.

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The following people have contributed to the development of this research, each in their own way, and so I extend my deepest thanks.

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CHAPTER 1

Thinking Through the Body: Sport and Sex Work

My friends suggest it. It's the only place left open in town, and although I'd made a point not to visit strip clubs before, but the group decision has already been made so I go along with it. My pupils constrict as the bouncer opens the door and I enter the shadowy main stage.

My frame of mind is surprisingly at ease, but I'm strangely aware of my ascribed womanhood – so much so that I find myself strutting in like I own the place. This place that deals in bodies makes mine feel immediately endowed. As I step onto the carpeted floor the ostentatious “click click” of my stilettos is snuffed out, leaving me feeling a little less “womanly”, so I swing my hips a degree or two more than usual with each step in an effort to exude more femininity. I feel sexy, secretly reveling in this space that I sense has something to do with it.

I sit down at one of the tables encircling the stage where a lone pole stands waiting. I am immediately intrigued. I've been out of gymnastics for years, but still catch myself thinking about objects as potentialities for movement. Its clean, shiny surface makes me start

wondering how adhesive the metal is and what the circumference is like. I wonder what my body could do with it. Could I get away with a natural grip or would I need to use a hook grip? It would be hard without chalk or hand guards. My abs contract. My palms tingle and the dormant callouses awaken and throb gently. I want to flip the bar horizontally and swing and swing, whipping my body around it with so much force my hands sting and rip open, blood mixing with clumps of chalk and salty sweat.

My friend takes a seat beside me. “Should we get up there girl?” I laugh it off. She stares me down with a mischievous smile and bouncing eyebrows. Oh no, she’s serious. “I’m pretty sure you’re allowed to while there’s no girl up there”. I do a quick scan of the audience – three men at one table, one lone man sitting at the bar, another in the shadows, and a male bartender I start to wonder. Who knows, it could be fun. I could actually see myself putting on a bit of a show. In fact, I think I might be a good exotic dancer! But I’m not sure. What if I look like an idiot? What if we get told to get off, or worse – booed off? What if the real dancer comes out and makes me look even more ridiculous? I want to, but I can’t. My heart is beating fast and my body is keen

and ready to spring up from my seat. But my shame is holding me back.

(Un)luckily for me, the “real” dancer does emerge from behind a curtain, giving us no more time to deliberate. I’m a mix of relief and disappointment. I won’t get to feel the cold metal on my skin or smell the metallic heat that comes from the friction. She carries out her routine as I watch. I’m so curious. I wonder what’s going through her mind. Through her body. She shows so much confidence and pride in her body, such that I’ve never seen before. Most women are way too embarrassed to move like that, for fear being labeled a “slut”. But to me, she is fearless. And she’s getting paid! My mind is doing somersaults. I admire her. I want what she’s got. I imagine myself up on stage using my body so sexually and publicly it fills my body with new meaning. Not since stomping the high beam or soaring over the vaulting horse has my body felt so big, tall, and strong. So important. I am conscious again that I too am a woman. I can use my body however I want, for whatever gain. This is something no one has ever told me before.

This embodied, sensual, affective experience at a strip club and brothel in early 2012 was one of a few key moments that prompted me to think differently about the sex industry. In the days that followed I continued to

think through my own body about the bodies of women sex workers, challenging my assumptions and asking different questions about their embodied, physical experiences. Thus, it was my sporting body, and the bodies of women sex workers, that together led me down the path towards this doctoral project.

Despite its decriminalisation in 2003, sex work in Aotearoa¹ remains highly stigmatised in public discourse (Armstrong, 2018; Schmidt, 2017; Wahab & Abel, 2016). In academic circles, sex work research is now a well-established field, dedicated to addressing these – and other – concerns around the world. Research into sex work has exposed the harmful consequences of ongoing stigmatisation, and while some anthologies and (auto)biographies (see Francis, 2008; Jordan, 1991; Wilton, 2019) provide glimpses into various experiences, there has been relatively little research carried out with a focus on understanding the everyday, personal lives of sex workers (notable exceptions include Cheng, 2017; Day, 2007; Dodsworth, 2014; Scorgie, Vasey, Harper, Richter, Nare, Maseko, & Chersich, 2013). Graham Scambler and Annette Scambler (2003) comment on this trend:

unexceptionally, most women sex workers spend much of their time preoccupied with the day-to-day business of living and supporting and maintaining households. This aspect of their biographies and *projects* for the future remains largely uninvestigated and unreported. (p. 117, italics original)

¹ Aotearoa is the Māori name for New Zealand and is used sometimes used on its own or alongside New Zealand. Throughout this thesis, I mainly use the term Aotearoa as a personal preference, and in acknowledgement of the pre-colonial historical context of my country.

To which Sophie Day (2007) reaffirms:

insofar as a prostitute is wholly equated with her work, her private life becomes invisible, even though it might be very similar in practice to other women's lives. (p. 5)

In this thesis I provide space for women sex workers to share their lived everyday experiences, opening up possibilities for new knowledge and understandings of gendered embodiment and subjectivity, and inadvertently debunking the "mystery" of the sex worker.

This is not a thesis about sex work. It involves women's bodies (un)marked by their involvement in the Aotearoa sex industry. Engaging a feminist poststructural perspective, I examine women sex workers' embodied experiences of sport, exercise, and physical leisure. This is an arena with much to offer in terms of understanding women's capacities for constructing and embodying multiple meanings and subjectivities within these contexts. In doing so, women sex workers' bodies are not reduced to meanings inscribed by their controversial choice of occupation, but are understood in terms of their capacities, forces, and intensities. This shifts the focus from women sex workers' involvement in the industry by asking questions about who women sex workers are, in terms of how they relate to different bodies and spaces, and the many things a woman sex worker's body can *do*. Sport, exercise, and physical leisure provide a unique context for such possibilities.

As women sex workers share their experiences of sport, exercise, and physical leisure, I draw too on my own background spent playing and researching the intricacies of sport, exercise, and physical leisure. The

result is a set of deeply embodied, affective and discursive insights into how women sex workers relate to spaces of sport, exercise, and physical leisure.

To date, no research has considered women sex workers' experiences of sport, exercise, and physical leisure. Thus, this project is framed around the following primary research question:

How do women sex workers experience sport, exercise, and physical leisure?

This is supported with the following sub-question:

- How are women sex workers' bodies imbued with meaning within and across spaces of sport, exercise, physical leisure and work, and how does this contribute to processes of embodied subjectivity?

It was by asking these questions that I began to shift the narrative on women sex workers, thus providing a platform for the construction of this transformative inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Hesse-Biber, 2012).

The framing of these questions, along with the design and scope of this study, have evolved at many stages and in a variety of ways. The foundations, however, have remained the same. Reflecting on transcripts from early field interviews provides renewed insight into the way I conceptualised this project:

Kararaina: So what made you want to [study] sex workers?

Grace: ... I've always been involved in sport, and I just thought about women, because I'm quite feminist and so I thought about women and then I thought about sex workers as a group that hasn't

really been studied before (personal communication, March 17, 2014).

Mere: Do you like your job [researching]?

Grace: I do! Well coz I got to choose what I want to study, and I was just like “I wonder what working girls² are like. I wonder if they’re sporty like me. I might just go and ask them” (laughs) (personal communication, April 16, 2014).

As glaringly oversimplified as these responses are, I find a lived authenticity and realness in them. Unfiltered, my comments capture the essence of this thesis, which is to include and take seriously the lived experiences of sex workers, thus facilitating a broader understanding of their (un)limited embodied subjectivities within and across physical spaces of work and leisure.

In the remainder of this chapter I establish the theoretical framework underpinning this project and shed light on some of the complex, intersecting terms and concepts central to this thesis to elucidate my use of them and provide context(s). I close this chapter by outlining the ensuing chapters that make up this thesis.

Establishing Matter(s)

The feminist poststructural framework upon which this research is grounded is taken from a range of theorists and researchers who are in agreement with a paradigm or perspective that critiques universal metanarratives, dualist thought and the “humanist self” (Barrett, 2005;

² A term Mere had used earlier in the interview.

Davies, Browne, Gannon, Hopkins, McCann, & Wihlborg, 2006). A feminist poststructural inquiry is particularly central to this research for its acknowledgement of wider contexts of gender and power relations, legitimisation of embodied experience, and in its application of feminist ethics to support socially constructed knowledge and truths (Gannon & Davies, 2007; Wright, 1995). Engaging a feminist poststructural critique in this way makes space for voices and bodies that have been previously marginalised or excluded (Fletcher, 1998).

Feminists have long acknowledged the value of women's experience for generating understanding (Kruks, 2014; Scott, 1992). This research project provides space for women sex workers' experiences using embodied ethnographic methodologies that emphasise the significance of bodies and contexts to knowledge production. I take women sex workers' histories, relations, judgements, feelings and affects and re-engage them in synthesis with key social theories, offering an understanding of women sex workers' subjectivities as embedded within complex networks of power relations (McNay, 2004). This includes problematisations of gender as a contingent, and at times, ubiquitous and heteronormative system of practices, as feminist scholars before me have stressed (Alcoff, 2000; Bartky, 1990; Bordo, 1993b; Budgeon, 2015; Butler, 1990; Del Busso & Reavey, 2011; Grosz, 1994; McNay, 2003). Linda M. Alcoff (2000) speaks to the importance of such an analysis: "Subjective experiences, or women's own accounts of our lives and its meaning, cannot be accepted uncritically without relinquishing our ability to challenge gender ideology" (p. 251).

"The body" is an important part of any feminist research concerning women's lives. In my approach I understand the body along feminist

poststructural lines as socially constructed, yet also 'weighty' in its materiality (Barrett, 2005; Burns, 2006; McNay, 1992; Somerville, 2004). In Judith Butler's (1990) words, "the body is not a 'being,' but a variable boundary, a surface whose permeability is politically regulated, a signifying practice within a cultural field of gender hierarchy and compulsory heterosexuality" (p. 177). With this I incorporate readings of the body as lived and corporeal, described by Elizabeth Grosz (1995) as a "concrete, material, animate organization of flesh, organs, nerves, and skeletal structure" (p. 104). Crucially, Grosz continues to say that these constituents "are given a unity, cohesiveness, and form through the psychical and social inscription of the body's surface" (p. 104). In accordance, I therefore embrace the materiality of the body in seeking to make visible the ways in which bodies are produced through power relations (Barrett, 2005; Budgeon, 2015; Burns, 2006).

These understandings of the body in turn influence understandings of embodiment; described intelligibly as both an individual's experience of their body and their understanding of it (Gorringer, Haddow, Rafanell, Tulle, & Yuill, 2007). To consider embodiment is thus to recognise that bodies are experienced both phenomenologically and cognitively, and to examine the processes through which the social is etched into the corporeal and – inversely – how agentic bodies continually constitute and reconstitute the social (Shilling, 1993).

As I locate women's bodies in contexts of sport and sex work, the marriage of the two may not be as unusual as one might expect. Deriving from the term "disport" – meaning to divert from work or take pleasure unrestrainedly – "sport" thus has etymological connections with sensual

and sexual recreation and entertainment (Williams, 2014). Around the turn of the 18th Century, the term “sporting lady” was common slang for prostitutes (MacKell & Noel, 2011; Williams, 2014). Today sex and sport are less analogous, with sport coming to include increasingly more associations with health, competition, and performance, although pleasure still plays a large part in dominant understandings (Brailsford, 2014).

I use the phrasing “sport, exercise, and physical leisure” throughout this thesis as an umbrella term to encompass spaces, places and activities that encourage leisured, physical movement of the body in ways that produce (un)certain meanings (Kirk, 1999; Laker, 2002).³ These and other terms (such as fitness, game, play, fun, training, work-out, and recreation) are recognised for their synonymous use in everyday conversation (Malcolm & Velija, 2018). Their openness to interpretation puts terms like sport, exercise, and physical leisure in a perpetual state of being (re)defined, asserted, and challenged (Murphy, Sheard, & Waddington, 2000). Researchers – many of whom draw upon figurational sociology – have critiqued the ambiguity and wide-range of messages these terms carry in academic literature, media publications, school curricula, and policy documents (Devine & Telfer, 2013a). While there is disagreement as to how these terms should or should not be equated, I take into consideration the ways that sport, exercise, and physical leisure as separate entities all contribute to a widely regarded assumption in Aotearoa; that is, that participation in *any* physical activity – be it

³ At times I use “sport” alone when referring to sport, exercise, and physical leisure. I do this for brevity and readability, but it also demonstrates the ambiguity and adaptability of these terms.

organised sport, dedicated exercise, physical leisure or physical labour – is a generally positive individual and social undertaking (Ryan & Watson, 2018). I unpack this idea in chapters to come, but for now I wish to establish sport, exercise, and physical leisure as a collective term for the purposes of recognising the similarities they share in terms of privileging the material, subjective “healthy”, physically active body (Kirk, 1999). This approach moves away from a tendency to homogenise experiences based on classical dichotomies such as work/leisure and active/passive (Murphy et al., 2000).

Furthermore, in speaking with women sex workers, the words sport, exercise, and physical leisure were used often and interchangeably. They did not ask for clarification on any terms, instead proceeding to apply their interpretations through their embodied experiences. This reflects the diversity and fluidity in women’s experiences and knowledge, but at the same time suggests similarities in discursive understandings of the physically active female body within and across spaces of work and leisure. Indeed, some women’s experiences led to understandings of sex work itself as (an) exercise. This was not something I had previously considered in depth, but rather than imposing my definitions, I allowed the women to offer their own interpretations of what constituted sport, exercise and physical leisure in their lives.

The consolidation of sport, exercise, and physical leisure should not obscure the fact that each term also has inferable, individual meanings, leading me to at times to break up this combination to highlight aspects such as the structured, competitive *institutions* of organised sport; the socially constructed and *individualistic* motivations for focused exercise;

or the *ambiguous* understandings of what constitutes a physical leisure activity.

While this thesis focuses on women sex workers' experiences of sport, exercise, and physical leisure, the bodies that move, negotiate, and manipulate in these spaces are, of course, the same bodies that navigate spaces of sex work. Being a sex worker is an affective, often lasting, embodied subjectivity that women in this study expressed in terms of their everyday lives. As retired sex worker Tania illustrates: "it's hard work to give up when you do give up sex work. I shouldn't say—I mean, you don't really give up sex work, but yeah, when you hang up your hooker heels" (personal communication, April 16, 2015). Before advancing any further, I briefly expand on the topic of "sex work" which has an omnipresence in this thesis.

In 2003, Aotearoa parliament passed the Prostitution Reform Act (PRA),⁴ effectively decriminalising sex work in efforts to eliminate exploitation, promote better working conditions and protect the human rights of sex workers (Abel, Healy, Bennachie, & Reed, 2010c).

"Prostitution" in this regard refers to the provision of commercial sexual services that "involve physical participation by a person in sexual acts with, and for the gratification of, another person; and are provided for payment or other reward" (Prostitution Reform Act, 2003, s. 4). The term "prostitution" has since been renamed "sex work" by many sex workers, activists, commentators, and academics in Aotearoa to better reflect individuals' agency and thus, their status as legitimate "workers" (Jordan,

⁴ Prostitution Reform Act (2003). Available from: <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2003/0028/latest/DLM197815.html>

2005; Schmidt, 2017). This is the basis for my understanding of sex work and sex workers, and does not include forced prostitution, sex slavery, or trafficking, all of which are gross violations of human rights and should not be conflated with sex work (as they can often be) in the context of this study (Butcher, 2003; Ditmore, 2010).

But sex work is not a monolithic practice, nor is “sex worker” a fixed category. Sex work operates in a range of contexts, and has different meanings for the individuals who engage in it (Kesler, 2002). In light of this, I examine varying interpretations of sex work alongside sport, exercise, and physical leisure as sites of embodiment and subjectivity as described by women sex workers, and analyse the flows of bodily movement between them.

In locating women sex workers at the intersections of sex work and sport, exercise, and physical leisure, I use the notion of subjectivity as a way of conceptualising the discursive and material embodiments of space/place and systems through which the body is lived and made meaningful. This is informed by a feminist poststructural understanding of subjectivity as an embodied, multifaceted and fluid experience or sense of self that is shaped by, and shapes, social spaces (Rice, 2009; Shildrick, 2015; Weedon, 2003). Constructed within power relations, subjectivity is a continual process of “becoming”, and often involves the embodiment of multiple, conflicting subject positions (Jackson, 2001; Weedon, 1997). By theorising women sex workers’ subjectivities in this way, I am able to (partially) consider the innumerable complexities of their embodied experiences, extending my initial question of “how do women sex workers experience sport, exercise, and physical leisure?”, to include analyses of

power that can also consider such questions as to *why* might women sex workers experience sport, exercise, and physical leisure in such ways?

While I highlight gendered and sexed power struggles throughout this thesis, I do so with an awareness of the intersections of race, ethnicity, nationality, class, age, and (dis)ability as social constructions that are not always apparent in physical contexts (van Ingen, 2003). Indeed, as Kath Weston (2010) writes, “Gender may assume a million shapes, but it is never just gender” (p. 16). I come to engage, interrogate and embrace these embodied differences as “more than a benign, descriptive listing, a structural-formulaic ‘weight’ or a purely cultural representation” (Taylor, Hines, & Casey, 2010, p. 4), but as women’s narratives reveal – and also as my momentary encounter at the strip club demonstrates – women’s embodied experiences are conflicting and multi-layered. In efforts to incorporate such complexities, I therefore locate women’s bodies “not on stable or given understandings of social differences” (Valentine, 2007, p. 13), but in shifting interactions with other bodies and contexts (Hesse-Biber, 2012).

As will be discussed later in more detail, the bodies and activities of women sex workers spark deep-seated feminist debates over issues of sexual objectification, oppression and exploitation, and agency, autonomy and empowerment. For feminists though, there is agreement that sex work is a deeply gendered experience. Applying a feminist poststructural lens to the study of women sex workers’ bodies, in this thesis I explore the ways in which women’s subjectivities are gendered in everyday practices and how they (re)produce and challenge various femininities that align to traditional conceptions of womanhood. Butler (2004b) understands the

significance of gender to the constitution of the subject in “civil society and cultural life” (p. 115). She explains that individuals become knowing subjects

through becoming gendered in conformity with recognizable standards of gender intelligibility ... the very notion of the ‘person’ is called into question by the cultural emergence of those ‘incoherent’; or ‘discontinuous’ gendered beings who appear to be persons but who fail to conform to the gendered norms of cultural intelligibility by which persons are defined. (Butler, 1990, p. 283)

Throughout this thesis I explore gendered norms of femininity by invoking dominant embodiments of youth, cis-gender, heterosexuality, whiteness, able-bodiedness, and class privilege. These represent technologies of power that operate on and through women sex workers’ bodies in different ways, or as Maggie Wykes and Barrie Gunter (2004) see it, a continual privileging of bodies that are “capitalist and patriarchal but also heterosexual, white and Western” (p. 208).

In addition to these narrow “ideals”, women’s bodies have been further scrutinised historically and culturally, using the “exclusionary logic” (Budgeon, 2015, p. 17) of the binary which establishes femininity as masculinity’s inferior other, embodied by traits such as thinness, weakness, passivity and emotion (Grosz, 1995; Weedon, 1997). I understand these representations of heteronormative femininity (Butler, 2004b) as historically constructed standards by which women’s bodies, practices and desires are frequently measured in Western societies (Bordo, 1993b; Budgeon, 2015), including Aotearoa (Blackett, 2016; Jackson & Vares,

2015). As sex worker Melissa claims, this “bullshit pressure” where women “have to try and be something they’re not” is thus omnipresent; “So that’s the problem—the society we live in”, yet experienced in different individual ways (personal communication, November 2, 2014).

I therefore use these dominant representations not to essentialise, devalue, or negate the experiences of women who do not conform to these types of femininities, but rather to highlight problematic gendered logics recognisable in spaces of sex work (Hubbard & Sanders, 2003; Sanders, 2005) and sport, exercise, and physical leisure (Hargreaves, 1994; Scraton & Flintoff, 2002), and to understand the intersections that gender maintains with other subjective modalities (Butler, 1990). The references to heteronormative femininity cited throughout my analyses are also indicative of the way *I* experience gender, evidencing the inevitable entanglement of my body within this research (discussed in chapters to come). In this knowledge, I explore how gendered power operates through women sex workers’ embodied experiences, embracing alternative readings and embodiments of femininity beyond simply conformity and transgression (Butler, 2006).

Thesis Overview

In the chapters that follow, I draw upon ethnographic observations and interviews with 17 current and former women sex workers, offering their lived, embodied experiences of sport, exercise, and physical leisure in Aotearoa. Together with key concepts from Pierre Bourdieu, Michel Foucault and feminist theorists Elspeth Probyn and Sara Ahmed, I engage

women's experiences to reveal complexities, nuances and intricacies that bring attention to gendered power dynamics across embodied spaces.

Chapter Two is a literature review in two parts. The first is a review of literature in relation to women's bodies in spaces of sport, exercise and physical leisure, and spaces of sex work, respectively. This brings me to a juncture where there is a need for more studies that explore the embodied experiences of women at the intersections between sport, exercise, and physical leisure and sex work. In the second half of Chapter Two, I turn my focus to major contemporary social theorists Pierre Bourdieu, Michel Foucault, and feminist affect and emotion theorists Elspeth Probyn and Sara Ahmed. I review literature in which their concepts have been applied in feminist poststructural interpretations to contexts of sport and sex work, assessing the value of each for this project.

In Chapter Three I discuss the embodied methodologies used to address my research questions. This involves a discussion of the significance of recognising poststructural feminist embodied ways of knowing that place women's bodies at the centre of knowledge construction. I outline my use of ethnographic methods – interviewing and observations – in spaces of sex work, including places of work and New Zealand Prostitutes Collective (NZPC) centres, and offer some brief biographical details about each of my participants. Finally, I interrogate my role as researcher and discuss some principles of feminist ethics that have offered an essential frame of thinking and acting throughout the research process.

Chapter Four is the first of three empirical chapters. I uncover how women sex workers have experienced sport, exercise, and physical leisure

in the past, and how they feature in their current everyday lives. I draw upon the work of Pierre Bourdieu, and feminist poststructuralist interpretations of Bourdieu, following a broad life trajectory to examine how childhood, adolescent, and adult experiences of sport, exercise, and physical leisure are understood and embodied. Concepts of habitus, field, and capital are useful theoretical “tools” employed throughout this chapter, constructing a framework for understanding the deeply embodied dispositions that emerge through the interconnectedness between bodies and spaces.

In Chapter Five I adopt a Foucauldian perspective, moving beyond Bourdieusian understandings of power as a resource, to highlight the ways power operates as a network, through discourses, practices and bodies. Three sex work discourses are examined for the ways in which they mark women sex workers’ bodies as victims, workers, and agents, respectively. These circulate amidst dominant gendered discourses of heteronormative femininity and the fit, healthy (hetero)sexy body, contributing to a mutually constitutive web of discourses, practices, and subjectivities (Davies, 1991). I explore how this tangled web is navigated by women sex workers who engage in ‘technologies of the self’ including sport, exercise, and physical leisure practices, as they actively (re)construct their bodies and subjectivities.

Chapter Six, my third and final empirical chapter, draws largely upon the work of feminist affect and emotion theorists Elspeth Probyn and Sara Ahmed to consider women sex workers’ affective experiences that highlight frames of power, politics and subjectivity. I explore women sex workers’ affective and emotional experiences broadly as instances of

disgust, shame, and pride. Through these experiences, women sex workers continually renegotiate their bodies in relation to other bodies in both spaces of sport, exercise, and physical leisure, and sex work. Embodied affects and emotions are revealed as a significant source of knowledge, opening up possibilities for women sex workers to engage in collective and political movements.

In my concluding chapter I review the theoretical and methodological processes I undertook in exploring the possibilities of women sex workers' experiences of sport, exercise, and physical leisure. I provide a concise summary of the main findings that emerged from the substantive chapters and reflect on some of the limitations to my analyses. I revisit my initial research questions and address each one with my final conclusions, before closing this discussion with a consideration of the implications for this research and the possibilities for new research agendas.

CHAPTER 2

Women's Bodies in Sport and Sex Work: A Literature Review

Women's bodies are integral to their lived experiences (Del Busso & Reavey, 2011; Kruks, 2014; Rice, 2009). Yet historically, women have been – and continue to be – caught up in struggles over their bodies (Coleman, 2009; Fischer & Dolezal, 2018; Rice, 2009). Researchers, scholars, activists and (s)experts have come to recognise the significance of living in one's body and what that means for women as they move within and across different spaces. This chapter begins by following some of the theoretical perspectives on women's bodies through sport, exercise and physical leisure, and sex work literature.

While there is a good deal of literature exploring women's bodies in sport, exercise and physical leisure, and likewise on women's bodies in sex work, what is missing is a consideration of those bodies that pass through *both* spaces. These largely invisible bodies continually cross boundaries, becoming entangled with other bodies, discourses, affects and emotions, and therefore an equally intersectional, interdisciplinary review of literature is needed to understand women's sex working and sporting bodies contextually. In accordance, I assert a feminist poststructural perspective that places emphasis on contemporary power relations that continue to exclude, marginalise, and challenge women's bodies in increasingly nuanced ways.

The second half of this review examines scholarship that has benefited from incorporating contemporary theoretical expertise to understand women's multiple and diverse positionings within and across

these work and leisure spaces. These include Pierre Bourdieu, Michel Foucault, and feminist affect and emotion theorists Sara Ahmed and Elspeth Probyn. I discuss this array of literature with regard to how each theorist and feminist proponents theorise women's bodies and what conceptual tools they might offer. From macro-critical social theories of power stressing domination and oppression, to lived experiences of affect and emotion, these theories highlight gender relations seemingly endemic to physical spaces of sport, exercise, and physical leisure, and sex work, making space for a considered analysis involving women's bodies as "privileged sources of cultural knowledge" (Rice, 2009, p. 248).

Women's Bodies in Sport, Exercise and Physical Leisure

Sport, exercise and physical leisure are often associated with a number of positive outcomes, from improving individual health and facilitating belonging to providing social and economic benefits to society as a whole (Devine & Telfer, 2013b; Wellard, 2012). According to Leslee A. Fisher, Susannah K. Knust, and Alicia J. Johnson (2013), sport has "the potential to enhance health and well-being, foster self-esteem and empowerment, facilitate social inclusion and integration, challenge gender norms, and provide opportunities for leadership and achievement" (p. 34). As a commonly accepted 'fact', this functionalist and utilitarian picture of sport, exercise and physical leisure also maintains an understanding that experiences of sport and physical activity are altogether empowering and liberating (Cooky, 2009; Kay & Dudfield, 2013; Kidd, 2008; Spaaij, 2013). Although evidently encouraging for both individuals and society, I challenge this "trope of empowerment" (Fullagar & Pavlidis, 2018, p. 448)

by employing poststructural feminist approaches that highlight the multiple ways power operates on and through sporting cultures and moving bodies (Markula, 2018). Certainly, women's bodies in sport and physical activity have been fraught with complex, contradictory meanings. For instance, women are encouraged through sport narratives to exercise in pursuit of the stereotypically feminine, heterosexual body, but are often exposed to criticism if they exercise too much, becoming "too" strong and muscular, and thus challenging the "maleness" of sports (Kanemasu & Molnar, 2017; Shilling & Bunsell, 2009; Tajrobehkar, 2016; Washington & Economides, 2016).

Feminist poststructural responses to such paradoxes provide ways to challenge binary constructions of women's bodies. Rather than questions of male/female, femininity/masculinity, and oppression/resistance, these approaches acknowledge multiple experiences and meanings, including sexualities, genders, subjectivities and identities (Del Busso & Reavey, 2011). Feminist poststructural considerations of power within sporting contexts have seen numerous sport scholars drawn to focusing on women's and girl's bodies as sites of embodied gender and femininity (Azzarito & Solmon, 2009; Lafrance, 2011; lisahunter, 2018; Lokman, 2011; Olive, 2013; Olive, McCuaig, & Phillips, 2015; Washington & Economides, 2016). Collectively, these studies emphasise the gendered nature of sport as complex, contradictory, highly relational and multidimensional. Whilst opposing reductive, oppressive binaries, many feminist sport researchers admit that sport, for women, appears as a site of dualistic power struggles:

sport can be both liberating and confining. On the one hand, it allows women the freedom to move their bodies powerfully and gracefully; on the other, women still experience the expectation to ‘perform femininity’ [Judith Butler, 1990] because of societal structures. (Fisher et al., 2013, p. 29)

In addition to focusing on the pervasiveness of gender and femininity, this complex, often paradoxical understanding of sport has been observed in “her/histories” of women in sport (Hargreaves, 1994; Parratt, 1994; Vertinsky, 1994); many organised sports (Ashton-Shaeffer, Gibson, Holt, & Willming, 2001; Birrell & Richter, 1987; Cox & Thompson, 2000; Dorken & Giles, 2011; Pavlidis & Fullagar, 2014; Theberge, 1998); women’s fitness and exercise (Duncan, 1994; Maguire, 2006; Markula, 1995; Washington & Economides, 2016); physical education in schools (Azzarito & Solmon, 2006; Azzarito, Solmon, & Harrison, 2006; Hills, 2006; Richman & Shaffer, 2000; Sykes, 1996; Velija & Kumar, 2009; Wright, 1995, 2004); sports media and corporate advertising (Creedon, Cramer, & Grantiz, 1994; Disch & Kane, 2000; Dworkin & Messner, 2002; Kane & Greendorfer, 1994); and leisure and lifestyle sports (Aitchison, 2000; Deem, 1996; Dille & Scraton, 2010; Shaw, 2001; Wearing & Wearing, 1988; Wheaton, 2002; Wheaton & Tomlinson, 1998). For example, Pirkko Markula’s (1995) foundational piece “Firm but Shapely, Fit but Sexy, Strong but Thin: The Postmodern Aerobicizing Female Bodies” examines aerobics specifically as a site for disciplining female bodies, but concludes that although women work hard to achieve the “ideal body”, they also gain pleasure, self-confidence, and self-esteem through their workouts:

Aerobicizers in this study have an active voice. They do not quietly dedicate their lives to body reconstruction, but they question the body ideal ... This questioning leaves many women puzzled: They [sic] want to conform with the ideal, but they also find the whole process ridiculous. As a result, women's relationship with the body ideal is contradictory. This awareness, nevertheless, demonstrates that women have not internalized the panoptic power arrangement entirely. (Markula, 1995, p. 450)

In order to understand such ambiguity, poststructural feminist inquiry must remain fluid and adaptable in its approach, deconstructing binaries and creating space for thinking about women's bodies in ways that have never been considered. Sport scholars have been astute in such application, examining embodied intersections of class (Azzarito & Solomon, 2005; Deem, 1996), sexuality (Caudwell, 2007b; Lenskyj, 1990, 1994b; Sykes, 1996), ethnicity and race (Hill & Azzarito, 2012; Palmer & Masters, 2010), dis/ability (Ashton-Shaeffer et al., 2001; Fitzgerald, Drury, & Stride, 2018) and religion (Hamzeh & Oliver, 2012; Knez, Macdonald, & Abbott, 2012) within sport, exercise, and physical leisure spaces – though they typically refrain from focusing solely on one aspect of identity, choosing to see women as constructed through multiple, fragmented subjectivities. Importantly, such an emphasis on women's bodies shifts the focus from viewing them as ultimately constrained by structure, to witnessing their possibilities for resistance through sport.

In adopting such nuanced approaches to understanding the workings of power within and on women's moving bodies, poststructural

feminists challenge essentialised, liberal assumptions about women as either cultural dupes or empowered subjects. Such dualisms are challenged by a growing area of research that keeps women's embodied experiences at the centre of their analyses in order to materialise different embodied knowledges of sport, exercise and physical leisure. While a considerable body of literature has explored women's bodies in spaces of sport, exercise and physical leisure, this thesis is focused on women sex workers' experiences of sport, exercise and physical leisure – an area not yet explored.

Women's Bodies in Sex Work

Women sex workers have been the subject of inquiry for many years. Previous studies have broadly focused on issues of HIV/AIDS and sexual health (Day, Ward, & Harris, 1988; Day, Ward, & Perrotta, 1993; O'Connor, Berry, Rohrsheim, & Donovan, 1996; Scambler & Paoli, 2008; Shannon, Kerr, Allinott, Chettiar, Shoveller, & Tyndall, 2008); sex workers' backgrounds and motivations (Bell & Brady, 2000; Hutto & Faulk, 2000; Silbert & Pines, 1982); drug use (Chettiar, Shannon, Wood, Zhang, & Kerr, 2010; Cusick & Hickman, 2005; Goldstein, 1979); workplace violence (Brents & Hausbeck, 2005; Farley & Barkan, 1998; Nixon, Tutty, Downe, Gorkoff, & Ursel, 2002; Raphael & Shapiro, 2004); research on sex work clients (Holt & Blevins, 2007; Monto, 1999; Pitts, Smith, Grierson, O'Brien, & Misson, 2004); and issues related to social and legal status (Abel et al., 2010c; Healy, Wi-Hongi, & Hati, 2017; Jordan, 2005; Outshoorn, 2004; Vanwesenbeeck, 2001; Wahab & Abel, 2016).

While research on sex work appears to be growing, it is still relatively sparse in comparison with other social groups (Milrod & Weitzer, 2012; Weitzer, 2009). Researchers in the past may well have opted not to focus inquiry on women in the sex industry because of the potential ethical and moral debates that rage around it (Boris, Gilmore, & Parrenas, 2010; Sanders, O'Neill, & Pitcher, 2009; Van der Meulen, Durisin, & Love, 2013). Christine Overall (1992) writes: “the topic [sex work] is a difficult one for women; it is a topic that divides us. In fact, the division of opinion that ostensibly exists between feminists and sex workers also divides feminists themselves” (p. 706). Indeed, feminist research on sex work can be broadly divided into two perspectives; one that denounces the sex industry entirely, based on inherent objectification and oppression of women (abolitionist or anti-sex work) and the other that argues for celebration of women’s embodied sexual freedom (pro-sex work). The two poles contribute to the “the sex wars” described by Wendy Chapkis (1997) as “acrimonious disputes over the role of sexuality in women’s liberation and oppression” (p. 27).

The abolitionist or anti-sex work perspective is today championed by academics including Melissa Farley (2003b, 2004, 2006, 2009, 2013), Sheila Jeffreys (2004, 2009, 2010a, 2010b), Andrea Dworkin (1987, 1993, 2004) and Julie Bindel (2006; 2012). Farley (2003a) clearly states the anti-sex work position, viewing “prostitution” as “sexual violence which results in economic profit for perpetrators ... Like slavery, prostitution is a lucrative form of oppression of human beings” (p. 247). Presenting a similar argument in their book *Sex for Sale*, Rebecca Whisnant and Christine Stark (2004) clarify:

As will be clear, we stand unequivocally on one side of that debate as it is typically framed: we believe that feminists who defend pornography and prostitution are mistaken in their analyses, and that their political positions and alliances are harmful to women, to feminism and to social justice. (p. xiii)

Drawing on these assumptions, research stemming from this camp tends to highlight the myriad dangers of prostitution in attempts to advocate safety and protection from violence perceived to be inherent to the institution (Bindel et al., 2012; Farley, 2009, 2013; Jeffreys, 2010a, 2010b; Post, 2011). Moreover, violence experienced by women in prostitution is taken to constitute violence against all women because prostitution is linked to deeper moral concerns about gender equality:

prostitution comes from male dominance, not from female nature. It is a political reality that exists because one group of people has and maintains power over another group of people ... We need to look at the role of men in creating political systems that subordinate women; and that means that we have to look at the role of men in creating prostitution, in protecting prostitution-how law enforcement does it, how journalism does it, how lawyers do it. We need to know the ways in which all those men use prostitutes and in doing so destroy the human dignity of the women. (Dworkin, 1993, p. 10)

The significance of this work in communicating the harms of sex work and promoting women's freedom is often negated by the accompanying (and contradictory) perspective that ultimately renders women sex workers as

objects – devoid of agency (Meyers, 2014). Carole Pateman (1999) has been accused of such minimisation (see Marasco, 2013) in her understanding of prostitution: “There is no desire or satisfaction on the part of the prostitute. Prostitution is not mutual, pleasurable exchange of the use of bodies, but the unilateral use of a woman’s body by a man in exchange for money” (p. 57). Pushing back on prostitution and sex work, this perspective draws on radical feminist rhetoric and theorising that inevitably positions women as victims of male sexual oppression. This justification reinforces responses set up to help women exit the sex industry, and campaigns against decriminalisation on the grounds that the solution to the problem of sex work must be extensive and involve addressing the social structures that currently support gender inequalities (Kissil & Davey, 2010).

As one could expect, the anti-sex perspective has been challenged by pro-sex work advocates through a pro-sex feminist stance. In direct response to what they call “social purity feminism”, Linda Gordon and Ellen DuBois (1983) promote recognition of a woman’s choice to enter sex work in order to “have at least a chance at economic independence” and sexual liberation (p.46). Others have studied the advent of such possibilities by providing space for the lived experiences of women in sex work to be shared and understood as conditions of embodied subjectivity (Abel, Fitzgerald, Healy, & Taylor, 2010b; Armstrong, 2015; Ditmore, Levy, & Willman, 2010; Harrington, 2017; Kontula, 2008; Nencel, 2017; Roberts, Sanders, Myers, & Smith, 2010; Sanders, 2013a, 2013b; Sanders et al., 2009; Spanger & Skilbrei, 2017; van der Meulen, 2011). These projects vary in scope and discipline, reflecting the vast differences and

complexities of the sex industry and the women who work in it, but all share in their recognition of sex work as work, thereby rejecting previous labels of “prostitute” and “whore” (although ‘whore’ has been reappropriated by some, see Nagle, 1997).

Sex work scholar Teela Sanders (2013a, 2013b) has produced a body of work that demonstrates a shift from perceiving sex work as ultimately abhorrent to a recognition that – despite the potential for exploitation – sex work is work, and in order to understand it “we must look to the micropractices of the organization of sex work and its complexity and resistance to dominant discourses” (Sanders, 2005, p. 322). Kate Hardy (2013) agrees, stating that:

Recognizing sex work as work does not mean denying that it is performed under conditions of exploitation, physical danger, emotional abuse, health degradation, racism, sexism, poverty and immiseration (Schultz, 2006), but instead provides the conceptual framework necessary for approaching these issues. (p. 53)

This growing area of literature is one I draw on often throughout this thesis for its recognition of women’s agency and potential for future theoretical frameworks that understand sex work as a situated practice.

Further toward the pro-sex work end of the spectrum, some feminists claim a “sex positive” approach in attempts to declare women’s freedom from ongoing stigma that afflicts those who “venture into any form of sexuality that does not conform to the restrictive frame of monogamous heterosexual sexuality” (Comte, 2014, p. 201; see also Bell, 2009; Willis, 2012). In her essay “Sex Radical Politics, Sex-

Positive Feminist Thought, and Whore Stigma”, Carol Queen (2001) embraces sex positive feminism as that which affirms women’s right to be sexual without shame, and doesn’t “denigrate, medicalize or demonize any form of sexual expression except that which is non consensual” [sic] (p. 94). She writes about the support from sex positive feminists to the causes of sex work:

They, unlike so many orthodox feminists, understand that we do not consider our work itself a form of sexual harassment; that many of the abuses committed within the sex industry have little to do, in fact, with sexuality; that we are not *selling* ourselves or our bodies ... any more that does any worker under capitalism; sex-positive feminists remember that any worker under capitalism is subject to mistreatment. (Queen, 2001, p. 102, emphasis original)

Like others, Queen uses the term “sex radicalism” to advance her resistance toward orthodox abolitionist feminism. This involves taking the minority sexual viewpoint, deemed unacceptable by the rest of society and openly interrogating the question of why sex is constantly conflated with questions of one’s morality (Califia, 2000; Hsu, 2018; Queen, 2001, 2003).

Of the various groups claiming to have sex workers’ best interests at heart, pro-sex, anti-sex, sex positive, radical feminists and sex radicals, and often feminists who do not specifically state their position on sex work, all seek to eliminate abuse. A number of researchers deliberately disengage from the age-old feminist debate over sex work (for example Scoular & O’Neill, 2008; Skilbrei, 2017; Skilbrei & Holmström, 2011). With so much in-fighting, taking sides is hardly an inviting task, especially

when all parties with an opinion are, at times, able to offer some worthy insights (Barton, 2002). Accordingly, I am in agreement with May-Len Skilbrei and Charlotta Holmström (2011) that the “problem with an approach that gives priority to one perspective is that it renders other sources of inequality invisible” (p. 509). Therefore, in adopting a feminist poststructural approach, I aim to provide awareness of gendered and sexual bodies as lived in everyday context without dealing in absolutes or binaries that are assumed as fact, or engage in “morality politics” (Weitzer, 2008) over how women choose to use their bodies (Shannon et al., 2008; Wagenaar & Altink, 2012).

Team Players: The Possibilities for Sport and Sex Work

Over the past decade there has been some interest in how mega-sports events and the influx of (predominantly male) sport tourists impact sex work. For example, the 2010 FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association) World Cup held in South Africa launched a number of inquiries into the supply of and demand for sex during the tournament. In a series of studies, Marlise Richter and colleagues address issues of public health and legal frameworks (Richter, Chersich, Scorgie, Luchters, Temmerman, & Steen, 2010), HIV transmission (Delva, Richter, De Koker, Chersich, & Temmerman, 2011; Richter & Massawe, 2010b), increases in population (Richter, Luchters, Ndlovu, Temmerman, & Chersich, 2012) and impacts on sex workers and advocacy initiatives (Richter & Massawe, 2010a; Richter, Scorgie, Chersich, & Luchters, 2014) during and following the 2010 World Cup. In agreement with these studies, Elsje Bonthuys (2012) found that media-driven sensationalism around the 2010 World

Cup purporting mass-immigration of foreign sex workers did not materialise, but rather added to justifications for the harassment and punishment of sex workers.

Inflated concerns about increases in sex work activity have become a fixture of many other major sporting events around the world including the Sydney Olympic Games in 2000 (McNulty, Rohrsheim, & Donovan, 2003), the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany (Loewenberg, 2006), the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver (Deering, Chettiar, Chan, Taylor, Montaner, & Shannon, 2012; Lenskyj, 2013) and UEFA Euro 2012 in Ukraine (Schuster, Sülzle, & Zimowska, 2010). These and other mega-sports events are frequently accompanied by media reports that raise public fears by predicting ‘swathes’ of sex workers, but have been shown to be altogether unfounded (Bonthuys, 2012; Deering et al., 2012; Deering & Shannon, 2012; Hubbard & Wilkinson, 2015; Loewenberg, 2006; Schuster et al., 2010). Gwynn Easterbrook-Smith (2018) recently added to this literature with an Aotearoa study of news media representations of sex work during the 2011 Rugby World Cup. She finds similar unnecessary “panic” about a forecasted influx of fans and sex workers surrounding the Rugby World Cup and discusses the implications of stigma for sex workers as a result (Easterbrook-Smith, 2018, p. 128). While this area of literature may be one of the only existing places where sport and sex work definitively collide, it nonetheless points to interesting intersections where women sex workers’ bodies are stigmatised and excluded, yet intrinsically linked to the functioning of sport in society.

There is also some interesting research linking sport and the sex industry through the growing interest in recreational pole and exotic

dancing, signalling cultural changes in sport, exercise and physical leisure. Identifying a new form of gendered leisure for women, these commentaries put forward important questions centred around issues of embodiment, stigma and empowerment (Bahri, 2012; Dimler, McFadden, & McHugh, 2017; Griffiths, 2015; Holland, 2010; McIntyre, 2011; Nicholas, Dimmock, Donnelly, Alderson, & Jackson, 2018; Pellizzer, Tiggemann, & Clark, 2016; Wesely, 2003; Whitehead & Kurz, 2009). Taking a Bourdieusian approach, Dana Fennell (2018) recognises the “spaces between fields” (Eyal, 2013, p. 158), and the ways that pole dancing studios act as a bridge between sport and adult entertainment, redefining understandings of sport, exercise and physical leisure.

But importantly, these studies examine pole and exotic dancing as a leisure activity taken up by ‘normal’, ‘everyday’ women, as Samantha Holland (2010) describes the “polers” in her study: “a nurse, a radio journalist, a full-time mum, a phlebotomist, a software developer, an analytical chemist, a barmaid ...” (p. 13). Therefore, while this literature conceptualises the intriguing intersections of sport and the sex industry, it does not consider paid dancers as leisure participants in any capacity, and although there is an extensive body of knowledge dedicated to the lives of paid dancers (Barton & Hardesty, 2010; Bradley, 2007; Law, 2009; Murphy, 2003; Trautner & Collett, 2010, to name a few), there has been no interest in their experiences of sport, exercise and physical leisure.

It appears that scholars are making progress in blurring the boundaries of sport and sex work (including exotic, burlesque, strip, lap, and pole dancing), albeit without the embodied experiences of women who actually work in these spaces. By providing space for women sex workers’

experiences of sport, exercise and physical leisure, this thesis makes an original contribution to this exciting new space encompassing sex work, sport, exercise and physical leisure and women's bodies.

Juxtaposing literature on women's bodies in sport and in sex work produces similarities in three distinct ways. Firstly, both spaces are well known for their controversial treatment of women's bodies, for example privileging dominant constructions of femininity, identified notably in "feminine appropriate" sports like figure skating, gymnastics and ballet (Lenskyj, 1994b, p. 291, see also Hargreaves, 1990), and in sex work where women have been found to "effectively manipulate aspects of heterosexual femininity in order to capitalize from this financially" (Sanders, 2005, p. 336). As a constraint on women's bodies, dominant constructions of femininity are symptomatic of a larger system of power, some feminists calling it patriarchy (Cann, 2015; Majstorovic & Lassen, 2011), others more attuned to systems, structures or discourses of neoliberalism (Brents & Sanders, 2010; Gill & Scharff, 2013; Kelly, 2013; McRobbie, 2015). Certainly, from a feminist poststructural point of view, dominant constructions of white, middle classed, cisgendered, heterosexual femininity are problematic for women, evidenced in analyses of both sport and sex work that highlight the complexities in comparing women's bodies against each other and defining them in opposition to men.

Secondly, despite showing evidence of constraint on women's gendered bodies, both sport and sex work offer spaces for resistance. This can be seen in women's rejection of heteronormative femininity, manifested in sport literature as the "empowered female athlete" (Toffoletti, 2016, p. 201), who, in a range of contemporary sport and

exercise contexts, is capable of producing new understandings of femininity through meaningful, embodied experiences (Barnett, 2008; Hill, 2015; Lafrance, 2011; Tajrobehkar, 2016; Thorpe, 2008; Washington & Economides, 2016). Likewise, we see in sex work research a similar depiction of the empowered sex worker who makes her own decisions about her body, including resistance to conventional heteronormative femininity, by becoming a risk taker (Sanders, 2004a), and is a “sexual entrepreneur” (Harvey & Gill, 2011) who rejects the label of victim. It is the focus on women’s lived and embodied experiences that have allowed these constructions to surface, highlighting the importance of analyses that recognise women’s agency within enduring power relations.

A lack of insight and acknowledgement of the complexities and intricacies of women’s lived experiences is what constitutes a third commonality between sport research and sex work research. That is, scholarship in neither field has considered, in depth, the possibilities of women embodying roles of athlete/participant/exerciser *and* sex worker. Questions thus remain as to how women sex workers experience sport, exercise, and physical leisure as part of their everyday embodied encounters.

Both sport and sex work are highly complex, “gender charged” (Carr, 2017, p. 25), physical environments. Considering the two together with feminist poststructural attention to embodiment as carried out in this study reveals a space of liminality in both the literature and wider social discourse, where women sex workers are situated firmly within the borders of their profession. For all they offer, the normative, seemingly

empowering potentialities of sport, exercise, and physical leisure seem not to have been conceived of as part of women sex workers' lives.

In examining women sex workers' experiences of sport, exercise, and physical leisure, I address questions of power and the possibilities of mobility and resistance by taking substantial direction from major contemporary social theorists Pierre Bourdieu, Michel Foucault, and feminist affect and emotion theorists Elspeth Probyn and Sara Ahmed. Each of these theorists offer valuable theoretical concepts and tools for understanding the ways power works on and through moving bodies within and across space. The remainder of this chapter reviews literature where their concepts have been applied in feminist poststructural interpretations of sport, exercise and physical leisure, and sex work, to reveal the benefits of each approach.

Exploring how feminist poststructural theory has been used in communication with major contemporary social theories provides a foundation upon which to build knowledge and addresses the shortage of specific sport-sex work literature, as this is an area yet to be examined. Feminist poststructural theories encourage me to use women's lived experiences as a leading source of knowledge, and as those before me have found, this is particularly useful in understanding women's bodies as sites of power and resistance (St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000). One of the ways poststructural feminist theories support women's lived experiences is in their synthesis with other established theoretical traditions, or what Lois McNay (2003) calls a "*generative* theoretical framework" (p. 140, emphasis original). In the following sections of this chapter I demonstrate

the benefits of such syntheses in understanding women's embodied experiences in sport, exercise, and physical leisure, and sex work.

Playing the Game with Pierre Bourdieu

Bourdieu is sometimes known for his stylistic assaults on those who opposed him or his theories. He famously referred to sociology as a martial art, to describe the way he used it to both rightfully attack what he saw as injustices, and defend his justifications (Bourdieu, 2010; Fregosi & Gonzalez, 2002). A rugby player during his youth, Bourdieu (1984) often used sporting analogies in his conceptualisations of society, using the terms "game" (p. 12) and "play" (p. 498) when describing social processes, not to mention his reworking of the term "field" (Grenfell, 2015, p. 94). These metaphors not only correlate with the context of this study, but the use of Bourdieusian theory within studies of physical and sporting culture has been highly beneficial for many scholars examining aspects of sport, exercise and physical leisure (Atencio, Beal, & Wilson, 2009; Falcous & McLeod, 2012; Grenfell, 2015; lisahunter, Smith, & emerald, 2014b; Paradis, 2012; Purdue & Howe, 2012, 2015; Thorpe, 2009, 2014).

David Brown (2006) suggests that the connection between sport sociology and Bourdieu is facilitated by the ways in which the sporting body acts as a fundamental component, linking Bourdieu's understandings of social structures and embodied subjectivity. Correspondingly, Grant Jarvie and Joseph Maguire (2002) state that "for Bourdieu, the study of the sporting body highlights issues which are central to the sociological enterprise" (p. 207).

For many scholars engaging in the type of corporeal sociology Bourdieu offers, his designated “conceptual tools” are perhaps the biggest advantage, granting means to “articulate the dialogue between structures that shape a society and their interaction with the individual person” (lisahunter, Smith, & emerald, 2014a, p. 3). Together these tools — habitus, field, and capital — constitute Bourdieu’s *Theory of Practice* in a bid to transcend dichotomies and offer new ways of understanding how power relations work within and across social spaces and institutions (Bourdieu, 1977; Swartz & Zolberg, 2004).

Several feminist sport scholars have experimented with Bourdieu’s theoretical framework in advancing understandings of women’s embodied, gendered experiences of sport, exercise and physical leisure (Hill, 2009; Hills, 2006; lisahunter, 2004; Olive & Thorpe, 2011; Thorpe, 2007, 2009, 2014). In an attempt to showcase the diverse applications that Bourdieu’s theories offer, Doune Macdonald and Louise McCuaig (2014) explore fellow sport theorists’ attractions to Bourdieu. Their summation highlights just how his adaptable tools have come to be so popular in studies of sport and physical activity:

What became apparent across all of this commentary is that often, no single theory or indeed theoretical concept was considered adequate to explain the complexity of the social phenomenon of interest, but that Bourdieu provided a strong foundation (Macdonald & McCuaig, 2014, p. 167).

They go on to say that researchers taking a gendered perspective have conveyed a keen and skilful ability to work in concert with Bourdieu:

Of particular interest ... was their paradigmatic eclecticism, in particular moving across structural, critical, feminist and poststructuralist boundaries in order to respond to the challenges posed by the research questions and spaces that they were exploring (Macdonald & McCuaig, 2014, p. 167).

Holly Thorpe (2007, 2009, 2011, 2014) has demonstrated this in her research into snowboarding bodies where she draws on recent feminist engagements with Bourdieu (Lovell, 2000; McCall, 1992; McNay, 1999b; Skeggs, 2004 and others) in order to explain gender and embodiment in snowboarding culture. In synthesis with feminism and Bourdieu, Thorpe (2014) extends the concept of habitus to “gendered habitus” (p. 138) to reveal how women embody different aspects of snowboarding culture, placing their experiences within the “highly fragmented” (p. 140), gendered and classed cultural field, amidst a continuous exchange of capital including “feminine capital”(p. 495), a gendered version of Bourdieu’s cultural capital. Thereby endorsing Bourdieu’s tools, Thorpe (2014) writes that these “concepts remain deliberately vague and malleable, encouraging their questioning and their adaptation to the specific domain to which they are applied” (p. 135).

Joanne Hill (2009) observes habitus located in heavily gendered discourses of women’s football. In what she sees as critical for participation free of constraint, spaces must be inclusive in order for the habitus to be “disrupted” (p. 7). A gendered habitus in this sense is reflexive, generative and deeply embodied in practices of football (McNay, 1999b). Therefore, while gendered dispositions are continually manifested

through inscriptions on the body, women's habitus also holds potential for creating material and symbolic subversions of gendered oppression characteristic to many sport, exercise and physical leisure experiences (Brown, 2006). As McNay (1999b) reminds us:

In Bourdieu's model although the habitus accords a disproportionate weight to primary social experiences, the resulting closure is never absolute because the habitus is an historical structure that is only ever realized in reference to specific situations. Thus while an agent might be predisposed to act in certain ways, the potentiality for innovation or creative action is never foreclosed. (p. 103)

This is important for feminist studies of gendered, sporting contexts where habitus may be afforded space to develop and flourish within various fields.

lisahunter (2004) extends the use of habitus to include both field and capital (and other Bourdieusian concepts) in her examination of physical education (PE) classes in school curricula. In doing so, she finds particular discourses of body, gender and sexuality in the field of PE working to produce physical capital "through gaze, performance, measurement and categorization" (lisahunter, 2004, p. 178). lisahunter (2004) reminds us that habitus may well be reflexive with potential to subvert, but it also houses crucial social memory that structures – but does not determine – negotiations of subjectivity. According to lisahunter (2004), "It is through the tension between being subjected to meaning inherent in the discourses of PE and becoming an embodied agentic subject that PE may constitute and construct the habitus of young people"

(p. 176), pointing to the complex, yet perpetual interrelatedness of field and disposition, place and subjectivity.

Bourdieu's conceptual framework has also been popular among feminist scholars studying sex work. Maddy Coy, Josephine Wakeling and Maria Garner (2011) draw on Bourdieu's (1990b) theory of symbolic violence to describe the depth of domination in which sex workers unwittingly find themselves. Symbolic violence is described as "the violence which is exercised upon a social agent with his or her complicity" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 167). Coy et al. (2011) believe representations of "prostitution" in popular culture to be forms of symbolic violence, responsible for reproducing gendered hierarchies by "reinforcing gender orders that privilege men and masculinity, and casting women as less than human, without coercion or physical force" (Coy et al., 2011, p. 442). Through dominant mainstream narratives, symbolic violence "disguises harm that women in the sex industry experience and the gender inequality of consumerism that underpins global sex markets" (Coy et al., 2011, p. 442). Firmly upholding anti-sex work legitimacies of male domination, these findings present sex work as working within patriarchy and consumerism in a neoliberal sense, to the detriment of women's bodies.

Bourdieuian theory has also been used to a greater extent by pro-sex work feminists; in particular, his concept of capital has been used to highlight the various economic, cultural, and bodily resources sex workers possess (Hoang, 2011). In her research into "Sex Workers' Strategies for Capitalizing on Sexuality", Sanders (2005) demonstrates the means to which sex workers use erotic capital to their advantage, and questions

interpretations of sex workers as victims: “Generalizations made regarding the exploitation of female sex workers can be problematized because there is evidence that some women involved in prostitution manipulate their own sexuality and that of their male clients” (p. 322). This conscious deployment of sexuality is extended by a number of scholars, with terminologies of erotic capital (Green, 2008b; Hakim, 2010), sexual capital (Ding & Ho, 2013; Martin & George, 2006), feminine capital (Otis, 2012) and girl capital (Mears, 2015) all being used to acknowledge women’s embodied sexual desirability as an asset.

Catherine Hakim’s (2010, p. 28) use of the term erotic capital refers to a “multi-faceted combination of physical and social attractiveness” and includes facial beauty, sexual attractiveness, liveliness and energy, social skills, social presentation, and sexuality itself: “sexual competence, energy, erotic imagination, playfulness and everything else that makes for a sexually satisfying partner” (Hakim, 2010, p. 29). Erotic capital in this sense is tradable by women sex workers for (men’s) economic capital in an exchange that Hakim sees as always most advantageous to the woman.

In his critique of Hakim’s use of erotic capital, Adam I. Green (2013) points out serious flaws in what he sees as reducing Bourdieu’s concept to an essentialised distillation, ultimately leading him to diagnose the fault as neglect of the contextual specificity of field analysis. Green argues for the importance of considering structures of race, class and age, for – as he asserts – erotic capital is not an obtainable, democratised resource, but accrues unequally across all women, including sex workers (Green, 2013). Additionally, as most feminist scholars agree, sexuality is not a monolithic thing, but open to many interpretations (Butler, 1990, 1997; Jackson, 2006;

Sanders, 2005). An apparent enthusiast of Bourdieu, Green formulates his concepts of “sexual fields” (Green, 2015), and “erotic habitus” (Green, 2008a) to complete his interpretation of Bourdieu’s theory of practice which, rather surprisingly, has yet to be applied in a sex work context, but nonetheless has all the elements for a potentially insightful analysis of the multilayered lives of women sex workers.

Disciplining Michel Foucault

Philosopher, historian, and “cultural icon” (O’Farrell, 2005, p. 1), Foucault is best known for his original conceptualisations on the workings of power. In his earlier works, Foucault (1983) demonstrates an understanding of power as fundamentally oppressive: “if we speak of the structures or the mechanisms of power, it is only insofar as we suppose that certain persons exercise power over others” (p. 217). Power is “a way of acting upon an acting subject or acting subjects by virtue of their acting or being capable of action” (Foucault, 1983, p. 221). This understanding of power is demonstrated through “technologies of domination” whereby the self is constituted by power-knowledge relations (Allen, 2011; Foucault, 1988c), and power and control is administered through institutions in order to impel social conformity (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 2014; O’Farrell, 2005).

Later on in his career Foucault (1988a) revised his understandings of the workings of power, and individuals’ potential for agency and resistance. In so doing, he formulated “technologies of the self”, which:

permit individuals to effect by their own means or with help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves

in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality. (p. 18)

Under certain conditions, technologies of the self can develop and function as practices of freedom, allowing individuals to transform oneself within power structures (Thorpe, 2008). This is made possible by Foucault's crucial reconceptualisation of power as embodied and productive as opposed to repressive, and constantly flowing through discourse (Butler, 2004a).

Foucault's legacy is sometimes marred by accusations of ignorance about gender and women's experience, or what Butler (1990) describes as "a problematic indifference to sexual difference" (p. xii). In spite of this, scholars – many of whom are feminists – continue to take direction from Foucault, who puts forth an array of useful theories regarding power, the body, and subjectivity.

Foucault's work is frequently used in feminist research to explore concepts of docility and discipline, which are often observed in spaces of sport, exercise and physical leisure (Barker-Ruchti & Tinning, 2010; Chase, 2006; Clark & Markula, 2017; Green, 2003). What Foucault (1977a) perceived as a systemic regulation of space, time, and people's behaviours led him to propose that technologies of domination produce "docile bodies" (Besley & Peters, 2007, p. 135). Those bodies that are functional to society and operate with limited capacity or desire to challenge norms may be understood as docile (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 2014; O'Farrell, 2005). An apt example is given by Debra A. Shogan (1999) in reference to the high-performance athlete:

While athletes are active with respect to movement they are often passive in making decisions about the acquisition of movement skills and in reflecting on their continued involvement with technologies that produce these skills. Disciplines may be productive of bodies that can perform amazing skills, but during the acquisition and performance of skills, athletes seem to have little or no agency. Paradoxically, the dynamism of athletes on the playing field may be evidence of their conformity. (p. 14)

Adopting a gendered approach, the work of Susan Bordo (1993a) examines in depth how women engage in self-surveillance of their bodies by disciplining themselves through diet and exercise, while Green (2003) provides another example of women in sport struggling under their own forms of (self)surveillance:

Dance training aims to achieve normative behavior. One of the ways in which it does this is through the use of mirrors. Mirrors provide a means for self-surveillance, a way that teachers can check students and students can continuously check their bodies and movements. For example, the participants in the study referred again and again to the traditional western dance setting, with particular reference to the existence of mirrors as an ominous and powerful presence that contributed to physical self-evaluation, behavior regulation, body objectification, and competition. (p. 112)

Other feminist sport scholars have previously drawn on technologies of domination to explore how sport and physical activity practices serve to discipline and normalise women's bodies and create ideal bodies to aspire

to (Azzarito, 2009; Chapman, 1997; Cole, 1993; Duncan, 1994; Markula, 1995). According to Cheryl L. Cole (1993), sport “is most usefully understood as a technology in the Foucauldian sense, an ensemble of knowledges and practices that disciplines, conditions, reshapes, and inscribes the body through the terms and needs of a patriarchal, racist capitalism” (p. 86). A strong metaphor for women’s oppression, Richard Pringle and Pirkko Markula (2005) critically point out that the image of the female body as docile and disciplined portrays sport and physical activity as unnecessarily negative. They stress that technologies of domination rarely function on their own, and should be studied in conjunction with Foucault’s several other concepts (Pringle & Markula, 2005).

Foucault’s understanding of discourse has provided sport scholars with further tools to analyse active bodies in sporting spaces (see Azzarito & Solmon, 2009; Markula, 2001, 2004, 2010, 2018; Markula & Pringle, 2006; McGannon, Johnson, & Spence, 2011; Schirato, 2013; Thorpe, 2007, 2008). These spaces are often laden with normative discourses that emphasise the necessity of the physically “able” body, or bodies that can perform sporting activities “best” (Azzarito & Solmon, 2009; Kennedy & Markula, 2011). Accordingly, traditional hyper- and hegemonic masculinity are also venerated through displays of physical aggression and violent behaviour, considered necessary to perform in many sporting activities (Adams, Anderson, & McCormack, 2010; Capon & Helstein, 2004; Pringle, 2005; Pringle & Hickey, 2010; Pringle & Markula, 2005; Steenbergen, de Knop, & Elling, 2001).

In the wake of dominant masculine discourses, feminine discourses also play a part in gendering spaces of sport, exercise and physical leisure. While there are a number of differing, competing discourses, arguably the most dominant gendered discourse in relation to women's bodies centres around the reproduction and reinforcement of heteronormative femininity and is upheld by exclusion and acts of discipline and surveillance (Azzarito, 2009; Capon & Helstein, 2004; Kennedy & Markula, 2011; Krane, Choi, Baird, Aimar, & Kauer, 2004; Thorpe, 2008).

Scholars have examined discourses of normalised femininity operating in feminine appropriate sports (Hargreaves, 1990; Lenskyj, 1994b) such as netball (Marfell, 2017; Mooney, Casey, & Smyth, 2012; Taylor, 2001; Treagus, 2005), gymnastics (Barker-Ruchti & Tinning, 2010; Dorken & Giles, 2011), and various forms of dance (Atencio & Wright, 2009; Fitz, 1998; Kolb, 2009), as well as traditionally masculine sports including snowboarding (Thorpe, 2007, 2008, 2011, 2017), football, (Caudwell, 2003; Christopherson, Janning, & McConnell, 2002), rugby (Gill, 2007; Wright & Clarke, 1999) and bodybuilding (Boyle, 2005; Grogan, Evans, Wright, & Hunter, 2004; Tajrobehkar, 2016). Furthermore, sport scholars influenced by Foucault have found dominant discourses of femininity operating in physical education programmes in schools (Azzarito, 2009; Cockburn & Clarke, 2002; Svender, Larsson, & Redelius, 2012) and in spaces of fitness-based exercise such as gyms (Dworkin, 2003; Mansfield, 2005).

Consistent with Foucault's theory of power, sport scholars have also demonstrated women's ability to challenge dominant gendered discourses seemingly inherent to sport, exercise and physical leisure. These studies

indicate feminism's initial reluctance to assume Foucault's theorisations on the female body because of the way they tended to portray individuals as "passive bodies, constituted by power and immobilized in a society of discipline" (Deveaux, 1994, p. 228). Feminist poststructural theorists have found promise in his analyses of the discursive effects of power and knowledge for women's understanding and construction of their subjectivities. Strong cases have been made using examples of sport, exercise, and physical leisure that demonstrate resistance to gendered discourses by individuals engaging in "alternative practices" (Markula & Pringle, 2006, p. 170), or technologies of the self (Foucault, 1988c). By insisting on intersectionality and agency, these engagements with Foucault offer feminist resistance to previous readings of women's bodies (Crocket, 2017; Hardin, 2011; Spowart, Burrows, & Shaw, 2010).

When it comes to sex workers, scholars often draw links with Foucault's docile body, together with others whose jobs involve touching customers (such as hairdressers, beauticians, massage therapists, caregivers, doctors, dentists, nurses, nannies, professional athletes, coaches, fitness instructors and personal trainers) (Gimlin, 2007; McDowell, 2009; Wolkowitz, 2002, 2006). These bodies are often read as disciplined, compliant, and productive as part of a postindustrial service economy (Wolkowitz, 2006). In this sense, women sex workers are labourers who perform "body work" using their bodies on and with the bodies of clients, but also separately perform body work on themselves in careful techniques of self-surveillance (Blood, 2005; Sanders, Cohen, & Hardy, 2013; Wainwright, Marandet, & Rizvi, 2011). Indeed, physical performances are crucial in sex work interactions, but equally is the

worker's bodily presentation in an economy dependent on "the manipulation and satisfaction of desire" (McDowell, 2009, p. 126). However, grouping sex workers together with other body workers fails to acknowledge the levels of physical contact and emotional labour that are required in offering sexual services (Bretns & Jackson, 2013; Gimlin, 2007; Kong, 2006; McDowell, 2009; Sanders, 2013b; Warhurst & Nickson, 2009).

The degree to which technologies of domination operate in sex work is not extensively covered in the literature. However, a few noteworthy studies have been done on body technologies in exotic dance (see Murphy, 2003; Wesely, 2003). Interestingly, many more scholars appear to engage with Foucault's later conceptualisations of power in their analyses of sex workers' bodies. Of these, the theory of discourse has arguably been one of the most beneficial of Foucault's concepts for feminists studying sex work, likely because of the way power is understood as plural and ubiquitous, allowing more focus on the micropolitics and practices involved in constructing women sex workers' subjectivities (Sutherland, 2004).

Monique Deveaux (1994) rationalises this link:

Foucault helps us move from a "state of subordination" explanation of gender relations, which emphasizes domination and victimization, to a more textured understanding of the role of power in women's lives. Viewing power as constitutive has helped many of us to grasp the interweaving nature of our social, political, and personal relationships. (p. 231)

Discursive flows of power in sexualised spaces are especially central for Foucault who, in *The History of Sexuality*, demonstrates how discourse has in the past served to regulate citizens' behaviours and morals, effectively bringing them under the control of the state and its institutions (Foucault, 1978). The discourse of sexuality, in particular, has been deployed historically to define normal and deviant practices and associate them with identity (Foucault, 1978).

Heavily stigmatised from the start, sex work today is bound to its historical construction, yet is also tolerated in some societies for its role as an outlet for sexually deviant acts, its growing influence on the economy, and its ability to maintain discourses of gendered heteronormativity (Maksimowski, 2012). Sophie A. Maksimowski (2012) provides a Foucauldian view of sex work discourse and explores how knowledge is constructed and enacted through bodies. In subduing the ongoing debate over sex workers' bodies, Maksimowski argues for an understanding of discourse in sex work as conflated with definitive categories, identities and sexualities, as well as bodies that push these boundaries, creating new ways of knowing. She writes:

It is important to recognize the ability of people, such as sex workers, to challenge discourses that constrain them, and to build discourses of their own that may remain peripheral, but are still powerful in affecting the lives of the people who shape and are shaped by them. (Maksimowski, 2012, p. 6)

Elizabeth M. Smith (2017) also sees value in a discursive analysis of sex work, using it to transcend polarised feminist debate, and ultimately

portray the ways women sex workers interact with discourses of intimacy, performance, and pleasure. She extends her use of Foucault to include his ethics of care of the self, which allows for a reading of sex workers as operating with a “degree of self-autonomy through the picking and choosing of discourses and subjugated knowledges that they have available to them” (Smith, 2017, p. 259).

While not developed primarily with sex workers in mind, *Technologies of Sexiness* (Evans, Riley, & Shankar, 2010) is a concept derived from Foucault’s technologies of the self that translates well in understanding sex workers’ experiences. Introduced by Hilary Radner (1999) and used by others including Rosalind Gill (2007) and Adrienne Evans, Sarah Riley and Avi Shankar (2010), the term has been developed in a way that highlights the means by which women work on themselves and their bodies to reproduce themselves through discourses of sexual liberation facilitated by neoliberalism and consumerism. Laura Harvey and Rosalind Gill (2011) see technologies of sexiness operating throughout society (especially through mainstream media), but their observation that women “must no longer embody virginity but are required to be skilled in a variety of sexual behaviours and practices, and the performance of confident sexual agency is central to this technology of the self” (p. 56) particularly illustrated by the position of the sex worker. Using a technologies of sexiness framework opens up possibilities for contextualising women sex workers’ experiences in an industry driven by “an unprecedented proliferation of popular discourses on women’s sexuality” (Evans et al., 2010, p. 126).

Despite some notable exceptions, clear evidence of feminists drawing Foucault into the debate on sex work remains surprisingly sparse. Rosalee S. Dorfman (2011) believes this is because a Foucauldian analysis transcends typical feminist arguments that are based on the view of the distribution of power as hierarchically top-down. Dorfman is justified in her observation that many feminists view sex work as structured by unequal power relations, often rooted in patriarchal, capitalist institutions (such as Barry, 1996; Dworkin, 1993; Jeffreys, 2010a; Overall, 1992; Pateman, 1999). However, in adopting a poststructural understanding of power as discursive and embodied, it could be argued that many feminists do implicitly employ a Foucauldian approach in studying sex work (Hardy, 2013; Kontula, 2008; Maher, Pickering, & Gerard, 2012; Sanders, 2013b).

Feminist Feelings: Theories of Affect and Emotion

The “affective turn” in scholarly inquiry signifies an intensification of interest in emotions, feelings, and affects (Cvetkovich, 2012; Pedwell & Whitehead, 2012). Feminist scholars have been actively engaging with affect and emotion, in part, Kristyn Gorton (2007) suggests, because of the very nature of feminism itself being “suffused with feelings, passions and emotions” (p. 333). This approach points to a refocusing of the body as a source of knowledge (Clough, 2017; Grosz, 1994; Pedwell & Whitehead, 2012). From this perspective, a poststructural feminist application moves away from focusing on only theories of structure and capital, domination and discourse, to explore affects and emotions not for how they discipline, regulate or oppress women, but for the possibilities they offer for

understanding and embodied ways of knowing (Colebrook, 2001; Pedwell & Whitehead, 2012).

Studies of affect tend to locate the individual experience as a biological or physiological response to stimuli (Probyn, 2005a). Feminist affect theorists such as Elspeth Probyn (2000, 2004a, 2004b, 2005a) accept this, but crucially, expand on understandings of affect to consider the ways bodies are connected to the organisation of the social. Probyn studies affect by drawing on the work of Silvan Tomkins (1962, 1963, 1991) to construct a unique perspective on embodiment. Her particular focus on shame, disgust, and pride exposes the ways affect works through both the body and the collective. She writes, “the distinct nature of affects provides an optic into the complex combinations that characterize the everyday” (Probyn, 2004a, p. 329).

Sara Ahmed (2000, 2004c, 2010a) also offers an important theoretical contribution to the affective turn, though is often inclined to use the term “emotion”, as in the “sociality of emotion” – her conceptual schema for regarding emotions as not only psychological states (Ahmed, 2004c, p. 9). In Ahmed’s approach, emotion is positioned as a productive concept and framework for considering the materiality of women’s bodies less in terms of how they are dominated, regulated, or constrained, and more for the relational possibilities they offer for thinking (and feeling) beyond what is already known and assumed about the social world. Theories and concepts of affect and emotion, like those of Probyn and Ahmed (and others) are especially valuable in exploring bodies that move in, out, and between the active, affective and emotional spaces of sport and sex work.

Frequently associated with passion, emotions and energy, sport, exercise and physical leisure offer ideal spaces for affect to be mobilised through bodies. In their chapter “Feminist Theories of Emotion and Affect in Sport”, Simone Fullagar and Adele Pavlidis (2018) point out that in sport, “the body is central, yet the body’s gendered affects are only recently being acknowledged as key to our understanding of individuals’ sport experiences and broader sport organizations” (p. 447). Indeed, affect theory in sport is surprisingly lacking in significant feminist analyses of the body. Probyn (2000) writes “it is true that for me as for many other feminists, sport is a sociological area of which we rarely speak” (p. 14).

It seems that studies that do incorporate dimensions of affect and emotion into their studies of sport, exercise and physical leisure are typically grounded in positivist, constructivist and interactionist traditions, measuring emotion during sports performance (Gaudreau, Blondin, & Lapierre, 2002; Hanin, 2007; Woodman, Davis, Hardy, Callow, Glasscock, & Yuill-Proctor, 2009), and often use the terms affect, mood, feeling and emotion interchangeably throughout, without any acknowledgement of potential conceptual slippage (Biddle, 2000; Collins, Cromartie, Butler, & Bae, 2018; Ntoumanis & Biddle, 1998; Vallerand, 2015; Webb & Forrester, 2015).

Nevertheless, there are an increasing number of scholars who are beginning to draw on affect and emotion theories in studies of sport, exercise and physical leisure by going beyond understandings of psychological states or biological reactions to enable “more complex understandings of the entanglement of material, visceral, discursive dimensions of gendered subjectivities” (Fox, 2013, 2015; Fullagar, 2002;

Fullagar & Pavlidis, 2018, p. 447; Pavlidis & Fullagar, 2013a, 2013b, 2015; Roy, 2014; Thorpe & Rinehart, 2010). For example, Holly Thorpe and Robert Rinehart (2010) apply Nigel Thrift's (2008) non-representational theory to shed new light on the "lived, affective and affecting experiences of participants in contemporary sport and physical cultures" (p. 1268). The result is an analysis that highlights the ways affect circulates through media networks with various political agendas, all the while providing space for affect to operate through alternative movements and sporting bodies.

Richard Pringle, Robert Rinehart and Jayne Caudwell (2015) also present a worthy contribution to this area in their book *Sport and the Social Significance of Pleasure*. In it, the writers examine not only pleasure, but also other affects within sporting domains such as pain, fear, disgust, anger and fascination. In doing so, Pringle, Rinehart and Caudwell go beyond discursive and symbolic analyses of sport to understand the visceral engagement that occurs at the individual level, and the implications this has for particular political understandings and actions such as support and protest for and against forms of neoliberalism, nationalism, racism, and sexism.

Research carried out by Simone Fullagar and Adele Pavlidis (Fullagar & Pavlidis, 2018; Pavlidis & Fullagar, 2013a, 2013b, 2015) provides evidence of the latter by exploring the potential for affect to be mobilised directly through sport to construct purposeful, gendered subjectivities. By concentrating on roller derby, their analyses demonstrate how embodied affects intimately connect the self and others via shared "judgements":

These judgements about the value of leisure in women's lives are intimately connected to the judgements made about the identities and desires of "other" women who play. Hence, roller derby exists as a fluid leisure space where passion and frustration, pride and shame, disgust and pleasure, anger and love, play out amidst everyday negotiations about women's sameness or difference (Pavlidis & Fullagar, 2013b, p. 21).

The connecting of individuals and collectives – or bodily space with social space – is pivotal to Fullagar and Pavlidis's notion that sport harbours a "feminist trope" of categorical "empowerment" for all women (Fullagar & Pavlidis, 2018, p. 53). Thus, identifying and articulating affects as judgements makes it possible to move beyond analyses that overstate agentic selfhood by considering both bodies and the organisation of enduring power relations (Ahmed, 2004c; Fullagar & Pavlidis, 2018; Probyn, 2005a).

While some feminist sport scholars have explored the flows of affect and emotion, feminist sex work researchers have also employed such approaches to understanding women sex workers from an individual, embodied and power relations point of view. Literature is replete with studies exploring the range of emotions embedded in sex work (Abel, 2011; Bernstein, 2010; Brents & Jackson, 2013; Dutton, 2004; McDowell, 2009; Sanders, 2004a, 2005) owing to the intimate nature of the work and the passionate debate surrounding the work itself (Bernstein, 2010; Brewis & Linstead, 2000; McDowell, 2009; Sanders, 2013b).

Concepts of affective and emotional labour have been applied to sex work in many cultural contexts, including Mexico (Hofmann, 2016; Robertson, Syvertsen, Amaro, Martinez, Rangel, Patterson, & Strathdee, 2014), Spain (Carbonero & Gómez Garrido, 2018; Oso Casas, 2010), Vietnam (Hoang, 2010), Costa Rica (Rivers-Moore, 2013), India (Ditmore, 2007), The Netherlands (Vanwesenbeeck, 2005), Britain (Sanders, 2004b), Cuba (Cabezas, 2009), The Dominican Republic (Cabezas, 2009), and Aotearoa (Barrington, 2008; Marie, 2009). These texts demonstrate the centrality of affect and emotion within sex work spaces and the complex ways sex workers experience and manage their affective and emotional capacities as part of their jobs.

Marlene Spanger (2017) and Maja B. Frederiksen (2012) provide fruitful accounts of affect as it circulates through discourses. Drawing on Ahmed, these scholars reveal the extensive influence that affect has on bodies – both individual and collective – and the production of subjectivities. In focusing on shame, Frederiksen (2012) acknowledges the versatile potential of affect for the way “it differentiates and distances, as well as when it becomes the site of redistribution (overflowing), returning, and re-signification” (p. 81). Employing a queer theoretical framework, she uses affect’s flexible nature to explore how shame circulates and produces (il)legitimate political subjectivities in sex work. Her deductions present a picture of sex work in Denmark as problematic in its reiterations of femininity and non-normative sexuality as shameful. However, she also discovers disruptions to the principles of what is considered “respectable” (p. 79) sex, and, in also providing some interesting features of shame, demonstrates the ways affect and emotion move discursively through

space “sticking” (Ahmed, 2004c) together subject positions and matter(s) (Frederiksen, 2012).

Building on the work of Frederiksen, Spanger (2017) takes a methodological journey in her chapter “What Emotions Do: Circulations of Annoyance, Hostility and Shame in Fieldwork”. She focuses on the way affect and emotion discursively circulate between the researcher, sex workers, and social workers in her study, also set in Denmark. Like Frederiksen, Spanger sees immense potential for poststructural affect theory in feminist studies of sex work, “sensing” her way through her fieldwork interactions to discover how discourses are felt at the individual level (Spanger, 2017, p. 157).

Perhaps most relevant to this thesis though, is Sealing Cheng’s (2017) progressive photovoice project, in which she worked in collaboration with sex workers in South Korea to explore affective engagements with space. While visual methods have been used in studies with sex workers with positive outcomes (Capous-Desyllas, 2014; Capous-Desyllas & Forro, 2014; Cheng, 2013), Cheng’s project stands out for her approach to understanding sex workers’ affective experiences *outside* of sex work. Her justification comes from recognising the value of the everyday lives and spaces of sex workers, as they experience it. She believes the divisive feminist debates over sex work obscures sex workers’ experiences: “In the heat of these national and global debates, the finer texture of everyday life is sometimes lost, together with a wide range of sex workers’ desires and aspirations that do not corroborate the crime versus rights framework” (Cheng, 2017, p. 102). Therefore, in addition to combining a relevant understanding of affect and sex workers, Cheng’s

project is also useful in addressing methodological and theoretical questions throughout this thesis.

Despite the promise that affect and emotion theories hold for analyses of sex work, they are yet to realise full potential in embracing the everyday, lived experiences of individual sex workers. This would involve more approaches similar to that of Cheng (2013, 2017) that extend beyond an emotional labour perspective; analyses at the level of the collective or political; and fieldwork affects in researcher-participant relations. All of these serve their purpose, but crucially neglect the affective bodies of sex workers. As Ahmed (2004c) writes, “the ‘we’ of feminism is shaped by some bodies, more than others” (p. 189). In this instance, the bodies of women sex workers remain marginalised, othered, “bodies out of place” (Ahmed, 2000, p. 39), until they are fully acknowledged for their role in culturally located knowledge (re)production (Butler, 1990, 1993; Pedwell & Whitehead, 2012).

Summary

In many societies and cultures, women’s bodies have long been ignored, marginalised, and othered. This chapter has explored some of the areas of literature where this is changing. Research in areas of sport and sex work demonstrates the many possibilities of working with women to share their stories in nuanced ways. In sport, women’s bodies have been sites of discipline, regulation, policing and domination. Feminist poststructural research has been pivotal in challenging traditional ways of viewing women in sport by privileging their lived, embodied experiences, and revealing the multiple and diverse ways women negotiate power in

sporting, exercise and leisure spaces. In a similar vein, women's bodies in sex work have historically been studied in terms of domination and oppression, but increasingly, feminist poststructural scholars are drawing upon approaches that recognise their agency within power relations, and rational choices through sex-positive and sex-radical discourses.

Bringing scholarship on sport, exercise, and physical leisure together with scholarship on sex work revealed crossovers in terms of the moving, gendered body and highlights possibilities for developing research that brings the spaces (sport, exercise, and physical leisure, sex work, and the body) together. Thus, in the second half of this chapter I focused on particular feminist poststructural engagements with key social theories to consider how such approaches might relate to this project.

In critically engaging Bourdieu's conceptual toolbox, feminist poststructural scholars have examined women's experiences as part of an interplay between structuring social relations and embodied dispositions, paving the way for understandings of women's bodies as endowed with embodied potential (Mennesson, 2012). Engaging Foucault in similar discussions, feminist poststructuralists shed light on the movements of discursive power and the myriad ways women interpret and embody gender and sexuality. While feminist sport literature indicates a departure from technologies of domination to a focus on the ways (some) women actively challenge dominant discourses of femininity, in sex work research, more spatialised and contextualised approaches illustrate sex work as simultaneously empowering and exploitative.

While feminist engagements with Bourdieu and Foucault offer valuable insights into the multiple and diverse ways that power operates

on and through women's sporting and sex working bodies, arguably it is feminist affect and emotion theories that appear most suited to transcending analyses that often become reduced to a binaries of structure/agency and empowerment/oppression. These theories are multilayered, with many types of affects and emotions professed, each individually felt and translated, and circulating between bodies with the power to affect individuals into action (Tomlinson, 2010). Through theories of affect and emotion, women's bodies in spaces of sport are recognised as sensory, feeling, moving, tactile, visceral, emotive and knowing, and yet feminist affect and emotion theories are still to be fully embraced in studies of sex working bodies. While I am sure sex workers' bodies are "doing" affect and emotion on a day to day basis, this valuable source of feeling and knowing remains largely dormant in much academic research to date.

For women who move between spaces of sport and sex work, their bodies may be vectors of knowledge; however, their experiences are yet to be legitimised. Examining sport and sex work literature in this way reveals a liminal space where sex workers' experiences of sport have gone unnoticed. Feminist poststructuralism, in combination with Bourdieu, Foucault, and affect and emotion theories, offers theoretical tools to consider these perspectives by moving past the static binaries that anchor women's experiences to axes of good/bad, victim/agent, empowered/oppressed and masculine/feminine, examining the entanglement of bodies, discourses, emotions, and affects in all their complexities. In the next chapter I outline the methods used for such an analysis.

CHAPTER 3

Embodied Methodologies: Knowing Bodies in (Un)Known Places

November 3, 2014

Sabrina hears from one of the other women that I am doing research on women's experiences of sport and is the first to approach me. She tells me she used to be a competitive gymnast and my ears prick up. It's my body responding to that g-word. I try to play it cool, knowing full well my gym days are long behind me. But my burnt-out body still holds a torch, and before I know it I've blurted out that "Omigod I used to do gymnastics too", like all of a sudden we're supposed to be sisters.

She talks about her experiences in gymnastics and I lose myself in how good it used to feel. Manipulating my body into a state of catharsis. Pushing it to the absolute limits, making it glide and release a violent energy in a way that expressed ultimate femininity. "The best feeling ever" Sabrina calls it. I agree. Even the hours and hours on end of conditioning she (we) used to endure. Ripping layers of skin off her (our) hands, finishing a routine without being able to physically breathe, screaming out in agony and receiving a scolding and extra reps for complaining. It was pleasure. Sure, a weird

masochistic pleasure, but gymnasts get it. Sabrina gets it.

But it's all just nostalgia. That body has gone. Looking at Sabrina is like looking in the mirror at my old self, ten years ago. I hope she doesn't sense my jealous impatience at her talking about how she still has her lean, muscular gymnast body, having quit not that long ago. Looking at me is probably making her feel uncomfortable. Maybe I am the sad embodiment of her future. My once tight muscles now loose, and loose joints, now tight. Chiming in about the glory days like some washed up has-been. I guess we're not gymnasts any more. Just women at work.

Sabrina and I share embodied experiences, and because of this, in our first meeting we were able to share something meaningful. Our bodies formed an attachment through our shared histories, feelings and emotions such as pleasure and pain (Ahmed, 2004c). Feeling this immediate connection with one of my participants confirmed to me that women sex workers are active in spaces of sport, exercise, and physical leisure, and that their bodies are intuitive, adaptable, and highly relational in and outside of sex work contexts. More than this though, my encounter with Sabrina revealed to me the ways our bodies have come to inform our knowledge about our bodies, our selves, and the world around us.

As an outsider to the sex industry, my research interest is in accessing this embodied knowledge to gain an understanding of sex

workers' bodies in sport, exercise and physical activity spaces by asking questions about how they experience these spaces. This chapter outlines my attempts to address these questions by applying methods that work to create space for women's experiences that have long been ignored.

I discuss my use of poststructural feminist embodied ways of knowing as an epistemological strategy in terms of recognising women's bodies at the centre of knowledge construction. I outline my use of ethnographic methods in accessing and acknowledging participants' complex, lived realities. Finally, I identify with feminist ethics and consider some of the practical applications that have offered an essential frame of thinking and acting throughout the research process.

Embodied Ways of Knowing and Doing

As I have discussed in the previous chapter, research on women's bodies has not always put women's experiences at the centre of inquiry. To ensure this was not to be repeated, I placed significance on women's experience, taking a lead from Karen Barbour's (2016) *Embodied Ways of Knowing*, and other similar feminist understandings of knowledge as constructed, embodied, experienced and lived (Budgeon, 2003; Coffey, 2013; Coleman, 2009; Hesse-Biber, 2012; Rice, 2009; Somerville, 2004; Young, 2005). I am drawn to the way these approaches recognise that "knowledge is contextual and experiential, not universal" (Barbour, 2011, p. 105), and their explicit acknowledgment of gender as an analytic category (Blackman, 2008; Grosz, 1994; Probyn, 1993, 2003; Witz, 2000; Young, 1980).

Furthermore, a focus on experience as embodied and productive approaches bodies as multiplicities of continuous processes in contact with other proximate knowledges, feelings, emotions, and histories (Probyn, 2003). Indeed, as Celia Kitzinger (2004) airily points out, “Women’s experience does not spring uncontaminated from an essential inner female way of knowing but is structured within and in opposition to social (heterosexist, patriarchal, etc) discourses” (p. 116). This was important in considering women sex workers in all their complexities, differences, and continually evolving relations within sport, exercise, and physical leisure contexts. Thus, I incorporated the epistemic influence of embodied ways of knowing into my methodological strategy, bringing feminist poststructural theory into a dialectic relationship with lived bodies.⁵

In terms of feminist methodology, I followed an array of feminist embodied geographies that aligned with my understandings of the body and importantly, the location of bodies in space (including Caretta & Riaño, 2016; England, 2006; Falconer, Kawabata, & Kawabata, 2002; Longhurst, Ho, & Johnston, 2008; Madge, Raghuram, Skelton, Willis, & Williams, 2013; McDowell, 1991; Moss, 1995, 2005; Moss & Dyck, 2003; Nash, 1994). This provided direction and a material visualisation of women sex workers’ bodies moving through space, eloquently expressed by Pamela Moss (2005): “Spaces that bodies inhabit are material and temporal juncture points, dripping with the minutiae of the immediate environment, the mediation of power through multiscale processes, and the culmination of historical moments” (p. 44).

⁵ For an overview of further embodied methodologies and praxes including implications and challenges see Chadwick (2017).

Places of sport, exercise and physical leisure, and sex work constituted both physical research fields, and places of embodied memory that framed women's experiences. The complex, dynamic spaces of sport, exercise, and physical leisure, and sex work that were brought together by women's embodied experiences highlighted the mutually constitutive relationships between bodies and spaces (Puig & Ingham, 1993; van Ingen, 2003). Using this conceptualisation, I considered a distinctly liminal space where sex workers frequently embody both sport, exercise, and physical leisure, and sex work, but are yet to be recognised in this way. As I established in my review of the literature, women sex workers are considered exclusively as sex working bodies, not sporting bodies. Ethnographic methods offered a means to create discursive space for women sex workers to share experiences that potentially (re)position them as "sporty", "active", "healthy" women, in whatever configuration that might (or indeed, might *not*) be.

Embodied Ethnography

In moving with the shift in feminist poststructuralist research toward alternative ways of knowing and emerging qualitative methods, I engaged ethnographic methods that emphasise participants' voices and lived experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Markula, Grant, & Denison, 2001; Markula & Silk, 2011; Sarantakos, 2005). Ethnography, defined by Scott Reeves Ayelet Kuper and Brian Hodges (2008) involves "the study of social interactions, behaviours, and perceptions that occur within groups, teams, organisations, and communities" (p. 512). One of ethnography's key features relating to this study is the interpretation of behaviours and

meanings, arising predominantly from verbal descriptions and explanations (Fetterman, 1998; Hammersley, 1998).

Sharing embodied experiences of sport and physical activity is at the core of this study, making ethnography an ideal approach to engaging with women sex workers whose lived, everyday realities are not recognised in wider society. This approach is supported by feminist sport researchers, who have used ethnographic methods to study movement and meaning in an array of physical cultures (Barbour, 2013; Beal, 2018; Dworkin, 2003; Giardina & Donnelly, 2017; Marfell, 2016; Markula, 1995; Olive, 2013; Olive & Thorpe, 2011, 2017; Theberge, 2005; van Ingen, 2004; van Ingen, Sharpe, & Lashua, 2018).

Rebecca Olive (2013) finds that ethnography has been pivotal in the study of women in sport from a feminist viewpoint, crediting the methodology with providing “a way to listen to and represent women using their own movements and words, rather than analysing a body of literature, texts or observations” (p. 49). The use of ethnography in studies of sex workers has also been productive as Susan Dewey (2013) indicates, “[ethnographies] have proven especially powerful in studies of sex work because of their capacity to illuminate both the specificities of place and accompanying normative moral frameworks, as well as the nuanced lives of participants in the research” (p.15).

Placing significance on bodies, places and spaces, I explored the experiences, perspectives and understandings of women who work in the sex industry in Aotearoa, using participatory ethnographic methods of interviews (including narratives of embodied experience) and observational field work (including informal conversations, researcher

embodied experiences, field notes and reflections). Using mixed methods provides opportunity for a wider, deeper understanding of my material and reflects the interdisciplinary nature of this study (Bryman, 2004; Denzin, 1970). In the next section I describe these methods, detailing the procedures and practices used to form relationships, conduct fieldwork, and analyse data.

Navigating the Field

I conducted fieldwork in three phases:

Phase 1: North Island sites (March-May, 2014)

Phase 2: South Island sites (November 2014)

Phase 3: A revisit of some North Island sites (April-July, 2015).⁶

In order to “gain entry” into the sex industry and make contact with potential participants, I made connections within the NZPC. As experts on the sex industry in Aotearoa, I also wanted their input into the research design, which was given by way of feedback in the planning phases, through meetings in person and via Skype and email correspondence.⁷

The Collective’s regional drop-in centres provided a place for me to put up recruitment posters⁸ and chat with people in the industry. The staff were helpful in recommending my project to potential participants, providing space for me to work and conduct interviews, giving me advice, and connecting me with brothel owners and managers. Above all, they

⁶ See Figure 1 for a map of these places.

⁷ See Appendix 1 for email correspondence with the NZPC.

⁸ See Appendix 2 for a copy of these posters.

made me feel as though they didn't mind me "hanging around", adding to my sense of these places as very welcoming and inclusive.

I spent time at all of the five NZPC regional drop-in centres: Auckland; Wellington; Tauranga; Christchurch; and, Dunedin.⁹ Free outreach services are available outside of these areas. The centres function as spaces for sex workers to connect outside of their workplaces to support each other and exchange ideas, information, and resources (Healy, Bennachie, & Reed, 2010). Each regional office had its own distinct atmosphere and particular processes and methods for dealing with their region which, in the sex industry, proved to be very geographically specific.



Figure 1: Map of NZPC drop-in centres in Aotearoa.
Adapted from Microsoft Office 2007

⁹ See Figure 1.

For example, the branch in Tauranga is often staffed by just one worker or volunteer, for a limited window of opening hours. The historic village it is located in is itself a quaint, quiet neighbourhood of community groups. By contrast, Auckland, with the country's largest population, is home to a range of sex workers including women, men, transgender, and many Pacific Island and Asian peoples. The Auckland NZPC branch is a hive of activity that caters to these diverse identities with specific staff positions and targeted support services and education. Interestingly though, stepping into the Auckland branch did not feel immediately inclusive, with an arrangement of tall reception desks demarcate the spaces, which can only be breached by passing through a locked gate. This gives the space a much more professional, organised, corporate feel than Tauranga or Wellington, which to me, felt more relaxed and communal.

When I visited Christchurch, the city was facing widespread issues relating to the aftermath of significant earthquakes in the region.¹⁰ The after-effects were felt within the sex industry, with a number of premises undergoing closures, resulting in a reduced number of operating brothels in the city and an increase in private and street work. Street-based workers were forced to relocate away from the condemned CDB (ironically dubbed the "red zone"¹¹) to suburban areas, causing moral panic.¹² Street-based sex work in particular is difficult to regulate and can provide a more

¹⁰ A catastrophic 6.2 earthquake struck the city in 2011, the nation's deadliest since 1931 (Greater Christchurch Greater Christchurch Group, 2017). Three years on, I carried out fieldwork in Christchurch, finding the effects from the disaster were still very much being felt.

¹¹ The colour red was used to denote danger or off-limits areas. However, red is often associated with sex work, such as the red umbrella symbol of sex worker rights and "red-light districts" known for high concentrations of sex-related businesses.

¹² See Appendix 3 for media headlines related to the relocation of Christchurch street workers around this time.

dangerous environment to work in (Ditmore, 2010; Sanders, 2004c). This risk can be increased in a city devastated by natural disaster (Fisher, 2010; True, 2016). Moreover, the Christchurch NZPC branch also had to relocate during this time, affecting sex workers' access to support services. Many sex workers were unaware of the new location, which was (by all accounts, including mine¹³) in a less than ideal geographical location.

In addition to the five cities mentioned, I also travelled to Queenstown, near Dunedin, where I assumed there would be a number of sex workers operating alongside the strong tourism market. However, when I arrived I couldn't locate any brothels, and after speaking with a few locals, learned there were apparently few sex workers in Queenstown, owing to an existing bylaw banning brothels. Certainly, my ethnographic journey around the country enabled me to experience and learn about places of sex work and begin to understand some of the realities constituted by these spaces and the women within them. In navigating the field I estimate I came into contact with close to 50 people in the sex industry.

Participants

Coming into contact with sex workers through the NZPC, I obtained participation from 17 women aged 18 and over, who had in the past worked, or were currently working as sex workers in Aotearoa New

¹³ I can attest to this, walking the 30 minute distance from close to the centre of the city – coincidentally, in some of the heaviest rain I've ever felt, which certainly compounded the experience! Thankfully, once I reached the NZPC centre I was met by the generosity of the staff with towels and hot tea.

Zealand.¹⁴ “Sex worker” was defined as someone who received money for providing sexual service(s), although this was never stipulated, allowing participants themselves to self-identify as a “sex worker” and thus choose to take part.¹⁵ This included former sex workers, many of whom were still in some way involved in the sex industry (e.g. managers, hostesses, associates), and others who had “exited”¹⁶ more definitively but still had connections. Participation was voluntary, informed, consensual and confidential, which was particularly important due to the sensitive nature of the women’s work¹⁷ (Dewey & Zheng, 2013b).

Historical and heteronormative understandings of gender and sexuality mean that sex workers are disproportionately women, and their clients are overwhelmingly men (Farvid & Glass, 2014; Jordan, 2005; Schmidt, 2017; Weatherall & Priestley, 2001). While there are certainly different gender identities and sexualities within the sex industry, by focusing on women, this study acknowledges the apparent gender divide between the majority of the providers and the consumers of commercial sexual services. As a self-identified woman, this has also played a part in focusing on women as participants.

In use of the term “women” I do not wish to privilege women as one half of a gender binary, but rather acknowledge the historically constructed categorisations of gender that are especially visible in places of sport and sex work. But gender categories are permeable, and in cases of gender fluidity, I was open to anyone who identified as woman. As Butler

¹⁴ See Appendix 4 for a copy of the information sheet supplied to participants.

¹⁵ See Figure 2 for an overview of participants.

¹⁶ The process of resigning from working in the sex industry. Recognised for its potential obstacles (see Mayhew & Mossman, 2007).

¹⁷ See Appendix 4 for a copy of the consent form signed by each participant.

(1993) tells us, all gender identities are performative and socially constructed, and there is no essentialising or “natural” gender truth. Wanting to promote inclusiveness, and being inclusive, however, turned out to be two different things. I was mortified to realise I was complicit in presenting essentialist categories of gender when one participant realised part way through the interview that they did not identify with the label “woman”:

Jay: Oh shit, is this supposed to be for women?

Grace: Yup, is that okay?

Jay: Oh, I can’t do it.

Grace: That’s okay, do you identify as woman?

Jay: Na...

Grace: Oh okay, what do you prefer?

Jay: Nothing.

Grace: Oh... that’s cool. You can still do it if you want?

Jay: Na, that’s okay. Sorry.

Grace: Na don’t be sorry! (personal communication, April 16, 2014).

Thinking through the complexities of gender might have prepared me better for this situation, rather than relying on simplistic, taken-for-granted categorisations that led to inadvertent exclusion. This encounter was to serve as an impetus for further reflexive thinking around the representations of my participants, and myself. The realities of multiple intersecting subjectivities were important to consider in ensuring practices of misrepresentation and exploitation were not reproduced.

The scope and scale of this doctoral project may not have allowed for a fully Māori-centred or Kaupapa Māori approach; however, it does involve Māori participants, including myself as part-Māori. Therefore I have considered what some have called “Māori feminism” (Palmer & Masters, 2010; Simmonds, 2011; Smith, 1993) by acknowledging te mana o te wāhine Māori, or the power that comes at the intersections of being Māori and female (Simmonds, 2011), and the historical, sociological, and political contexts in which Māori women are placed in Aotearoa.

From an embodied geography perspective, I realise that Māori women’s bodies must be contextualised in a way that recognises differences between women as an important part of the feminist project (McDowell, 1991). Again I am compelled to evaluate and challenge the conception of “woman” and appreciate that differences in experiences of race, ethnicity, religion or class are both political and personal. As McDowell (1991) sees it, “There is no uniformity or sameness and the sets of meanings and structures that result in women’s subordination have to be specified in each instance” (p. 131).

In 2001, several Māori feminists and women’s organisations such as Te Ropu Wahine Māori Toko i te Ora¹⁸ and Te Puāwai Tapu¹⁹ supported the Prostitution Reform Bill in view of positive outcomes for Māori health development (Laurie, 2010). Professor Ngahuia Te Awekotuku reflected on the colonial context of sex work in Aotearoa, wherein Māori had control over the exchange of sexual services with Europeans, “The exchange was

¹⁸ Māori Women’s Welfare League is an organisation founded in 1951, dedicated to the wellbeing of Māori women and their whānau (family) and the people of Aotearoa (Maori Womens Welfare League, 2018).

¹⁹ Te Puāwai Tapu is a kaupapa Māori organisation, specialising in sexuality, sexual and reproductive health promotion, education and advisory (“Te Puāwai Tapu,” 2018)

uncomplicated; the provider set the terms. I would suggest that the proposed Bill puts forward an opportunity for similar arrangements. It has occurred on these islands before; it could happen again” (JL/PRB/116, as cited in Laurie, 2010, p. 96).

Māori sex workers in the 21st Century make up a high proportion of sex workers relative to the population in Aotearoa (Abel, Fitzgerald, & Brunton, 2009; Healy et al., 2017; Jordan, 2005). In 2007, an evaluation of the PRA found that Māori made up nearly a third of those surveyed across all sectors of the sex industry (Abel et al., 2009). Māori are also significantly more likely to be involved in street-based sex work (Abel et al., 2009; Jordan, 2005), where exposure to the risk of violence is reportedly higher (Abel et al., 2009; Plummridge & Abel, 2001). In 2016 non-Māori researcher Elise Escaravage (2016) from Universities of Gothenburg, Rohampton, and Tromsø conducted the only study I am aware of that has focused on Māori sex workers to date. She suggests Māori women commonly face discrimination based on their skin colour, over and above their already stigmatised occupation (Escaravage, 2016). This is an area that requires more attention. In this ethnography I endeavoured to offer prudent spaces for Māori women to openly participate in my project, on their own terms. This is a topic discussed further in the next section where I discuss researcher reflexivity and “Māori-friendly”²⁰ (Johnston, 1998) practices.

²⁰ My research project might be described as “Māori-friendly” in that it considers Māori participants and Māori ways of thinking. However I would suggest that my approach transcends what Johnston (1998) identifies as Māori-friendly in an institutional “tick-box” sense, owing to the deconstructive underpinnings that challenge dominant power structures including colonialism and Pākeha privilege.

As previously indicated, there are many layers of differences between women (i.e. women with disabilities, religious beliefs, Māori women). This is also true of differences between sex working women. Women sex workers are not a homogeneous group. From geographical and working locations, to services offered²¹, to clientele, this study chose not to place any restrictions on the activities, identities, subjectivities and positionalities of women sex workers. However, the way I recruited participants meant that inevitably, women who were proactive in seeking services from the NZPC were more likely to be a part of the study. As previously noted, I also entered brothels to recruit participants, potentially disadvantaging workers in other locations such as their homes or on the streets.

Below I offer some details about the participants by locating their physically active bodies in cultural and social contexts, using personal biographical descriptions (portrayed from within my own perspective) and demographics (Tables 1 and 2). I use pseudonyms here and throughout this thesis to protect the identity of the participants.

²¹ As mentioned in Chapter One, I allowed participants to self-identify with the term “sex worker”, which in Aotearoa is synonymous with prostitution, which involves consensual physical participation in sexual acts for monetary gain.

Participant Biographies

Eighteen-year-old **Jess** is “fresh” to sex work, having only been in the job two days when I met her. She also studies psychology at university and made it clear to me that she is only working temporarily, to pay off her student loan, buy a new car, and make some extra money. She goes walking three times a week with her mum and her mum’s Jack Russell dog, who live around the corner from her.

The only dedicated exercise that **Mere** does is 20 squats every morning, to help with her job. The 18 year old has been working as a sex worker for one year. Mere was a skilled netball player but gave up sports before she reached high school to stay home and care for her father following a stroke. Now Mere works double shifts to pay for her father’s unpaid funeral costs. This leaves very little time to join a gym; something she would like to do.

Sabrina (19) comes from a very competitive background in cheerleading and gymnastics and although she does not miss the intense pressure to perform, she still experiences the loss of being admired for her talent. She struggles when seeing her old teammates competing at the Commonwealth Games and preparing for the Olympics, and tries to keep her head down by working and saving to go away on her OE.²²

A woman in her early twenties, **Bonnie** feels constrained by a number of barriers that prevent her from freely participating in sport and physical activity. She has been working as a sex worker for three years and

²² Short for overseas experience, an OE is an extended overseas working or leisure holiday. The Kiwi OE is a sort of rite of passage typically ventured following graduation from secondary or tertiary education.

feels that the job itself is an obstacle because of the long hours and subsequent low energy levels.

At the time of interview, **Kararaina** (25) was in between jobs, having worked for six years as an escort and a dominatrix. She describes herself as a “curvy size 14” who caters to a specific niche because of her size. Very active and talented as a child, Kararaina has continued swimming into her adult life but wishes she could “get back into sport” and recover the confidence that she felt as a girl.

Charlotte’s baby girl is her own personal mini weights machine. The 26-year-old solo mum carries her 8kg child in her front pack all over town or puts her in the pram to change it up. Charlotte has been working as a sex worker for a year and a half and admits that before she was a mum she would visit the gym, but believes now she gets enough of a workout with her bub.

Maggie (29) loves the way the water feels when she’s swimming. She describes it as “soothing” as the water glides over her. Her time spent in the pool took her all over Aotearoa with the Special Olympics as a woman with a mild intellectual disability.²³ After a near drowning incident at a swim meet Maggie has struggled to get back into the water, but has overcome her fears and looks back proudly at her accomplishments. She had only been working as a sex worker for 5 months when we spoke.

Spending eight years on and off as a sex worker, **Melissa** describes her work as “exercise”, “physical”, and “good for you”. She spent a lot of her twenties rehabilitating after a car accident in her teens. Now she is a

²³ Maggie has Fragile X Syndrome – a genetic disorder that causes mild to severe intellectual disability.

fit 29-year-old who has a personal trainer and walks three times a week. She's done jiu jitsu, kickboxing, and women's self-defence to keep her safe in the business and calls her body her "temple" and her "money maker".

Thirty-four-year-old **Rose** has been working in the industry for over ten years, on and off. She played competitive softball growing up, enjoying the personal challenge and skill development it brought. Nowadays her sporting experiences are lived vicariously through her children as she recovers from an ankle reconstruction after an old touch rugby injury resurfaced. She finds that just being able to walk is a "blessing".

Growing up, **Tania** (37) disliked the competitive aspect of sport. When she entered the sex industry she encountered the same mentality, explaining "It's like Miss World" in relation to acquiring clients. These days Tania is done with sport and sex work, but does weights at the gym with her guy mates who she can relate to: "no fucking gossip, no bullshit, just boom". They also don't judge her vocational choices.

Nina is 40 years old and works in the public sector. She began working in the sex industry when she was 16 as a dancer and sex worker for twelve years. Nina would often "forget" her sports gear at school, leading to a fair bit of time writing lines during PE class. But when her parents enrolled her for an Outward Bound²⁴ course at age 14, she had "the most unique experience" of her life, leading her to appreciate her body and the natural environment.

²⁴ Outward Bound is an outdoor education organisation offering courses with focuses on adventure, teamwork, personal development and learning (see <https://www.outwardbound.co.nz>).

Sasha places a lot of value in whānau.²⁵ She had two stints as a sex worker in her teens and twenties. Now at age 43 she has no time for work outside of being a full time mum who participates in regular physical activity with her partner and sons. Whether it's tramping, fishing or mountain biking, Sasha sees sport and physical leisure as the perfect way to spend time with her boys as well as keep fit and healthy for her future mokopuna.²⁶

Monica is a 44-year-old widow with a four year old son. She worked as a sex worker for around eleven years before her current job as a part-time massage therapist. Despite being successful as a sex worker and receiving frequent compliments from clients, she has always been unhappy with her body image. She feels too self-conscious working out in gyms, so now tries her best to motivate herself to go jogging.

Laura (45) is a “large woman” who describes herself as “well proportioned all over”. She loves working from home because she can manage her own hours, clientele, and income, and it means she can find time to visit the gym, study toward her bachelor of education, and mentor at-risk youth.

Kate (46) gave up sex working to have her now teenage daughter. She is a big believer in holistic living – making sure she's active every day, and fuelling her body with good nutrition: “food is medicine”. She tries to get her daughter off her cell phone and outside but concedes that maybe she is driven by her own sporty, tomboy childhood which, looking back, was probably an aberration.

²⁵ Te reo Māori (Māori language) term for family.

²⁶ Te reo Māori term for grandchildren.

At age 65, **Iris** is conscious of what her body can and cannot do anymore. Growing up she was fit and athletic, while as a sex worker her body became her “sexual calling card” for ten years. These days Iris enjoys bush walks and swimming in the ocean, but is constantly aware of her body as she gets older and feels constrained by injuries and conditions that threaten to sideline her from physical activity for good.

Approaching her 70s, **Alexandra** is a self-professed “hippie”, who enjoys gardening, wood chopping, and “outrageous” dancing. Her 27 years as a sex worker is testament to her belief in the importance of recognising the body as a practical entity. She has always had an awareness of her body and how it could bring her love and allow her to share love through sex work.

Table 1: Participant Information.

Name	Age	Ethnicity (self-defined)	Time spent as sex worker	Current Occupation
Jess	18	European	2 days	Sex worker/ uni student
Mere	18	Māori	1 year	Sex worker
Sabrina	19	New Zealander	1 year	Sex worker
Bonnie	21	White	3 years	Sex worker
Kararaina	25	New Zealander	6 years	Sex worker
Charlotte	26	Part Māori, part Pākehā	1.5 years	Sex worker/ mum
Maggie	29	NZ/Dutch	5 months	Sex worker
Melissa	29	NZ European	8 years	Sex worker
Rose	34	Māori	>10 years	Sex worker/ mum
Tania	37	Polynesian	7 years	Manager
Nina	40	Born in NZ	9 years	Civil servant
Sasha	43	Māori-English	5 years	Full time mum
Monica	44	European	11 years	Massage therapist
Laura	45	South African Kiwi	14 years	Sex worker/ uni student
Kate	46	NZ Euro/NZ born	10 years	Hostess/ receptionist
Iris	65	New Zealander	10 years	Owner-operator
Alexandra	68	European New Zealander	25 years	Artisan

Table 2: Past and present physical activity involvement.

Name	Previous sport, exercise and leisure participation	Current sport, exercise and leisure participation
Jess	Rowing, netball, volleyball	Walking/running
Mere	Rugby, netball	Squats, sex work, exotic dancing
Sabrina	Gymnastics, cheerleading, cricket, netball, cross-country, gym	Walking
Bonnie	Netball, shotput, discuss, trampolining, gymnastics, Latin dance, gym, walking	No activity
Kararaina	Swimming, netball, rugby, basketball, hockey, softball, gymnastics, running, skateboarding	Swimming, walking, dancing
Charlotte	Touch, cross-country, sprinting, netball	Walking
Maggie	Swimming	Swimming, walking, running
Melissa	Running, bike riding, sprinting, canoeing, gym, martial arts, jiu jitsu, kickboxing, self defence	Personal trainer, sex work
Rose	Swimming, hockey, softball, netball, badminton, gym	Surfing, walking, fitness DVD's
Tania	Skipping, cycling, volleyball, badminton, touch, climbing trees, skipping, hopscotch, swimming, netball, high jump, sprinting, gym, tennis, sex work	Gym, cycling, walking, weight lifting, yoga
Nina	Netball, hockey, cross-country, athletics, Outward Bound, gym, skiing, horse riding	Treadmill, elliptical cross-trainer, walking
Sasha	Trampoline, swimming, gymnastics, tennis, BMX, ballet, netball, basketball, athletics, 4-square, handball, skateboarding, volleyball	MMA, mountain biking, walking, tramping, fishing, rock-hopping
Monica	Netball, cross-country, swimming, soccer, hockey, athletics, sprinting, running, gym, Jazzercise	Running
Laura	Hockey, basketball, netball, snooker	Gym, swimming
Kate	Bike riding, netball, table tennis, tennis, indoor bowls, rugby, gym, kayaking, motocross, rock climbing, badminton, swimming, bodybuilding, mountain biking, sex work	Pilates, walking, kayaking, yoga
Iris	Netball, tennis, swimming, athletics, bike riding, bushwalking, tramping, roller-skating, rowing	Swimming, walking, gardening
Alexandra	Hopscotch, skipping, netball, hockey, gardening, tramping, ballet	Gardening, wood chopping, dancing

Interviews

I conducted 17 interviews with 17 individual women. Interviewing was chosen for its capacity to explore in detail the experiences and opinions of my participants from their own perspectives (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). This aligns closely with feminist poststructuralist theories, which hold that it is “language which enables us to think, speak and give meaning to the world around us” (Weedon, 1997, p. 31). It also directly attended to my intentions of creating space for women’s voices to be shared.

Interviews were generally one-on-one²⁷, semi-structured, and ranged in duration from 20-45 minutes. A set of predetermined open-ended questions were asked, with sufficient space to deviate with comments or other thoughts as needed.²⁸ Interviews were held at places and times decided by participants (usually at the NZPC or workplace).

I began interviews with four or five simple closed-answer questions to gain specific details about the women, such as age and ethnicity. This also worked to illustrate early in the conversations that the interview was going to be relatively straightforward and uncomplicated, allowing the women to gain a sense of comfortability and shared control of the discussion. From there I asked questions that were more in-depth, relating to their involvement in, feelings, and experiences of sport, exercise, and physical leisure, sex work, and their relationships with other people

²⁷ There were two instances where participants preferred to be interviewed in communal spaces, in which case I obtained verbal consent from women who at times engaged in discussion, but did not wish to participate in their own interview. Although this made managing the interviewing process somewhat more challenging, these situations made for an all the more interesting dynamic.

²⁸ See Appendix 6 for a copy of my interview schedule I used to guide my questioning.

and spaces. As my empirical chapters will show, these questions yielded responses that were highly personal, contextual, detailed, contradictory, and at times remarkable.

Observations

I initially set out with a plan to conduct non-participant observations of participants engaging in sport, exercise, and physical leisure; for example visiting the gym or meeting a friend for walk. I wanted to observe how women sex workers' bodies interpret and interact with other bodies, rules of the fields, discourses, affects, emotions, and gendered power relations in these spaces and places. But given the option of interview, observation(s), or both, time and again participants chose to just participate in an interview. I put this reluctance down to a variety of reasons including logistical difficulties, time constraints and general perception of the idea as onerous and disruptive to an already busy life. Sanders (2013b) agrees that sex workers are often busy with commitments either at work or at home. This was also evidenced in interviews, as sex worker Bonnie demonstrates:

Stuff could get done, it's just lack of time, you know? Wake up in the morning, I'm tired. Go home at the end of the day, I'm tired ... by the time I finish, get home, go to the shop, get dinner, come home, do dishes, cook tea, I've barely had time to sit down and watch TV for five minutes (personal communication, November 3, 2014).

Unease about confidentiality, awkwardness, embarrassment, and overall lack of knowledge and fear of the unknown could also have played a part in participants' avoidance. After a while I stopped asking women if they

wanted to participate in an observation and opted to offer only an interview. Thus, my research was unfolding in a dynamic and iterative way. I interpreted the situation and upon revisiting my methodology, realised the intersubjective (Bondi, Avis, Bankey, Bingley, Davidson, Duffy, Einagel, Green, Johnston, Lilley, Listerborn, Marshy, McEwan, O'Connor, Rose, Vivat, & Wood, 2002; England, 1994) knowledge I was already gaining from women in sex working spaces was where my data collection lay.

Being in places of sex work and interacting with women was constituting relevant, meaningful fieldwork observations *within the sex industry*. What I had envisioned as systematic, prearranged observations of sport, exercise, and physical leisure transformed into observations of naturally occurring interactions, events, and environments of sex work. Furthermore, observations that were to be “scheduled” presented participants with a model that resembled conformity and structure, features I felt were rejected in favour of a relaxed conversation in a place already convenient. As Sasha commented upon completion of her interview: “Well that was easy” (personal communication, May 9, 2014).

The field then consisted of NZPC drop in centres and places of work (i.e. brothels). I visited these sites anywhere from once up to five times per place. My presence in these places could be described as “peripheral membership”, as I maintained a position between being an insider and an outsider to the sex industry (Adler & Adler, 1994; Baker, 2006). Often I relaxed, drank, ate and gossiped with people in the sex industry, yet remained excluded by not engaging in those activities “that stand at the core of group membership and identification” (Adler & Adler, 1987, p. 36).

This also included chit-chat with interviewees before and after the interview itself.

By engaging with the spaces my participants were a part of, I became better equipped to (at least) partially understand their experiences. My system of data collection involved audio-recorded interviews; audio recorded mental notes, reflections or diary “scribbles”; various descriptions; reflexive, conversation and interview notes; and “on-the-fly” notes (Leavy & Harris, 2018, p. 153). At times I would make notes in retrospect of other places of interest as I saw fit or felt compelled. For example, an audio-taped reflection upon visiting an adult store as part of an activity at a friend’s hens’ party:

Ahhh, so, Maia’s hens’ party the other night – how at home did I feel in that sex shop?! Everyone was all giggly and shy and embarrassed. Not me! Completely uninhibited! [It’s] Safe to say I’m becoming desensitised to sex by my research. (Field notes, January 29, 2015)

In this way the field extended to my everyday life, just as it did for my participants. Categories of insider/outsider, researcher/participant were becoming further blurred (Katz, 1994). Another example of observations I made in relation to sex work occurred in spaces where I was in transit to sex work places. The following extract from my notebook (Figure 2) shows my initial thoughts and feelings upon walking through Myers Park in Auckland, which then served as a reference for writing a more detailed, introspective, reflective narrative:

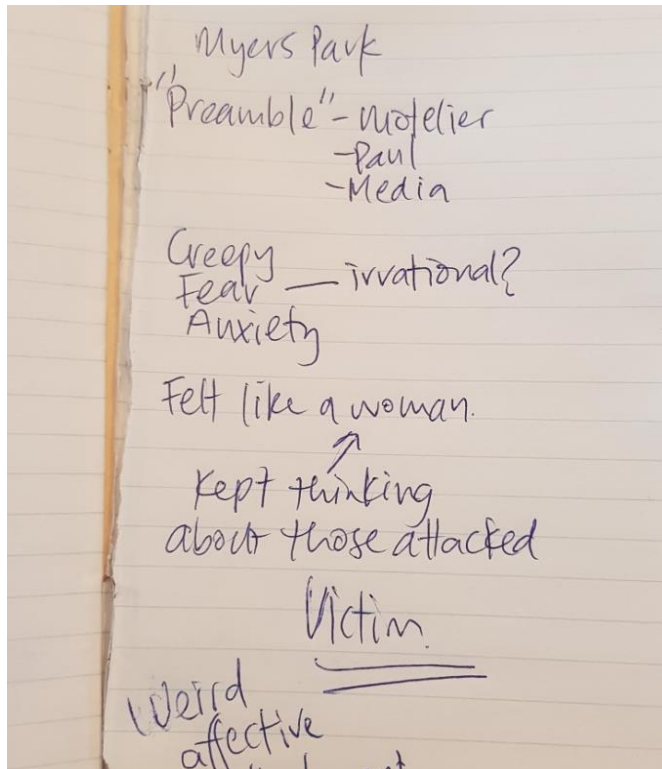


Figure 2: “Myers Park”. Field notes, July 15, 2015.

“Don’t get lost!”, my boyfriend joked. Lost was the least of my worries. I was planning to shortcut my way into town by walking through the central city reserve known as Myers Park, but I couldn’t remember where I had read, or heard about the park’s dark history of violent assaults including ones inflicted on sex workers. Maybe I had dreamed it up. Either way, I kept it to myself.

The sun was out, it was a glorious day. I entered the park surprised to discover an altogether pleasant scene. Couples picnicking, kids playing, and people like me, enjoying the green space whilst shortcutting their way through town. Gentrified, but nice.

When it was time to return back to the motel after carrying out fieldwork in town I realised I had let time get away from me. Something or someone threw my concerns out the window and I entered the park again, only for them to quickly return. The motelier shot to mind, "Please don't walk in the park at night". I looked up to the fading sky, it wasn't quite night, but it didn't feel like day either. I made a futile plea to the sun to slow its descent. The picnickers had packed up, the children were gone.

As I advanced through the open space, giant palm trees began to bear down on me, dwarfing me and pushing my head down to see only my footsteps. I dared not look up at the cedars lining the gully, "shady" had taken on new meaning. I quickened my step to not quite a run, but a sure disqualification by "race-walking" standards. My legs ached to sprint but I kept them in check. Running in a skirt and sandals, awkwardly struggling with my heavy laptop would only draw attention to myself like a floundering, injured seal. Or God forbid, I could be exposed as a hysterical, middle class, small town white girl in the big city. I didn't know which was worse.

Reliving this experience through writing allowed me to flesh out my fears and reflect on their validity whilst recognising some of my own insecurities. Identifying my position as a “hysterical, middle class, small town white girl” for example, reveals an unease in my privileged upbringing and skin colour – which, regardless of whether true or not – for me, suggests a propensity for others to stereotype me as a culturally ignorant “dumb blonde” (Greenwood & Isbell, 2002). The specifics of researcher reflexivity and positionality are addressed further in the following section as I discuss how I navigate sex work spaces and relate to my participants.

Analysis

While analysis was going on all the time through my embodied, affective, emotional experiences and engagement with the literature, there were also relative stages that signalled my analytical engagement with interview and observation material. As the narrative of Myers Park demonstrates, it was not until I re-engaged with my field notes that I was able to make more sense of my experiences. This type of remembering, rereading, reimagining and rewriting of my field notes represents a precursory, but essential level of analysis.

Transcribing interviews functioned in a similar way, allowing me to stop, rewind and replay dialogue to listen closer to my participants, and indeed, myself on the audiotapes. Transcribing was an important stage of analysis, that is, the nuanced pauses, sighs and laughter deepened my understanding of what women were saying (Evers, 2011; Müller, 2005).

Upon completing transcription I entered a secondary phase of analysis where I examined embodied narratives of both participants and

myself, interpreting and identifying key typologies and themes whilst engaging in reflexive analysis. I interpreted women's responses as truth, following by choosing to "ignore positivist and postmodern doubts about the relationship between 'voice' and experience" (Kitzinger, 2004, p. 118). Yet in doing so, I made sure to locate women's voices within necessary parameters including what I knew of the background and motivations of the speaker, the audience, and the social context (Sparkes, 1999).

Detailed and repeated readings of the transcripts allowed me to interpret women sex workers' subjective experiences and meanings attached to their bodies (Sparkes, 1999). The nuanced histories, relations, judgements, affects, and emotions provided a foundation for themes to emerge from, and I then organised concepts as I interpreted them in relation to each other and wider contexts of gender and power (Sparkes, 1999). This approach has been used by sports scholars as an effective way to connect the moving body to other individuals, groups, and structures (Oliver, 1998; Sparkes, 1999; Young & White, 1995; Young, White, & McTeer, 1994). Andrew Sparkes (1999) comments on this type of embodied narrative analysis as a response to a previous theorising of the body in a way I find especially relevant to women sex workers:

Certainly, much recent theorizing about the body has tended to be cerebral, esoteric, and ultimately a disembodied activity that has operated to distance us from the everyday embodied experiences of ordinary people. Where bodies have been focused upon they have been heavily theorized bodies, detached, distant, and for the most

part lacking intimate connection to the lived experiences of the corporeal beings who are the objects of analytical scrutiny. (p. 18)

Thus, in seeking to broaden understandings of how women sex workers construct multiple and diverse meanings of their experiences, I analysed their voices with a focus on how their bodies “talk” through their narratives (Grosz, 1994; Sparkes, 1999; Young et al., 1994), their embodied memories “unearthing” experiences to necessitate analysis (Somerville, 2004).

In a third layer of analysis I re-engaged my materials in dialogue with key theoretical approaches. Throughout these stages I also conceptualised and catalogued themes in a continual meaning making process, as demonstrated in my array of mind maps displayed in my home (Figure 3).²⁹



Figure 3: Conceptual mind maps on display in my home.

²⁹ See Appendix 8 for a close-up view of some of these posters.

As the following empirical chapters detail, my theorising at this stage extends beyond my initial scope of establishing shared experience through sport, to gain a deeper understanding of the entanglements of women sex workers' moving bodies in space of sport and sex work.³⁰

Feminist Ethics

While I have “set the scene” (Stanley, 2013, p. 63) for my research by describing my participants, methods and the field, I now attend to the ethical concerns that come as part and parcel of doing ethnography with women sex workers in sex working spaces. As I have already alluded to, my shifting positionalities and the intersubjective dynamics of field relationships were key areas to focus on. The final section of this chapter therefore explores my attempts to engage in feminist ethics by preparing for potential difficulties, practicing reflexivity and navigating difference in order to (un)relate to my participants.

Ethics Approval

In speaking of ethnographic research, Maurice Punch (1994) finds it “potentially volatile, even hazardous, requiring careful consideration and preparation” (p. 84). This is especially true in research with sex workers, a group who are identified as potentially vulnerable in terms of research participation (Abel, Fitzgerald, & Brunton, 2010a; Dewey & Zheng, 2013b; Harrington, 2017; Shaver, 2005). This is a feature of sex work research that has been covered extensively with researchers agreeing on a need for

³⁰ See Appendix 7 for an example of some thematic analysis undertaken in concert with feminist affect theories.

ethical, non-exploitative strategies to studying sex work (Dewey & Zheng, 2013b; Hardy, Kingston, & Sanders, 2010; Hubbard, 1999; Sanders, 2006; Sanders & Campbell, 2007; Shaver, 2005; Sinha, 2017; van der Meulen, 2011). I drew on this area of knowledge in writing my proposal for ethical approval by the University of Waikato. This was the first stage in planning and practicing feminist poststructural research that was grounded in a genuine regard for women (Edwards & Mauthner, 2002; Hesse-Biber, 2013).

In my ethics proposal, I demonstrated my awareness of issues including confidentiality, informed consent, handling of information, and risk of harm to participants, and myself. Ethical approval for this research was granted by the University of Waikato Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee on 17 December, 2013.³¹ As the project progressed, and as I entered sex work spaces and met my participants, my understanding of ethics continued to deepen.

Researcher Reflexivity

As a sporting type, I initially imagined reflexivity in relation to my body; for example, “how fast are my reflexes at catching a ball?” This metaphor also made sense for me in thinking about reflexivity in the field. If something complicated, delicate, ‘dicey’ were to come at me, how would I react? Would I be quick enough? Did I have enough experience or ability? Would my reflex be the right one for the task? By asking these questions I tried to prepare myself for “steady, uncomfortable assessment about the interpersonal and interstitial knowledge-producing dynamics of

³¹ See Appendix 9 for a copy of the memorandum advising ethical approval.

qualitative research” (Olesen, 2011, p. 135). However, I came to realise that often my reflexes were exceedingly slow, that is, being reflexive was a constant, open-ended state that continued long after I left the field (Doucet & Mauthner, 2006; Mauthner & Doucet, 2003). Here I provide some examples of how I engaged in reflexivity throughout the research process.

Sex work scholar Joanna Brewis (2005) claims it is not possible to enter the field as a “neutral-researcher-body”, “unmarked by gender and sexuality” (Zheng, 2013, p. 498). My embodied experiences were certainly a part of this research project, impacting each stage including theorising, interviewing, observing, analysing and writing. Becoming aware of this process connected me to my participants, and provided a site for transformation, where I could connect to other bodies through a feminist politics (Black, Crimmins, & Henderson, 2017). Leaning into self-knowledge, vulnerability and intercorporeality (Burns, 2006) led to a deeper understanding of how women sex workers experience their bodies too.

With research so firmly grounded in embodiment, I made attempts to acknowledge and reacquaint myself with my physical body, something I was not proficient at. It involved an increased cognizance in my body so that I could “tune in” and receive information with a lot more awareness. While the skill of “listening to one’s body” initially struck me as a tad alternative – at times doing more to confuse me in my thought processes – I did discover things about myself that I once might not have associated with my body. For instance, Figure 4 shows a jumble of emotions initially

conveyed upon being “cat called³²” at while out running, later served as insight:

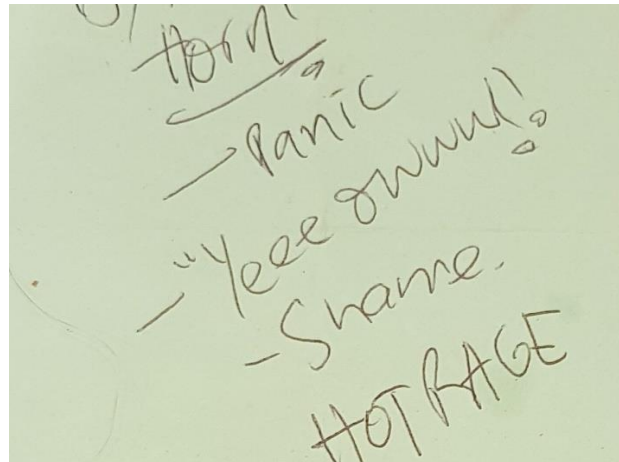


Figure 4: “Stopped short”. Field notes, July 6, 2016.

Far from “typical” ethnographic field notes in their (lack of) description, these words recorded on-the-fly after I had returned home nonetheless give an indication to how I experienced the situation. The emotions drawn from the account produce associations with my self-image, femininity, sexuality and agency. I later reflected further on the experience, turning my feelings into an evocative narrative:

Like a road block, the initial panic jolted me into stopping dead in my tracks. The hollering that followed was animalistic and tainted with male privilege. My shame was forced down my throat until it festered in my belly where it mutated into indignation and resentment, only to be expelled down through my legs and out of my feet as I pounded it out on the pavement.

³² “Cat-calling” is a form of sexual harassment (usually toward women) that can consist of unwanted comments, gestures, honking, whistling or shouting.

Reflecting on experiences like this brought together the lived body and theory of the body (Somerville, 2004), and the writing of such emotive vignettes works to enhance the representational richness of my research (Humphreys, 2005). By thinking through my body, in this way, I was often able to interpret and relate to the experiences of my participants.

Theorising my embodied experiences also offered a means of conceptualising places of sport, exercise, and physical leisure, and sex work, and the location of bodies and connections within and around these places, as the following vignette illustrates:

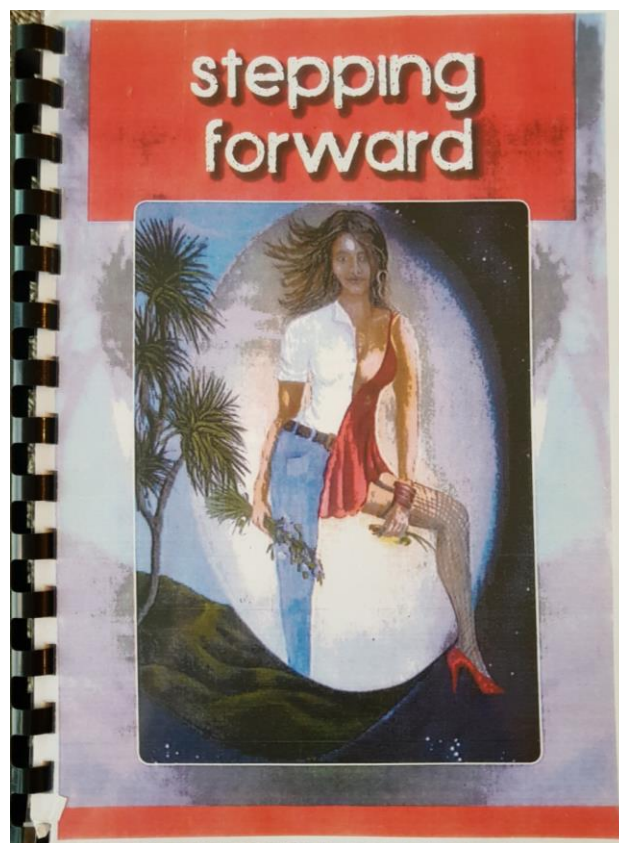


Figure 5: “Stepping Forward”. NZPC new workers’ booklet.

March 14, 2014

I arrive at the New Zealand Prostitutes Collective. I take a deep breath and walk through the door, crossing the threshold into the “shadowy” domain of sex work. But to my surprise, all I’m met with is couches, rugs, pot plants, and safe sex posters. The space feels rather homely. There are windows allowing warm light to come through. A shelf in the corner displays a considerable amount of various condoms – different sizes, flavours, colours, and textures. It’s a mise-en-scene of public health meets living room week on “The Block”.³³

I make my way further into the common area where a woman is seated at a big dinner size table working away fastidiously at constructing booklets. “Kia ora” I say cheerily, making out like I’m there every week. “Oh kia ora bub!” she replies casually. I feel duty bound so I reluctantly give her the quick rehearsed spiel about who I am and what the it is I’m doing there before moving the conversation on. I don’t think she’s really interested. She’s on a tight deadline to finish making these booklets. I don’t wait for an invite before I sit down and start helping. She is a volunteer, which I

³³ “The Block” is a popular home renovation and decoration television show in Aotearoa and Australia.

instantly admire and want to do the same. I keep my laptop bag and jacket close to me so as not to take up too much space.

The booklets we are putting together are guidelines for new sex workers to help introduce them to the industry and to keep them informed and safe.³⁴ As I am assembling I can't help but read the material which is surprisingly graphic and altogether intriguing. Should I be reading this? I feel like a bit of a voyeur but justify it by reminding myself I'm a researcher so it's okay. Sipping my cup of tea my new friend has made me, I inhabit the character of "new sex worker", educating myself from "dealing with clients" through to "staying within the law". As I finish with a head full of "tricks of the trade" I set my cup down on the table next to a large, green, translucent model penis³⁵ proudly standing erect next to the plate of biscuits. I think I might have to rethink some of my ideas about sex.

As the vignette suggests, NZPC places were both very welcoming, and unapologetically confronting. As my understandings of sex, work, and sex work expanded, so too did my self-awareness. Indeed, in the months after being first introduced to the sex industry, my own subjectivity underwent transformations that ultimately led to a deeper understanding of sex

³⁴ Figure 5 is a picture of the front cover of this booklet.

³⁵ Of course, I later learned this was a condom demonstrator - used to demonstrate and practice the correct way to put on a condom.

workers. In the field I was sensitive to affects and emotions, and questioned my experience of them. I constantly mused about sex and sex work, relating my experiences to my knowing and beliefs about my body. I challenged deeply held assumptions I had and evaluated new knowledges. Coming to “know oneself” in this way, Wanda S. Pillow (2003) suggests, aids in developing understanding of participants and is one way researchers can take on the “messiness of representation” (p. 183). I came to understand “knowing myself” as a constant process persisting now in all situations, as Donna Haraway (1988) alludes:

The knowing self is partial, in all its guises, never finished, whole, simply there and original; it is always constructed and stitched together imperfectly, and *therefore* able to join with another, to see together without claiming to be another. (emphasis original, p. 586)

In knowing myself I became more aware of my “situatedness” in relation to space and others (Haraway, 2004, p. 216). As I analyse the bodies of my participants throughout this thesis, it is only right to present my body for critique too. As follows, I am a single, white female. I am able-bodied, highly educated, and come from a middle-class background. My previous intimate relationships have been with men. At the time of writing this, I am 31 years old.

I am a New Zealander, born and raised in Rotorua in Te Ika A Māui (the North Island) of Aotearoa New Zealand. I am predominantly of Irish,

English, and Māori descent. The positionality of my whakapapa³⁶ is as follows:

Ko Tuturu te maunga

Ko Puarenga te awa

Ko Tūhourangi Ngāti Wāhiao rāua ko Ngāti Whakaue nga hapū

Ko Te Pakira te marae

Ko Te Arawa te iwi

He honanga whakapapa ki Ngāpuhi hoki.

This dialogue is part of a rich oral tradition embedded in Māori culture, situating me within my family geneology, tribal affiliations, and my connections to space and place. My upbringing was European in terms of language and cultural practices, *and* I have always felt a spiritual connection to my whenua³⁷ and tūrangawaewae,³⁸ and whakapapa.³⁹ I am (a) “hybrid” (Ahmed, 2004c; Asher, 2002; Azzarito, 2010; Bhabha, 1994; Moeke-Maxwell, 2005; Young, 2005).

I subscribe to many heteronormative expressions of femininity, through my long brownish/blonde hair (which I colour, straighten, and style), daily wearing of makeup (usually foundation, eyeliner and lipstick for occasions), jewellery (including necklaces, rings, and piercings) and generally “feminine” clothing (skirts, dresses, fitted pants etc). I often find myself at odds with the way I negotiate femininity together with my

³⁶ Te reo Māori term for genealogy or lineage. Whakapapa is an infrangible birthright that locates me in the world in relation to my ancestors and my whānau (family).

³⁷ Te reo Māori term for land. Māori have a close cultural connection to whenua. Papatūānuku, the Earth or Earth Mother represents the physical and spiritual foundations of life (Mead, 2016).

³⁸ Tūrangawaewae is a te reo Māori word pertaining to one’s place where we are most connected and feel we belong (Mead, 2016).

³⁹ My late Kui (grandmother), in particular.

feminist principles. To borrow Cristina Tzintzun's (2002) words, "I am confused, yet sure. I am a contradiction" (p.28).⁴⁰ I continually manage multiple, shifting and conflicting interpretations of gender and sexuality by thinking critically, feeling, and acting in the everyday (Evans & Bobel, 2007).

Like many of my participants, my experiences in sport, exercise, and physical leisure began from a young age. My sporting experiences have been grounded in organised sports as a competitor (regionally and nationally), coach, and official. Later in life I carried on my love for sport, exercise, and physical leisure through my vocational choices and maintain a relatively active lifestyle – using sport, exercise, and physical leisure mostly to relieve stress, maintain my weight and physical health, and to connect with nature, people, and myself. My ongoing socialisation in sport has contributed to a curious sense of embodiment and continues to shape the experiences of my body and self. Over the years my body has been conditioned (through gymnastics in particular) to represent health, skill, commitment, discipline, aesthetics, conformity and resistance. My heavy involvement and love for gymnastics, which led to an abrupt cessation due to a physical condition,⁴¹ continues to contribute to my theorising about embodiment in different contexts.

Introducing my positionality (England, 1994) in this way contextualises my body and self (to a degree); blurs personal and professional identities; and draws attention to the plurality of bodies, both

⁴⁰ Tzintzún (2002) says this in relation to her skin colour: "I am mixed. I am the colonizer and the colonized, the exploiter and the exploited. I am confused yet sure. I am a contradiction." (p. 28). She captures my struggle in wanting to embrace my complexities.

⁴¹ I have idiopathic scoliosis - a curvature of the spine requiring corrective spinal surgery at the age of 17.

mine and my participants (Ellingson, 2006). As I continue to write my body through personal narratives in layered accounts throughout this research I disrupt traditional researcher privilege (Ellingson, 2006) and open up space for knowledges to be “woven together with passion, experience and embodied individuality” (Barbour, 2016, p. 234).

As a woman of Māori descent I felt especially compelled to make space for the embodied experiences of other Māori women in understanding of our position as distinctive. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1997) views Māori women in terms of difference:

As women, we have been defined in terms of our differences to men.

As Māori, we have been defined in terms of our differences to our colonisers. As both, we have been defined by our differences to Māori men, Pākehā⁴² men and Pākehā women. (p. 33)

In shaping a postcolonial identity, I acknowledge that historical Māori experiences of colonisation have constructed different social positions that remain today, and bring attention to the ways that differences between Māori and Pākehā continue to be reproduced (Brown, 1994; Smith, 2012).

Often, I felt that acknowledging Māori in my research was an unconscious disposition that came “naturally” to me, and when in the field I found myself to be culturally aware, embodying behaviours similar to those suggested by Fiona Cram (2001):

⁴² A te reo Māori term for white, non-Māori people, usually of European descent.

1. Aroha ki te tangata (show respect for people);
2. He kanohi kitea (face-to-face contact);
3. Titiro, whakarongo ... korero (look, listen ... then talk);
4. Manaaki ki te tangata (be generous);
5. Kia tupato (be cautious);
6. Kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata (do not intentionally trample on the mana of people)
7. Kaua e mahaki (do not flaunt your knowledge).

These principles go beyond the University ethical requirements and were (often instinctively, reflecting a pre-constructed subjectivity) woven into the ethical fabric of this research.

Ethical concerns about knowledge, voice, authority and positionality were, in the end, tantamount to the complexities of the researcher/participant relationship. I quickly became aware of the various social, intellectual and spatial locations that position us differently, as well as the histories and lived experiences that shape our knowledge and understanding of the world (England, 2006). As a Māori and Pākehā woman I feel a challenge lies in my ability to negotiate my positionalities (England, 1994) in order to address my “Pākehā privilege” (Alice, 1993). In efforts to embrace my hybridity I spoke with friends and whānau about race relations in Aotearoa; consumed more Māori media and engaged in more te reo Māori;⁴³ questioned my positionality; and accepted my privilege as a Pākehā academic researcher. This disposition enabled me to

⁴³ Te reo Māori is the Māori language.

become more comfortable in the complexities of doing research with all cultures (Hotere-Barnes, 2015).

My philosophical, personal, political, and theoretical beliefs and values stemming from my positionality have also inextricably played a part in the design and practice of carrying out research. I entered the field with a relatively neutral stance on sex work, which was quickly informed by my experiences in the field. The following audio-taped reflection – made shortly after leaving the first brothel I visited – demonstrates my shifting inner conflict about sex work:

Man, that place was weird. That girl in there was lovely. She wasn't a girl, she was in her mid-forties. But she was so lovely. She was just so cute. She was such a babe. But... oh I don't know... She seemed like she didn't want to be there. It's like... oh I don't know. I don't know. I feel weird. Don't get me wrong, I think sex work is great... But that woman... I wanted to just like, give her a cuddle! I wanted her to come with me outside into the sunshine, out of that dark, dirty, dank place. Oh my God I can't say that, that's so... arrogant.
(Field notes, November 2, 2014)

Reflecting on my experience in this way situated me in the (formally unknown) field of sex work, and forced me to think through my own complex and implicated woman/researcher subjectivities. My unease is made clear by my comments, and as I recorded this particular commentary on my Dictaphone I can be heard breathing heavier and faster than normal

as I was power-walking down a busy street, away from the brothel I had come from. My sentences are short with a good pause after each one as I try to gather my thoughts. This “internal conversation” (Pagis, 2009, p. 265) exemplifies the ongoing internal conflict I faced particularly early on in my research, and the need for continuous reflexive thinking, critical analysis (Pillow, 2003), and more time in the field which eventually led to the abatement of these such moments of conflict.

If not for anything else, the passage shows that I am not, nor have I been, a sex worker. This was the most palpable difference between myself and my participants, and in a way worked to even out researcher/participant power imbalances, as I was a clear “outsider” (Abel et al., 2010a; Dewey & Zheng, 2013a; Mossman, 2010). Engaging in self-reflexivity, I was often conflicted by *my* difference. I became acutely aware of the (im)possibilities that differences can create, and continued to reflect on my positionality as ethnocentric, privileged and potentially damaging to the research process (Nencel, 2014). While my critical theoretical framework encouraged me to deconstruct my multiple subjectivities, I constantly found myself simultaneously trying to get away from these categories altogether in an attempt to identify with my participants. This contradiction has been observed by feminist geographers as an inescapable negotiation between the worlds of me and not-me (England, 1994; Katz, 1994; Moss, 1995; Nast, 1994; Rose, 1997). Heidi Nast (1994) explains that because we are located simultaneously in a number of positions we are always “in a state of betweenness, negotiating various degrees and kinds of difference – be they based on gender, age, class, ethnicity, ‘race’, sexuality, and so on” (p. 57). Therefore, I came to accept the “differences as

distances” and inhabit the betweenness (England, 1994; Katz, 1992; Nast, 1994; Rose, 1997, p. 313). In this space between the field and “normal life”, between theory and practice, and crucially, between researcher and participant, my purpose became less about highlighting difference, and more about observing the intersections between our collective bodies (England, 1994; Rose, 1997).

As I worked on deconstructing my multiple subject positions I became aware of the way I deployed differential belonging across lines of difference in order to relate, or belong to, spaces and people. Aimee M. C. Rowe (2005) illustrates how:

The sites of our belonging constitute how we see the world, what we value, who we are (becoming). The meaning of self is never individual, but a shifting set of relations that we move in and out of, often without reflection (p. 25) ... We need not, or cannot, be the same person everywhere — in different communities, on different occasions, at different times in our lives. We may move among various stages of belonging throughout our lives (p. 33).

Just as Rowe describes, I often used intersectional positionalities and differential belonging to navigate across perceived boundaries of difference. For example, when entering the NZPC for the first time I crossed the threshold as “Nerdy-Naive Grace”, the early career researcher who sometimes felt sorry for sex workers, but in less than a minute I had quickly assumed the role of “Cool Grace”, the self-assured woman full of swagger amidst sexual health discourse. Upon interacting with the volunteer worker I used te reo Māori, and told her who I was and where

I'm from,⁴⁴ projecting "Māori Grace" to relate to the woman whom I (rightly or wrongly) also identified as Māori. Quickly after this I felt obliged to don the role of researcher to the woman, yet to do so I made efforts to stay connected to her and the space, avoiding academic jargon and instead using colloquial "Kiwi" language like "yeah, na", "it's all good aye".

Retrospectively, my choice in clothing that day also reflected differential belonging. I wore a tartan mini-skirt (reflecting European culture) and makeup (traditionally feminine markers) paired with Chuck Taylor sneakers⁴⁵ (traditionally masculine), so as to break up overemphasised femininity. This (albeit subdued) androgynous combination might have also undermined any flagrant signs of heterosexuality. My skirt was above the knee and I wore patterned, crisscross style stockings which communicated youth, playfulness, and sexuality. My hair was swept up into a messy bun, suggesting an offhand attitude toward tightly defined norms of femininity as pretty and primped. Finally, my taonga⁴⁶ reflected Māori cultural belonging. My identity as a researcher was not glaringly obvious to prevent a disconnection between me and my surroundings. Rather, these intersecting personal markers allowed me to manoeuvre within and across social fields and ultimately

⁴⁴ Common Māori tikanga or custom upon meeting someone new.

⁴⁵ A style of shoe developed by American semi-professional basketball player Charles "Chuck" Taylor in the 1920s (Aamidor, 2006). "Chucks" were popular among male athletes and permeated into mainstream culture as an icon of individualism and masculinity (Aamidor, 2006), although since manufacturer Converse sold to multinational Nike in 2003, more and more 'women friendly' versions of the Chuck Taylor are being released such as the 'Dainty', 'Ballerina', 'Glitter', and 'Sequin'.

⁴⁶ My carved (Māori) bone necklace. The literal translation of taonga is "treasure".

provide a better position to share experience and meaning (Rowe, 2005; Taylor, 2010; Weston, 2010).

Relational Ethics

Relationships are paramount to ethnographic research, as William Kornblum (1996) suggests; “the relationships that develop between ethnographic researchers and the people they are studying are critical to the success of their research” (p. 4). Relational ethics, as Carolyn Ellis (2007) sees it, means “to act from our hearts and minds, to acknowledge our interpersonal bonds to others” (p. 4). Presenting my relational self, as opposed to an individualistic self, meant – to me – acting the same way I do when I am in otherwise similar circumstances where I am in contact with people with whom I am not well acquainted. In a research context, it meant working at building meaningful, relational yet ethically appropriate relationships with my participants (Hesse-Biber, 2012; Koehyn, 1998; Pitts & Miller-Day, 2007). I took opportunities wherever possible to treat people with respect and kindness. Smiling, sharing baked goods, giving someone a ride, helping out wherever possible, speaking to people with genuine concern, indeed these courtesies might well be what feminists have named and renamed “good feminist practice” (Whitmore, 2014, p. 66).⁴⁷ Acknowledging difference in a respectful way, and then taking the responsibility of interrogating my own subjectivities was also crucial in order to build understanding (Pillow, 2003). Carol Gilligan (1982) believes that behaving this way is inherently gendered. While practicing

⁴⁷ These practices might also reflect a sense of “manaakitanga”, or, being hospitable, caring, and nurturing relationships (Mead, 2016).

relational ethics was certainly something that I felt came “naturally” to me, I cannot definitively say whether this is based on my gender, ethnicity, upbringing, or personality (Moser, 2008) (although my estimate is that it is a hybrid combination).

At times though, this approach threatened to interrupt processes of truth telling, like when I became affected by women’s perceptions of their bodies. Many of the women I had spoken to had referred to their bodies disparagingly; as “average” (Iris, personal communication, March 17, 2014), “old” (in a negative way - Sabrina, personal communication, November 3, 2014), and “gross” (Sasha). Hearing such negative comments affected me so much that I found myself acting more empathetically toward my participants. For example, previous sex worker Sasha had been answering my questions about her body as prompted and had, so far, presented what *I* perceived to be a distorted picture of herself. This made me feel sad, so I deviated from my scripted questions and started coaxing her to get her to consider some of the positive things about her body:

Grace: What does your body mean to you? Like, does your body mean anything or do you even really think about it?

Sasha: No I hate my body.

Grace: Do you?

Sasha: Yeah. I hate the stretch marks, I hate my flab, my jelly roll, yeah. Heaps about my stretch marks. I’ve got heaps of stretch marks and I feel really insecure about them. No, I don’t like my body at all. And my pimples and stuff like that, scars. Yeah, I just don’t like my body.

Grace: Okay. What about things that you do like?

Sasha: My hands (laughs), I like my hands!

Grace: Yeah? Totally...

Sasha: That's it.

Grace: Okay, so, like, what about what your body can do?

Sasha: ...What my body can do? What kind of question is that?

(Laughs) What do I like about my body that my body can do?

Grace: Yeah! I mean, your body can do stuff right?

Sasha: ...Well I've got long lanky legs, and I can jump over long distances when we go rock hopping. I can get to a lot more places than other people (laughs).

Grace: That's sweet! So your body gets you out and about with your family doesn't it? And it means you can keep up with your son and stuff yeah?

Sasha: Yeah...

Grace: Okay, cool, so next question...

A natural inclination to make Sasha feel better about her body can also appear condescending. While it's possible that I *may* have made her feel better, researchers such as Kathryn Anderson and Dana C. Jack (1991) advise against controlling situations like this, insisting participants be able to express their experiences free of expectation, making each person "free to describe her idiosyncratic interaction between self-image and cultural norms. Each person can tell us how she comes to value or devalue herself" (p. 166).

In considering my response to Sasha, I felt like I had gotten too close. I unpacked my experience and found insecurities in my own body that I may have felt a need to compensate for. Even more than that, I found a compromised feminist agenda that just *had* to see another woman “empowered”. I, as researcher would be the one then, to empower/colonise/free Sasha from herself, her body, from dominant constructions of femininity, and from sex work. Clearly, a feminist push for relational ethics may be ideal in theory, in practice it was messy (Pillow, 2003). It required going back to seeing difference as distance, and back to the inbetweenness where I could critically analyse my own embodied experience. This deconstructive process allowed me to transcend (if only partially or momentarily) the shifting boundaries of my intersecting subjectivities and imagine the possibility of a different subjectivity (Cupo, 2010; Pillow, 2003). Examining the frames with which I read the world unquestionably transformed my sense of self and other(s) (St. Pierre, 1997).

Summary

This chapter has outlined the embodied methodological approaches used to create space for women sex workers to share their lived, embodied experiences. I laid the foundation for this chapter by emphasising poststructural feminist embodied ways of knowing for its epistemological relevance to this project. I detailed the methods I used (participant interviews and observations) in what became a multi-method ethnography, and introduced my participants and the spaces in which they move. Finally, I exposed and interrogated my own complex positionalities and

embodiments as a part of the research process in a reflexive discussion of the value of practicing feminist ethics.

Stressing the relevance of women's bodies, this chapter has set the scene for a theoretical analysis of the rich, embodied, lived experiences of women sex workers. In the chapters that follow, I draw on empirical material to discuss women sex workers' gendered, discursive, and affective and emotional (dis)engagements in sport, exercise, and physical leisure.

CHAPTER 4

Women Sex Workers' (Dis)engagement in Sport, Exercise, and Physical Leisure: A Bourdieusian Analysis

In this first empirically based chapter I highlight the ways in which women sex workers have engaged with sport, exercise, and physical leisure as children, adolescents, and adults. I offer their stories within a feminist poststructuralist framework attuned to power, places, spaces and bodies, while providing temporal snapshots of how women sex workers in Aotearoa experience sport, exercise, and physical leisure.

This chapter evolves through analysis guided by both Pierre Bourdieu and feminist scholars engaging with his work, to understand intricate embodied experiences, the contexts in which they take place, and the relationships between selfhood and power relations. While gender serves as a focus of this thesis, it does not exist in isolation, and so accordingly class, race, ethnicity, nationality, age, and ability are also acknowledged throughout this chapter for their contributions to embodiment. In so doing, this chapter offers an intersectional examination of women sex workers' past and present lived experiences of sport, exercise, and physical leisure.

I begin this chapter by providing an overview of Bourdieu's key concepts before applying them to women sex workers' sport, exercise, and physical leisure experiences, from early childhood to school life and into adulthood. I then consider how women's experiences of sport, exercise, and physical leisure coincide with new roles like motherhood, and being a sex worker. To bring this broad trajectory to a close, I evaluate the

usefulness of Bourdieu's concepts in examining the sport, exercise, and physical leisure experiences of women sex workers.

Applying Bourdieu's Thinking Tools

While it is unlikely that Bourdieu imagined his concepts being applied to women sex workers' sporting experiences, his concepts nonetheless prove useful when engaged in dialogue with feminist engagements of his work. Lisa Adkins (2004), for example, believes that when Bourdieu's work is used by feminist theorists, the result is "most refreshing and profitable to both contemporary social theory and feminist theorizing" (p. 2). As examined in Chapter Two, feminist researchers have taken this partnership into studies of sport, exercise, and physical leisure with positive results (Adkins, 2004; Adkins & Skeggs, 2004; Lovell, 2000; McLeod, 2005; McNay, 1999b; Thorpe, 2014). In particular, the shared focus on the body contributes to the continuation of beneficial syntheses, as well as Bourdieu's specialised concepts useful for analysing gender and other facets of identity.

This chapter uses three of Bourdieu's concepts, or what have come to be known as his "thinking tools" (Grenfell, 2012; lisahunter et al., 2014b; Swartz & Zolberg, 2004; Thorpe, 2014). These guiding principles influenced his analysis through various lines of theoretical thought and practical application. Together they constitute his "theory of practice" in a bid to transcend dichotomies and offer new thinking on power relations (Bourdieu, 1977; Swartz & Zolberg, 2004). Here I briefly introduce three of Bourdieu's core thinking tools – habitus, field, and capital – before

exploring their relevance to the sport, exercise, and physical leisure experiences of women sex workers in Aotearoa.

Bourdieu's theory of habitus was conceptualised relatively early on in his explorations of social phenomena (Bourdieu, 1990b). In his book *The Logic of Practice*, Bourdieu (1990b) describes habitus as "systems of durable, transposable dispositions" (p. 53). This entails the internalised beliefs, feelings, thoughts, and perceptions that organise the behaviours and representations of the individual agent (Bourdieu, 1990b; Maton, 2012; Reed-Danahay, 2005; Swartz, 2013). But these dispositions do not exist in isolation; rather their very foundation is dependent on their context (Reed-Danahay, 2005). This underlying relationship is central to understanding Bourdieu's leading concern; the intricate dynamic between human agency and social structures. As he summarises: "I can say that all my thinking started from this point: how can behaviour be regulated without being the product of obedience to rules?" (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 65). A durable and transposable system, habitus is Bourdieu's way of theorising the complex intersections of structure and action, and individuals and agency (Bourdieu, 1990b).

Gender affects habitus by structuring individuals and instituting deeply ingrained habits of behaviour and embodied action.⁴⁸ A common female embodiment in some Aotearoa spaces is, for example, sitting with one's legs crossed – this conveys historically constructed notions of femininity, modesty, and sophistication. This embodied practice could be said to facilitate what Madeline Arnot (2002) describes as "the

⁴⁸ Bourdieu (1977) uses the term "hexis" (p. 82) for what I will refer to as "embodiment", or the embodied nature of habitus.

socialization and reproduction of gender” (p. 49). However, gender is not the only dimension of habitus; it also encapsulates other aspects of identity, including sexuality, ethnicity, race, and class. These aspects produce a habitus that is lived and unique to each woman yet is able to share in experiences with others.

Crucial to understanding habitus is Bourdieu’s theorisation of social space. Bourdieu links individuals to respective groups by assigning them positions within social structures, or what he calls “fields” (Bourdieu, 1993a, 2005b). Jen Webb, Tony Schirato and Geoff Danaher (2002) offer the following definition:

A cultural field can be defined as a series of institutions, rules, rituals, conventions, categories, designations, appointments and titles which constitute an objective hierarchy and which produce and authorize certain discourses and activities ... Cultural fields, that is, are made up not simply of institutions and rules, but of the interactions between institutions, rules and practices. (p. 21-22)

In a fitting analogy, Patricia Thomson (2012) explains Bourdieu’s field in terms of a football field:

Just as in football, the social field consisted of positions occupied by agents (people or institutions) and what happens on/in the field is consequently boundaried. There are thus limits to what can be done, and what can be done is also shaped by the conditions of the field. (p. 67)

Each social field has a structure of power relations, created and maintained by individual and collective habitus that are simultaneously

constructed by the field in a dynamic, reciprocal synergy. As individuals move within the field they joust for positions of power, which can only be obtained with a specified habitus that wields sufficient dominance by way of Bourdieu's third notable theory of "capital" (discussed below). In addition, each field contains "doxa", which are unquestioned, shared beliefs that are reproduced in any field (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 164). These assumptions also act to regulate individuals' behaviours while in the field.

When habitus is considered within a field, behaviour is contextualised and it becomes possible to understand why fields of sport, exercise, and physical leisure might be experienced differently by different women. Feminist poststructural theorists argue that, in order for Bourdieu's concept of field to be beneficial to feminist theories, it is crucial to conceptualise fields as permeable and open, as bodies move between them with all the ambiguity of mutable gender norms (McLeod, 2005; McNay, 1999b). This helps us acknowledge the enormous "differentiation within and across the identity category of gender, and within the experience of gender" (McLeod, 2005, p. 22).

Bourdieu's (1989a) concept of capital considers individuals' access to different forms of power within fields (McLeod, 2005; McNay, 1999b; Moore, 2012; Swartz, 1997; Thorpe, 2009). In a separation from Marx and Engels (1967), Bourdieu's capital is applied through a wider system of trade, whereby assets of different kinds are transformed and exchanged within and across different fields (Moore, 2012; Swartz & Zolberg, 2004). For Bourdieu, the types of capital are not merely economic, but include social and cultural, as well as a number of subtypes (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Fogle, 2011; Moore, 2012; Shilling, 1991; Swartz, 2013).

Four main types of capital anchor Bourdieu's theory: economic; social; symbolic; and, cultural. He divided the latter into a further three forms: objectified; institutionalised; and, embodied capital (1986). Objectified capital refers to objects or things owned by an individual, while institutionalised capital manifests as credentials or qualifications such as degrees or titles that represent cultural competence and authority (Bourdieu, 1986). Embodied capital bears most significance to this research and is understood as a resource internalised within the body via a process of embodiment, cultivation, and inculcation (Bourdieu, 1986). For many, embodied capital represents a broad understanding encompassing any cultural assets within the body, whereas others have moved to develop Bourdieu's concept further in order to capture the importance of the body more adequately (see Shilling, 1991, 1993, 2004). Bourdieu himself encouraged such developments, believing that "acknowledging that capital can take a variety of forms is indispensable to explain the structure and dynamics of differentiated societies" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 119). For this reason, this chapter draws upon Bourdieu's core types of capital (economic, social, symbolic, cultural) as well as three subtypes of *embodied* capital (physical, gendered, and sexual) to help understand women's experiences of sport, exercise, and physical leisure.

The three thinking tools outlined (habitus, field, and capital) are interrelated. Bourdieu (1984) summarised this relationship in the following equation: [(Habitus)(Capital)] + Field = Practice (p.101). This is Bourdieu's complete model of practice, with behaviours that coincide with one's interests as the outcome of the three thinking tools. The model has proven beneficial to many poststructural feminists as a dynamic theory of

embodiment and lived practice. In the following sections I apply this model in synthesis with contemporary feminist theory to women sex workers' stories of sport, exercise, and physical leisure. This provides depth, context, and perspective to their lived experiences, and highlights some of the ways they understand and navigate social structures.

“A good, well rounded thing for a kid to do”: Childhood

In Aotearoa, childhood is generally regarded as a time of play and activity. Therefore it comes as no surprise that all participants recalled some level of sport, exercise, and physical leisure participation during their childhood. Participation levels in childhood were remarkably high, with women each participating in approximately four to seven different sports throughout their school years.⁴⁹ Women sex workers looked backed on their involvement in sport and leisure with nostalgia, especially during their younger years (3-10 years old), with many commenting on their insatiable enthusiasm, energy, and ability:

I had a lot of energy ... So I was always keen ... It wasn't like “mmm can't be bothered”. I was always like “Yeah! Yeah!” (Melissa)

I used to do gymnastics, and tennis, BMX, ballet. Oh and athletics at school. The whole lot – netball, basketball ... 4 square, handball type thing ... I used to love going and playing tennis at lunch break.
(Sasha)

⁴⁹ See Table 3 for a list of all of the sport, exercise, and physical leisure activities undertaken by participants during childhood.

I was a runner as a child and I was very athletic right through school and you know, games – netball, through primary; tennis, swimming ... running, high jumping, long jumping, you know the athletic things; track and field. I was just a fit kid and I was good at it. (Iris)

As demonstrated by Melissa, Sasha, and Iris, and the activities displayed in Table 3, the types of activities participated in during childhood are diverse. Women’s choices of activity and how they were experienced and are remembered are heavily influenced by their habitus and the fields in which they participated within and across. Bourdieu (1984) points out that childhood is a crucial time where one comes to learn “one’s place” by developing the habitus amid other structures in the field (p. 465).

Table 3: Activities undertaken during childhood and adolescence.

Athletics	Cross country	Obstacle	Skiing
Badminton	Gymnastics	courses	Skipping
Ballet	Handball / 4-	Play fighting	Snooker
Bike riding	square	Play gym	Softball
BMX	Hockey	Pickup sticks	Swimming
Bushwalking	Hopscotch	Rock climbing	Table tennis
Canoeing	Horse riding	Rollerskating	Tennis
Catch ‘n’ kiss	Kayaking	Rowing	Touch rugby
Chasing games	Knucklebones	Rugby league	Trampoline
Cheerleading	Latin dance	Rugby union	Volleyball
Climbing trees	Motocross	Running races	
	Netball	Skateboarding	

While choices in activity can often be gendered, manifestations of social class in the habitus are also apparent. Participation in certain types of sports can indicate possession of economic wealth. For example, horse

riding generally requires sufficient amounts of money, in other words, a form of capital that lower socio-economic groups typically do not have access to (Bourdieu, 1978; Falcoux & McLeod, 2012; Wilson, 2002). But as women's experiences came to show, and as Bourdieu (1978, 1984) himself suggests, barriers to sport participation based on class goes beyond economic capital to include cultural, social, and symbolic capital, acquired through "taste" and "dispositions" in the habitus (Engström, 2008; Falcoux & McLeod, 2012; Wilson, 2002).

Sport, play, and physical leisure in early childhood often occurs first within the home, domestic gardens or backyards, and surrounding streets and neighbourhoods (Hancock & Gillen, 2007; Hemming, 2007; Jachimiak, 2014; Jones & Cunningham, 1999; Matthews, Limb, & Taylor, 2000). Margaret Jones and Chris Cunningham (1999) recognise the home as the "centre of the child's universe" (p. 29), but also note that as the child develops, the external world becomes increasingly important. They find that:

As mobility increases, the distinctive territory of the child—the street, the homes of friends, the location of favoured playspaces, places which must be avoided, places which can be easily reached on foot or bicycle, places which are forbidden, places where friends meet, places in which to be alone—gradually develop. (p. 29)

These spaces have been studied closely over the last decade or so, contributing to greater understandings of the gendering of children's agency in spaces that represent family and home life while also producing

opportunities for play and leisure (Christensen & O'Brien, 2003; Hancock & Gillen, 2007; Holloway & Valentine, 2004; Punch, 2000).

Women in this study confirmed that the home was the first space they encountered sport, games, and physical leisure, including outdoor spaces on or near the home property, such as in the yard, on the street, or in nearby parks and reserves. Outdoor spaces feature heavily among women's experiences, with many instantly making a connection to the outdoors when speaking about their very first memories of sport, exercise, and physical leisure, such as Melissa:

I was always outside playing rather than sitting inside, running around playing, climbing trees, falling out of trees (laughs), making huts, running up and down the street ... I was bought up around the Avon River so I spent a lot of time catching ducklings, running after them (laughs), and all the trees and running around there, eh, with friends. We spent a lot of time when we were younger around that river, running up and down the river and all around, making huts and all of that.

Melissa's memories of the Avon River portray a strong narrative that signals feelings of pleasure as well as spatial freedom to run and move and use the able body in creative ways. Similarly, when asked about her experiences of physical activity as a child, Kate begins by describing the place that she grew up in, and accordingly the place where she made her first memories of physical leisure:

I grew up in the country, so I grew up on a farm, so continuous activity, and I think my body was just, we just ran everywhere, we

cycled to school ... We used to walk everywhere. We just used to play all day (laughs), and come in for food (laughs) ... all sorts of imaginary sort of games. We had this amazing tree that had fallen over on the property and that was our “ship” (laughs) (personal communication, April 16, 2015).

Clearly, outdoor spaces play a big part in what makes up Kate and Melissa’s childhood memories of sport, exercise, and physical leisure.

The relations within these unsupervised, spontaneous moments that many women played in as children may not qualify as fields. “In order for field to function”, says Bourdieu (1993b), “there have to be stakes and people prepared to play the game, endowed with the habitus that implies knowledge and recognition of the immanent laws of the field, the stakes, and so on” (p. 72). At first glance, children’s play does not fit this criterion, as unstructured, unregulated, aimless playful interaction lacks any significant power relations or struggle. Bourdieu (2001) himself argues that it is not so much domestic spheres “where principles of domination that go on to be exercised within even the most private universe are developed and imposed” but rather “agencies such as the school or the state” (p. 4). However, looking closer at fields of play, it becomes clearer that these too can often be charged with requirements for physical and social capital, and are impacted by family fields which (dis)allow children access, thus shaping girls’ embodied corporeal awareness (habitus) in dynamic and relational ways from an early age. As Mere’s admission demonstrates, fields of childhood play can certainly involve structure, and indeed dominance:

We played rugby on our farm ... you know how it is with brothers and sisters, you sort of have your moments, you know, get angry.

Well I used to go for the one I was angry at, at the time (laughs).

Whoever it was, yeah take it out on them, bowl them over!

Whether sport, or play, Mere's recollection gives insight into a field packed with hierarchy, stakes, struggle, positions, rules and power. As the eldest of 13 children, Mere's experience is one that is also located in the family field, a site Bourdieu believes to be the primary field of inculcation during childhood (Bourdieu, 1984, 1996; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990).

While Mere wielded her physical capital among her siblings, actively shaping and reshaping fields and habitus, Tania remembers being in a position of marginality within the family field. She explains that she was allowed to play outside, but she was not permitted to play on the street with the other neighbourhood children:

My dad was quite strict about playing with other kids because where I grew up as a child ... it's in a cul-de-sac, and it's pretty much a working class community and the street is the field. [There are] I think maybe seven privately owned homes and the rest are all Housing New Zealand.⁵⁰ So my parents owned their own house, but we had a fenced off area. But yeah, kids just played all the time. Rugby, basketball ...

In contrast to Mere, Kate and Melissa's embodied experiences playing outside, Tania's is marked by the presence of a patriarchal father and state body, Housing New Zealand. Tania describes the place she grew up in

⁵⁰ Housing New Zealand is a governmental housing agency in Aotearoa.

terms of the people that also shared that space. She suggests that her father did not want her to play with the “other kids” because they lived in public houses owned by the government, indicating they did not have the means to buy their own home. Public housing projects like the one Tania describes are often perceived to be associated with poverty, illegal activity and violence (van Ingen et al., 2018). This situated Tania’s habitus within defined boundaries of social class, stipulating where, and with whom she could (and could not) play.

In this controlled space, Tania received lessons in socioeconomic status and class divisions within her community and throughout Aotearoa society, and she communicates an understanding of how sport and physical leisure can be implicated in such matters. But although her access to social and physical capital was limited by the family field, these perceived constraints on Tania’s participation simultaneously endowed her with economic and cultural capital. In other words, these circumstances informed Tania’s embodied habitus in relation to other bodies, places and spaces (McDowell, 2009; Teather, 1999).

While her habitus was constructed in relation to class, which positioned her above other girls in her community, it is interesting to consider Tania’s later choice of career as a sex worker, a job historically constructed as comprising low, middle, and working classes (Jordan, 2010). One might assume that her classed habitus has since adapted. However, this may not be the case, firstly because of the changing shape of the sex work field, which now incorporates “high class” sex workers (Sanders, 2013b). Secondly, Tania’s embodied habitus has been, and continues to be, actively nurtured through the sport and physical activity

field – as an adult she cycles, lifts weights at the gym, walks the dog, does yoga, visits an osteopath and a physiotherapist – “I embrace my body” (April 16, 2015). This “bodily conduct” (McDowell, 2009, p. 67) is in line with the idea that higher classes pay more attention to sport, fitness and health (Bourdieu, 1978; Sugden & Tomlinson, 2000).

Sabrina demonstrates her tastes and preferences for sport that associated her with upper class upbringing. As a competitive gymnast from a young age, Sabrina later transitioned into cheerleading as a teen. She comments that she would have liked to have also tried diving and figure skating, but was constrained by time. These preferences are all sporting activities that have been known to preserve strong emphases on dominant notions of traditional femininity consistent with white, upper class values (Bourdieu, 1978; Roper, 2013; Wilson, 2002). Further increasing her “distinction” (Bourdieu, 1984), or cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1978), Sabrina reveals more markers of class that facilitate her entry into gymnastics, including both family tradition and early training:

[Mum] did gymnastics, she did netball, she did dancing, she did athletics, she was just like an all-rounder. She kind of expected me to be like that. My dad was the same as well ... my older sisters were in gymnastics as well ... my whole family did it [gymnastics]. They all did really well and so there was a lot of pressure there as well to do well, to get into the New Zealand team.

The first ever physical activity I remember doing was gymnastics because I started when I was either three or four ... From when I was seven to when I was 12 I had a really defined six pack

(laughs) ... So I was constantly working out for four days a week, training for three hours [a day], and that was when I was 8 [years old].

While participation in gymnastics is generally one of the more costly sports to take up, Bourdieu (1978) points out that involvement in these types of activities is also contingent on these two factors:

no less than the economic obstacles, it is the hidden entry requirements, such as family tradition and early training, and also the obligatory clothing, bearing and techniques of sociability which keep these sports closed to the working classes and to individuals rising from the lower-middle and even upper-middle classes (p. 838)

Sabrina's classed, gendered habitus allowed her to participate in gymnastics while gymnastics inversely shaped her habitus to align with values of heteronormative femininity (Roth & Basow, 2004), Sabrina herself, referencing the revealing feminine attire required in gymnastics, by commenting "leotards leave little to the imagination".

In opposition to Sabrina, Rose struggled with being able to participate in her chosen sport, which is softball. She had the required physical capital, "I was the only one who got home"⁵¹ (personal communication, November 2, 2014), but in a collision of sport and family fields, Rose often did not have the economic capital required to take part:

We always made it into the finals and stuff like that, against some really good teams and [their players] were always in the regional

⁵¹ As in home base in softball – the final base that a player must touch to score a run.

team. But I didn't really go away for sports for the team, just limited fundraising and things like that ... We never liked having to ask your mum for a glove or knickerbockers⁵² and subs⁵³ and stuff, that was the only hard part.

Rose's sporting habitus (Brown, 2009; Stuij, 2015) were affected by her family's socioeconomic status or class membership. Not having the same economic capital as someone like Sabrina meant her ability to play the sport she loved was constrained. It wasn't until Rose entered educational fields that she was afforded better access to softball:

Yeah, [I was] just really involved [in sport] right through primary and stuff like that. Yeah, the opportunity. Normally not like club things like that coz you'd have to ask your mum for the fee...

From their earliest accounts of sport, play, and physical leisure, all but one of the women sex workers made reference to the influence that family fields had on the practices and bodily dispositions of their then young selves. Girls' embodied learning occurred progressively over time and as they matured and became exposed to new and different fields, so too did their habitus. This became intensified with passage into the complex, shifting spaces of the educational field, an area Bourdieu himself dedicated considerable effort to studying for its powerful ability to institutionalise the habitus (Alanen, Brooker, & Mayall, 2015; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Grenfell, 2012; Reed-Danahay, 2005; Swartz, 1997).

⁵² "Knickerbockers" are a type of trousers worn during softball games.

⁵³ Player fees.

Schools and educational sites are well known for their influence in not only teaching children in academic subjects, but through socialisation and culturisation, providing knowledge and direction in terms of social organisation, norms, and values (Davies, 1989, 1990; Pillow, 2002; St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000; Walker & Barton, 2013). Bourdieu recognised this influence and focused his attention on the ensuing unequal distribution and exchange of capital in educational fields (McNay, 1999b). As Michael J. Grenfell (2012) writes: “Far from being a meritocratic institution through which any individual child could progress, Bourdieu demonstrated that those who benefited from the French schooling system, were those already possessed of social and economic advantages” (p. 73-74).

The social struggle within the field of education is reflected through women’s experiences of sport and physical leisure at school. Their stories demonstrate the power of two fields (sport and education) converging to (re)produce firm social norms in order for them to become embodied in the habitus. One of the most important ways this is achieved is through introduction to organised competition. In sporting spaces the unstructured free play that occurred at home is lost as it becomes regulated and rule bound, and sustained through sports and associated clubs and teams. Hierarchies, stereotypes, and emphasis on winning are commonplace in these spaces, and negative consequences can be experienced by individuals who do not conform to the doxa. Tania’s memory highlights the significance that sport had within her school, as well as evidence of racial stereotyping that eventually led to a dislike of sport for the rest of her life:

They'd look at me and they'd think I'm athletic, you know, they just assume because you're a Pacific Islander, you're going to be a great sportswoman ... Hell no! (Laughs). Yeah, no, I was pretty much forced to play sports at school, which I didn't like.

She continues:

I don't like competitiveness to be honest, coz that's why I don't like sports ... At school they were like "you've got to be A or B or C, and if you're not A, then you suck". You know? And I don't like that, and I think that's what put me off. Coz schools tend to put a lot of pressure on young people on winning and being the best, when really it should just be whether you lose or win, you're a winner. As long as you achieved your goal and I think that's what sports should be about. But it's not.

Tania was at the cross-section of educational and school fields with what others perceived as physical capital based on her ethnicity. Scholars in Aotearoa agree that Māori and Pacific Islanders continue to be portrayed as inherently physical and biologically advantaged in physical activity in historical and contemporary discourses (e.g. Bruce, Falcous, & Thorpe, 2007; Fitzpatrick, 2011, 2013; Hokowhitu, 2003; Hokowhitu, 2008; Palmer, 2000; Palmer & Masters, 2010). This highlights sport as a place that reinforces the idea that these types of bodies are indeed talented, but are merely physical in nature, capable of little else (Hokowhitu, 2003). As Brendan Hokowhitu (2008, p. 89) writes in response: "neither Māori, nor Pacific, nor any New Zealand student for that matter should be bound by their physicality". Tania – it appears – was bound. She was forced to play

while in school, but escaped having to participate in sports outside of school: “I was happy just to go to the library and read books or just, you know, do things.” (April 16, 2015)

In not engaging with the sports field, Tania challenged two erroneous assumptions; that ethnicity determines physical prowess, and that winning in sports (and ultimately in all fields) determines success and the value of a person, and therefore should be sought by all. Tania, in this instance, was not bound by her physicality. By rejecting the physical capital afforded to her by her skin colour, she opens up the possibilities for the fields of sport and education to be transformed (Bourdieu, 2005a).

Alexandra demonstrated a similar sentiment to Tania, in that she did not agree with the doxa within sport, and instead sought to actively challenge the pervasive competitive culture she encountered at school:

I’ve always had an aversion to sport, since school days really. I decided that what I didn’t like about it was the competitive element and I thought it brought out the worst in people ... I tended to focus on the fact there was this emphasis on winning and I didn’t like that. [It] felt socially unjust (personal communication, November 2, 2014).

Here Alexandra indicates that – like Tania – her dislike of sport began within the field of education. Referring to sport as a “socially unjust” space that brought out “the worst in people”, Alexandra conveys a field where she felt like a “fish out of water” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 127). She is also able to critically unpack a specific incident that she thinks could explain her strong feelings toward sport and competition:

I have a very clear memory of, I was either four or five, I think I was at kindergarten or first year at school in Invercargill.⁵⁴ We had an afternoon of races. I was running along and I didn't know that I was in the lead. I was running along, and then I stopped to see where everybody else was and they all came thrashing past me! (Laughs). It's possible that that's got things that have still stayed with me forever. (November 2, 2014)

Alexandra's habitus was developed at home in a family field that did not place emphasis on sport:

My family were academic and weren't sports oriented at all ... I often had to do piano or other instruments and they said there wasn't enough money for both [sport and piano], and it was "unthinkable" that I wouldn't take piano.

Once she entered the field of education and subsequently the field of sport, Alexandra quickly realised that her habitus did not match the field – what Bourdieu calls "hysteresis" (Bourdieu, 1977). As a result, Alexandra's habitus began to experience the effects of two coinciding fields. While the habitus is known to be continually adaptable and mobile, the deep embodiment of Alexandra's experience is demonstrated by its durability – after the event on the track she never genuinely participated in organised sport again, instead doing all she could to avoid it:

I actually made a conscious effort to get out of sport for many years ... I wrote a letter that said I had something called water on

⁵⁴ A city in Te Wai Pounamu - The South Island of Aotearoa.

the knee and I used that for at least two years. That got me out of sport.

Grenfell (2012) describes this avoidance-type behaviour as in fact choosing one's most suitable field: "We learn, in short, our rightful place in the social world, where we will do best given our dispositions and resources, and also where we will struggle" (p. 57). Sport sociologists Symeon Dagkas and Thomas Quarmby (2014) make this connection directly with sport participation:

how young people's habitus is influenced may shape their initial and ongoing involvement in physical activity and even the nature and reasons behind engaging in activities in general ... the dispositions (which make up habitus) to engage in physical activity arise from a complex interplay of various economic, cultural and social factors associated with the fields in which individuals are positioned (p. 102).

Iris joined Tania and Alexandra in feeling her habitus did not fit into sports fields, opting for spontaneous physical leisure instead:

I resented organised sports with a compulsion. I loved the voluntary and spontaneous ... the constructed, organised sport, it was a bit boring for me. I liked the disorganised thing that you did with your friends.

Tania, Alexandra, and Iris' experiences of sport and education fields, and in particular, their conscious non-compliance, are interpreted by Bourdieu (1977) as expressions of heterodoxy, whereby damaging, taken-for-granted assumptions about social life are destabilised (Armour, 2013; Brown &

Szeman, 2000). Bourdieu (1977) states that heterodoxy “implies an awareness and recognition of the possibility of different or antagonistic beliefs” (p. 164). Through heterodoxy, these women take steps toward creating opportunities for new doxa to develop, thereby appropriating power and enabling transformation to the field(s). As Bourdieu (2005a) writes: “every field is inhabited by tensions and contradictions which are at the origin (basis) of conflicts; that means that it is simultaneously a field of struggles or competitions which generate change” (p. 47).

As girls got older they became more involved in acquiring individual capital, and the fields of sport and school (often overlapping each other) offered more opportunities for gaining social capital, recognition and prestige. Many women revelled in organised sport, where they could achieve the status of “winner”. For example, Kararaina recalls: “I was really good at working in a team and having fun and winning. I liked to win”. Accomplished gymnast Sabrina also comments on how she felt as a talented athlete: “I loved being active and I loved being the best. That was always a major thing for me, like being number one and having people look up to me in that sense. And I had that”. The value that is placed on winning infiltrates the habitus of young girls indirectly through the fields of family, education, and sport, while their compliance conversely reinforces the doxa. In return, girls gain opportunities to convert their physical capital into other capital such as social and symbolic (Bourdieu, 1986).

Whether experienced positively or negatively, the competitive aspect of sport is palpable even from the earliest encounters at school. Associations with sport and the messages that come from this can

influence young girls about their position in society as female bodies. A skilled, athletic body is desirable within sporting spaces, as this is a body that can “win” and enjoy recognition, thus accumulating capital (Cooky, 2009; Doherty, 1999; Gilbert, 2001; Hargreaves & Anderson, 2014). The attitude of “winning is everything” in sport has been associated with traditional male values, and yet is imperative for girls to conform to if they want to participate fully in sporting fields, as well as wider society (Hargreaves & Anderson, 2014; McDevitt, 2004). The achievements of Sabrina and Kararaina can thus be described as characteristic of a masculine desire to win and be the best (Lenskyj, 1994a, 1994b).

Kate is more explicit in her ability to reify gender ambiguity. She comments on how she not only competed against her male counterparts, but did so in a typically masculine, male dominated sport:

I did motocross with the boys! I was a tomboy. I rode motocross with the boys. I was the only girl out there doing that as well ... I always like to challenge myself, and I've always competed with men on that level.

Kate's comments recognise a common desire by some girls to be “one of the boys”, and she appears proud about the fact that she was (and is) successful at doing so. This could be a mere longing to fit in and be accepted by the other gender (while devaluating her femininity), or an act of defiance to traditional gender stereotypes that say girls shouldn't play with the boys (McDonagh & Pappano, 2007). It could also be both. What is clear are indications of Kate's evolving “gendered habitus” – where

social constructions of masculinity and femininity shape, define, and express the body's identity (Krais, 2006; Thorpe, 2009).

On the one hand, Kate's admission that she feels that competing with men is more of a "challenge" indicates a deep-seated embodied belief that women's bodies are less physical than male bodies. On the other hand, her actions based on her view that she is on their "level" challenges this very assumption. Gendered comparisons like this began to appear more as women sex workers got older, signifying the development of both gendered and sexualised habitus, and various other subsets of capital; important resources for adult fields.

Competing and winning are meaningful to some women, yet these experiences were not sought out by everyone. This includes Alexandra, Tania, and Iris, who outright rejected competition, and other women who overlooked competition altogether. Cheryl Cooky (2009) also found this in her study on socially constructed interest in girls' sport. She found that "For these girls, having fun was based not on competition or winning but on meeting new girls, spending time with friends, and getting out of the house" (Cooky, 2009, p. 277). The latter was especially true for Sasha:

[I liked] being around other kids as well. Being the only child back then, yeah... I liked getting out. And I also had a dirty stepdad so I didn't like being in the house so I used to get out all the time and do anything you know, any sports, anything to get out of the house!

Clearly, sport can offer girls much more than competition. For Sasha, sport offered an escape, and while, from exactly what is not made explicit, her experience uncovers an imminent threat of symbolic (and physical)

violence and a struggle of power (McNay, 2004). Her perceptions of the family field motivated Sasha to reposition her body and self in spaces and fields of sport, demonstrating the spatial, agentic potentialities of the habitus (McNay, 2003).

Other women sex workers spoke of sport and physical leisure at school as spaces of social interaction: “I made friends... I made a lot of friends” (Mere). The importance of building and maintaining friendships through sport and physical activity at school can also be felt on a deeper level than acquaintanceship, as demonstrated by Laura:

[Sport] was the only place that I felt part of the team, a group, because I'd always been picked on from the word go ... right through my school years I was badly picked on [for having a foreign accent and being large]. So it was nice to actually, nice to join, be in a group, playing hockey and that no one teased me, we're all in a group, you know? So yeah, I made friends that way. So I see it as a reason why I liked group sports (personal communication, July 8, 2015).

While hockey allowed Laura to engage in social interaction, as a victim of bullying at school she also found safety in being part of a team. In their research into women's roller derby, Pavlidis and Fullagar (2014) refer to this collective team environment as a “protective space created against the general stresses of life” (p. 54). As demonstrated with some unstructured play spaces, under circumstances like these, sport simply does not fit the criteria of Bourdieu's field (Lahire, 2015). Or, if it does, as Laura's

experience reflects the dynamic nature of fields as open to change and redefinition (Bourdieu, 1989b).

With women's pleasure stemming from a desire to win as well as a desire for fun and social interaction, the muddy, contradictory nature of sport becomes more obvious. A well-known tenet of sport sociology, the "double edged sword" (Hartmann, 2003, p. xii) or "contested ideological terrain" (Messner, 1988, p. 198) confirms participants' experiences so far as dynamic, diverse, and conflicting. Laura's gratifying solace found in her teammates is, nevertheless, located within a field that is suffused with resources, is structured by a gendered logic, and favours specific habitus.

While Laura (and the majority of other participants) was fortunate enough to enjoy full inclusion in sport at school, some women spoke about the barriers that kept them out. These experiences are unique in demonstrating that everyday lived experiences are never identical and highlight the importance of understanding diverse circumstances. Maggie, for example, is enthusiastic about sport, exercise, and physical leisure participation, but concedes that growing up she felt limited to the swimming pool because of her experiences living with an intellectual disability:

Grace: What was it that got you into swimming?

Maggie: I couldn't play any contact sport

Grace: Oh? Because of your disability?

Maggie: Yeah... Contact sports – I get too violent (personal communication, November 6, 2014).

Maggie's comments illustrate a habitus that she believes is not supported by the field of contact sport. Maggie's condition sometimes leads to practice that is at odds with the doxa. While violence in contact sport is often encouraged, behaving "too violently" is not acceptable. Moreover, women who act aggressively within any field in society disrupt wider gender norms, causing social instability (Caudwell, 2003; Gill, 2007; Lock, 2006). The barrier that Maggie faced then was not simply because of her condition, but her gendered habitus as well.

Tania was also discouraged from sport after her early experiences at school where her embodied habitus was extensively scrutinised. Her rapidly developing body was out of place within both school and sport, and threatened to disrupt gendered norms:

It looked like I had the size of a 20 year old body, and I was a child. I was wearing adult clothes. I remember when I was at primary school, my older brother and sister – they were at high school – they would walk past my school to pick me up, and some of their friends would say "Oh look at that hot teacher there, that trainee teacher" and they were like "That is our little sister! She is only nine!"

I remember when I got my period at that age at nine years old, when it was that time for swimming. Because I already had pubic hairs and I had hairs under my arms, my father said I wasn't allowed to shave because I was still a child. The school nurse and, I mean the Principal and them knew about how my body had advanced, so I had to get changed separately from all the other

children because my body was just like, you know, I had no control over my body.

I mean my mind was a child, but again, because I was menstruating, I mean, I knew people were attracted to me sexually. Because they just thought I was an adult. So I got my father to write me sick notes. I'd be like "Dad, can you please write me sick notes so I can get off sports?" And he'd be like "yip, I can do that". Because he knew it really stressed me out, you know? So he would write me weekly letters to get me off or like a whole letter for the term, and he'd say that I had a medical condition, and then that got me off [sports].

(Tania)

Before reaching secondary school, Tania's body had been racialised, classed, gendered, medicalised and sexualised within sport and physical leisure spaces. From a Bourdieusian (1990b) perspective, these processes function to reproduce social norms by adapting Tania's awareness of the possibilities of her situation and how she should act accordingly. As a Pacific Island girl who was not athletically skilful, with a body that was uncontrollable and unpredictable, Tania's embodied habitus did not match up to the expectations of the competitive, gendered sports field, making way for the hysteresis effect (Bourdieu, 1977). As a result, she acted to remove herself from sport, thereby maintaining the status quo.

The childhood experiences of sport and physical leisure of women in sex work are, at a glance, seemingly unremarkable, reflecting a shared doxa that sport was, and is, a "normal" childhood activity. As Nina commented:

Mum was pretty big on trying to get me to join teams and things, after school things. [It was] Probably to do with social contact and it being a good well rounded thing for a kid to do.

Like many children growing up in Aotearoa, women in this study spoke of high physical activity levels and experiences that were generally positive. Introducing concepts from Bourdieu's toolbox provides deeper insights into women's experiences by offering a framework to locate individual experience within social structures. The application of this to participants' sport, exercise, and physical leisure experiences exposes underlying conflicts that manifested early in the embodied habitus and were subsequently carried through to new fields (i.e., education, sport) as they grew older.

“Next minute, I had curves!”: Adolescence

As women left the field of formal education in their teenage years, it signalled a departure from the interrelated sports field as well. The opportunities that school once provided for sport diminished as young women quit, graduated, or disengaged and pursued new interests. With adulthood approaching, girls were also confronted by social responsibilities and constraints, many of which were gendered. Any remaining involvement in sport was relinquished in lieu of an embodied, gendered habitus that often seemed at odds with sport participation.

Over time, girls' habitus' adapted, signalling their changing bodies. As young women they expressed new interests and tastes, and began to trade more and more in various forms of capital. Many women spoke

about their lives at this point as somewhat chaotic – although not completely out of control – indicative of “typical” teenage behaviour:

Grace: So how come you gave up sport?

Monica: Boys (laughs). Alcohol. Parties. Friends. Peer pressure. That sort of stuff (personal communication, November 2, 2014).

Life changes again, you know, get into relationships and things, don't go into sports, you know, you're doing other things, start to party (laughs). Starting to have a good time! (Laura).

As a teenager I was quite naughty like I was starting to just rebel you know, typical teenager...” (Nina, personal communication, May 8, 2014).

At school I was always in sports. I could name heaps of sports teams that I was in ... But then I discovered marijuana and alcohol when I was seventeen and got into the sex industry and so kind of stopped all that (Kararaina)

These comments suggest that during this period young women were in between fields, although still trading in embodied, social and (sub)cultural (Thornton, 1996) capital. For these women, pushing the boundaries as a teen left little or no room for sport participation, where rules and regulations are integral. Sport may have been avoided under the perception that it was “uncool”, as Amy Slater and Marika Tiggemann (2010) found in their focus groups on adolescent girls' reasons for withdrawing from physical activity: “Girls were quite expressive that sports and running were not ‘cool’” (p. 625). Although as Sasha reveals, pushing the boundaries sometimes led directly to sport:

I got into volleyball when I went to jail when I was 17 turning 18 ... yeah, it was cool. You're in one wing and someone else is in another wing. Wing versus wing! (Laughs) And I loved it! ... Because I'm tall they used to stick me at the front and I'd be able to smash the ball! (Laughs) Straight down on them! (Laughs)

As girls transitioned through puberty and adolescence, new types of embodied capital like Sasha's height and physical power became increasingly available. "Gendered capital" (McCall, 1992, p. 845) is constructed through gendered dispositions of the habitus and shares features with physical capital, wherein the body comes to possess significant value, often associated with commodification (Brown, 2005; Frew & McGillivray, 2005; Shilling, 2004). In her understanding, Beverly Skeggs (1997) observes how "The discourses of femininity and masculinity become embodied and can be used as cultural resources" (p. 8). Women sex workers provided examples of this through self-conceptualisation of their developing bodies. For example, slenderness – commonly expressed as valuable – became particularly important around adolescence and through into adulthood. This trend has been observed extensively in women in contemporary Western societies, with a slim body shape being associated with self-control, elegance, social attractiveness, and youth (Bordo, 2003; Grogan, 2007; Orbach, 2005; Tiggemann & Miller, 2010).

When asked to describe their bodies during adolescence, many women made reference in relation to their weight, with many citing a fat/skinny binary. Body image concerns exist among women of all ages and have been researched exhaustively from different disciplinary and

theoretical perspectives, including those influenced by poststructural feminism (for example Bartky, 1990; Blood, 2005; Bordo, 1993b, 1997, 2003; Frost, 2005; Probyn, 1991; Rice, 2007, 2014). Bordo (1993b) writes about the extremity of eating disorders to highlight the pervasiveness of women's ongoing weight issues: "anorexia represents one extreme on a continuum on which all women today find themselves, insofar as they are vulnerable, to one degree or another, to the requirements of the cultural construction of femininity" (p. 47).⁵⁵ Some of the women were able to conform to feminine ideals of slenderness, facilitated by sport, exercise, and physical leisure, like Nina:

I had the body type, like I could eat anything, wouldn't put on an ounce of weight ... Yeah I was fit, and I think I had a lot of muscle memory from things like horse riding, like I've got quite strong muscles in my legs as it is but I think from all of my sport and being active as a kid involves a lot of muscle memory and things like that.

Women such as Monica were more deliberate in taking up exercise – in place of sport – to work on achieving or maintaining an ideal gendered habitus:

I was still pretty skinny back then ... and then as I got into my late teens and toward my twenties things really changed. That was probably eating habits as well. So I got back into running in my twenties, jogging and running so I enjoyed that quite a lot just as a recreational thing. I didn't join any clubs or go on any marathons

⁵⁵ Other seminal texts on femininity and eating disorders include works by Susie Orbach (2005, 2010), Elspeth Probyn (2005b), and Morag MacSween (1998).

or anything but I was sort of thinking about that and I was trying to get my speed up and stuff and also trying to keep my weight down.

Monica goes on to say that at one stage she was “skinny”, but then faced a different dilemma in a loss of gendered capital: “I used to, believe it or not, I used to worry about being so skinny and not having any, you know [points to breasts]” (November 2, 2014). In a similar way, Sasha also reveals that she felt she had the desirable slim body type, but lacked in breast size:

Sasha: I was real skinny, really really skinny ... Yeah, no, I was really skinny.

Grace: Did you like your body back then? Were you happy being skinny?

Sasha: Yeah, but I wanted bigger boobs, coz I’ve had no boobs my whole life. (Laughs)

Monica and Sasha both comment on their body size and shape (“skinny”), while also being drawn into conversation about their breasts. Iris Marion Young (2005) notably discussed the cultural construction of breasts in her book *On Female Body Experience*. She sees the close relationship between femininity and sexuality playing out through the social understanding of women’s breasts: “Breasts are the most visible sign of a woman’s femininity, the signal of her sexuality” (Young, 2005, p. 78). According to Young (2005), the way women experience their breasts is variable, but,

For many women, if not all, breasts are an important component of body self-image; a woman may love them or dislike them, but she is rarely neutral. In our culture that focuses to the extreme on breasts,

a woman, especially in those adolescent years but also through the rest of her life, often feels judged and evaluated according to the size and contours of her breasts, and indeed often she is. For her and for others, her breasts are the daily visible and tangible signifier of her womanliness. (p. 76)

This is true for both Monica and Sasha, in that they distinctly recall feeling dissatisfied with their breasts as teenagers. Women embracing their femininity may choose to use it as sexual capital in certain fields. Young (2005) illustrates this with reference again to breasts:

When a girl blossoms into adolescence and sallies forth, chest out boldly to the world, she experiences herself as being looked at in a different way than before. People, especially boys, notice her breasts or her lack of them; they may stare at her chest and remark on her. If her energy radiates from her chest, she too often finds the rays deflected by the gaze that positions her from outside, evaluating her according to standards that she had no part in establishing and that remain outside her control. She may enjoy the attention and learn to draw the gaze to her bosom with a sense of sexual power. (p. 77)

Maggie noticed this attention after she lost some weight through swimming and her body underwent some changes:

[The boys] couldn't believe that I'd gone from a big girl into the next minute I had curves! And the younger ones, like 3rd and 4th formers were like "Shit! Shit! And she's got three brothers! Gee whizz! Woah-wa-bang!" and I was like, "yeah, you can look guys, but you can't touch. You're too young for me. Bye. (Laughs)

It is this type of sexual capital that women can take into the field of sex work, where they can benefit economically from their embodied assets. For women sex workers, becoming an adult was not simply an age-related transition from childhood and adolescence, but a transition of subjectivity as girls began to work out the bodily practices that would position them as young women (Hauge, 2009; Hill, 2015).

“I don’t work out for physical perfection anymore”: Adulthood

A general understanding of their adult bodies more in terms of capital seems to have offered some women some respite after puberty and adolescence – a time when many felt they had “no control” over their bodies (Tania). Embodying a more gendered and sexual habitus may have been a key reason for women abandoning sport participation as they appeared to take more control of their bodies, directing them towards more focused concepts and practices of health and femininity. Women sex workers’ participation in exercise and physical leisure fields today might be described as congruous with “everyday” modern day living in Aotearoa: “Life is busy for me as it is. Things like just work, family events” (Nina). For some, exercise and physical leisure fields (and to a much lesser extent sport) provide useful sites for developing connections with others including family, friends, and even pets and nature:⁵⁶

I’m studying as well as working full time so if I’m feeling like I can’t do any more [work] or the sun’s out, calling me out there in the bush, then I want to be outdoors ... If I’m feeling a bit flat I grab the

⁵⁶ The importance of women’s connections with nature and animals is resonated by many ecofeminists, see Adams and Gruen (2014) and Adams, Donovan, and Birke (1995) for more on this topic.

dog and I go out for a good walk with her and I find that it balances me. It rebalances me. And I find it relaxing because I don't work out for physical perfection anymore I just work out to make myself feel better. (Kate)

Those who use exercise and sport as a conduit for cultivating relationships have the ability to do so across multiple roles they might have such as partner, mother, daughter, and friend. Combining family and physical leisure fields, Sasha endured physical pain in order to share an outdoor experience with her sons and her father:

Sasha: You've heard of the Pinnacles?⁵⁷ We went and walked that. I got up there, got all the way back down, by the time I sat in the car I knew I wouldn't be able to walk much longer. I spent two days in bed getting my kids to get everything because I couldn't walk! ... it was the worst pain ever! (Laughs)

Me: (Laughs) Was it worth it?

Sasha: Yip. Coz it was with my boys, we conquered that together. And it was with my dad as well, and I only just met my dad when I was about 12 or 13. But this is my first time – and that's at [age] 43 – being close to him, doing things together. Yeah, my dad and I got to bond there.

Sasha's experience demonstrates her ability to manage both affects and emotions through an embodied habitus that may have been less than felicitous to the field, and yet allowed her to experience the benefits of the

⁵⁷ The Pinnacles is a popular elevated walking track on the Coromandel Peninsula in Te Ika-a-Māui, the North Island of Aotearoa.

physical capital she was able to muster.

Some women sex workers engage in exercise and physical leisure practices for the purposes of shaping their gendered, embodied habitus and bettering their position in the sex work field. During adolescence and early adulthood, gendered capital can convert into “sexual capital” wherein the body possesses attributes that elicit an erotic response in another (Martin & George, 2006, p. 125). Hakim’s (2010) description of her comparative *Erotic Capital* includes necessary elements of beauty, sex appeal, presentation, liveliness, social skills, and sexuality; the sum of which provides power to those who possess it, especially women. Green (2013) stresses the need to situate sexual capital “in time, space and context, not as a universal resource” (p. 152). Indeed, women sex workers appeared to be aware of this proviso, and it is within the sex work field that gendered capital is readily converted into sexual capital.

Gendered capital in the embodied form of slenderness works to boost femininity, which in turn can increase sexual capital. Previous sex worker Iris reflects on her ten years in the sex industry and what she observed in regard to desirable female bodies:

Grace: What type of body do you think is most desirable in the sex industry?

Iris: Slim. I think...

Grace: Or is there any one type?

Iris: Yeah, there is, there probably is. There are so many different types of bodies in the sex industry but I think the weighting does, so

to speak, go toward slim ... I've seen it enough go down in brothels where the person chosen is someone who is slim.

Iris' admission captures what other women sex workers shared about bodies in the sex industry, that is, an understanding that bodies in the sex industry are heterogeneous and diverse, but that heteronormatively feminine bodies are often regarded as most sexually desirable. This body type would then appear to represent the corresponding habitus specific to the sex work field (Bourdieu, 1977). But this does not mean that other embodied habitus cannot participate in this field. Indeed, women sex workers understand their bodies in terms of their differences to men, and their individual differences to other women. In other words, in sex work fields, women sex workers use their gendered capital to their advantage, and draw on other embodied parts of their habitus to trade in capital, gain influence, and shape the fields they occupy. Bodies like Tania's, which was previously racialised, classed, and sexualised and was therefore not suitable or accepted within sport and physical leisure fields, could now be of value in sex work fields: "Yeah, I always used my attributes [while sex working] whether it's my boobs, my butt, my thighs, my legs". In the next chapter I extend this discussion of women sex workers' bodies in sex work spaces in terms of discourse to better understand the multiple discursive subject positions that women occupy.

Summary

In this chapter I have traced some of the ways women sex workers engage(d) with sport, exercise, and physical leisure as children, adolescents and adults. From an early age, family and educational fields

came to influence girls' direct and indirect experiences of sport, exercise, and physical leisure. Signs of gender structures were experienced alongside intersections of race and ethnicity, class, and ability. Some girls participated freely in sport fields that offered embodied capital and social mobility, which was experienced through friendships, health, pleasure, achievement and recognition (Collins & Kay, 2003). For other young girls whose habitus' were classed, racialised, gendered or disabled in certain ways, experiences of sport were tinged with cynicism or active resistance toward it as an exclusive institution (Stempel, 2005).

Many women shared experiences characteristic to age and gender, such as the rapid changes to their bodies through puberty and adolescence. As a developmental period, adolescence is known as time of increased levels of "self-awareness, self-consciousness, introspectiveness, and preoccupation with self-image" (Tiggemann & Miller, 2010, p. 79), and an acute awareness of bodily changes (Budgeon, 2015). Sometimes these changes did little to encourage girls to play sports. Conversely, perhaps it was sport itself that did little to encourage girls to participate (Evans, 2006; Young, 2005), or more accurately, the doxa of sport, exercise, and physical leisure fields inhibited continued participation during the teenage years (Bourdieu, 1977).

As adults, women sex workers, it seems, have stopped their participation in "sport", but continue to engage in fields of exercise and physical leisure, trading and accumulating various forms of capital. The different types of capital held by women sex workers highlights differences and similarities within and across fields, and illustrates that women can be "subjects with capital-accumulating strategies" (Skeggs, 2004, p. 29), not

mere objects, as Bourdieu has been accused of portraying them (Lovell, 2000; Skeggs, 2004; Thorpe, 2009). The women in this study are a diverse group, but all have grown up with an understanding of their bodies informed in some way by fields of sport, exercise, and physical leisure. As adults, women sex workers' bodies are often reduced to being viewed as objects of sexual activity, depriving them of their true embodied voices and confining their physical experiences to places of sexual trade. Viewing women sex workers in this way suppresses the reality that many sex workers have, can, and do engage their bodies in physical activity outside of their workplace. Women sex workers' experiences in this chapter show that they have long been a part of sport, exercise, and physical leisure spaces, and continue to frequent parks, fields, mountains, oceans, pavements, roads, gyms, arenas, dojos and forests.

Women sex workers' experiences of sport, exercise, and physical leisure are characterised by many structures – parents and family members, teachers, coaches, school systems, sporting codes, and boundaries of gender, race, class, age and ability – all having significant influences on bodily comportment, development, and conduct. Yet these structures were not experienced as totally constraining. For example, women sex workers recalled their embodied childhood memories with considerable nostalgia. They sentimentalized in vivid detail their vibrant, athletic, youthful bodies; what they looked like, felt like, and perhaps most importantly, what they could do. Even early experiences of sport, exercise, and physical leisure that were evidently negative were, in many cases, readily reframed and relived through adult bodies where women appeared to practice more internalised control and restraint over the body (Prout,

1999). While fields shape(d) women's habitus', their narratives suggest a conscious participation in capital(ist) based systems, in the knowledge that their bodies were, and are, (a)bound.

Bourdieu's tools have proven valuable for analyses of women's sport, exercise, and physical leisure experiences. I have found them just as Thorpe (2011) describes: "deliberately vague and malleable, encouraging their questioning and their adaptation to the specific domain to which they are applied" (p. 110). When that domain is sport, exercise, and physical leisure, Bourdieu's theorising around the embodiment of culture resonates fittingly with feminist poststructural theory. Understanding these spaces as contingent on fields was an important step toward theorising women's embodiment located within particular social groupings and power relations. This has allowed for contextual specificity that highlights players, social positionings, and rules within – and outside of – structured systems of positions of power.

Using Bourdieu's tools in this chapter has enabled an examination of how class, gender, age, race, ethnicity and (dis)ability construct habitus, impacting women sex workers' childhood experiences of sport, play, and physical leisure, and how women gain (and lose) access to different forms of capital/power in different fields. The many intersections of these lines of difference has created an intricate web of multiple, conflicting and contradictory bodies that do not always "fit" into prescribed sporting or heteronormative femininities. Instead they reflect ambivalent embodiments of gendered subjectivity that, in keeping with women's habitus, remain open systems of dispositions (McNay, 1999b), "durable but not eternal" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 133).

In leaving Bourdieu's theoretical toolbox behind, for now, I look toward theories of his French counterpart Michel Foucault, to provide alternative perspectives on women's adult experiences amidst multiple forms of power. Both Foucault and Bourdieu have been criticised for emphasising subjectivity as overly determined and shaped by social and historical factors (McNay, 2003), yet, as I have demonstrated with Bourdieu, there is certainly space for feminist poststructural understandings of bodily resistance. Adopting a feminist Foucauldian lens in the next chapter, I explore the multiple forms of power that operate on and through women sex workers' active bodies, and the possibilities of resistance to gendered, sex work discourses in (un)expected ways.

CHAPTER 5

Discourses of Sex, Work, Exercise, and Leisure:

A Foucauldian Analysis

In this chapter I draw upon a Foucauldian understanding of power and discourse to facilitate new understandings of how women sex workers use their bodies to navigate places and spaces. In so doing, women's understandings and interpretations of their bodies are discussed through discourses of sex work livelihood, sport, exercise, and physical leisure, and wider systems of power. This framework reveals the flows of overarching power relations and showcases the myriad of complex, interrelated and contradictory discourses that are an essential part of women's experiences of embodiment.

This chapter focuses on three context-specific discourses of sex work to examine women's embodied experiences of negotiating variable positions of power. These spatialized discourses (Hubbard, 2002; Soja & Hooper, 1993) represent understandings of women sex workers' bodies as victims, workers, and agents. This approach contextualises their everyday experiences within these discourses and explores the ways sport, exercise, and physical leisure contribute to understandings of the body and self. At a cursory glance, these discourses support techniques of domination through self-surveillance and discipline to collectively constitute a docile body (Foucault, 1977a), but as I discussed in chapter two, feminist contributions to Foucault's later conceptions of power have since made space for a more gendered, critical and comprehensive analysis (see Bartky, 1997; Bordo, 1993a; Cain, 1993; Deveaux, 1994; Diamond, Quinby,

Benhabib, & Cornell, 1990; Hekman, 1996; McLaren, 2002; McNeil, 1993; Ramazanoglu, 1993; Sawicki, 1991). In this chapter, I engage a feminist Foucauldian analysis using technologies of the self (Foucault, 1988c) to consider women as active co-constructors of their experiences within multiple discourses of power.

A brief yet vital summary of Foucault's theory of discourse provides the foundation for this chapter, including a discussion of how dominant discourses operate in relation to gender and the body in spaces of sport, exercise, and physical leisure, and sex work. From here, sex work discourses are examined along a continuum of discursive understandings of sex work bodies, from victim to worker, to agent. Throughout this chapter, women sex workers' voices provide lived experience of how discourses circulate in places and spaces, as they are accepted, manipulated, problematised, rejected, and embodied.

Applying a Discursive Lens

Foucault (1972) summarised discourse in three ways: “the general domain of all statements”; “an individualizable group of statements” and “a regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements” (p. 80). The first definition: “the general domain of all statements” refers to all utterances or texts that produce effects or meaning in specific contexts (Markula & Pringle, 2006; Mills, 2004). This understanding of discourse is able to link objects, subjects, and concepts to context by constructing them and giving them meaning. For example, a riding crop in an equestrian setting is generally used as an implement to communicate with horses during performances, but the object has other discourses attached

to it. When placed in a bondage, domination, sadism, masochism (BDSM) context it takes on sexual meanings and purposes including fun, discipline, pleasure, and pain. These two domains represent Foucault's second definition of discourse – “an individualizable group of statements” (Foucault, 1972, p. 80). These statements have some phenomenon or circumstance in common, such as discourses of equestrian, discourses of BDSM, discourses of sexuality and so on.

Finally, Foucault's third definition of discourse: “a regulated practice which accounts for a number of statements” (Foucault, 1972, p. 80), focuses on rules that guide social practices by producing and regulating statements (Mills, 2004). For example, there are no universal governing rules that state exactly how a riding crop may or may not be used, and so it has been eventually adopted and used for sexual fetishes, or yet another entirely different purpose, such as a personal weapon.⁵⁸

This chapter focuses on discourses of sport, exercise, and physical leisure, and discourses of sex work, as statements that exist as functional theories within and across multiple spaces (Markula, 2018). While there are many differing, competing discourses within and across sex work and sporting spaces, this chapter also considers what is arguably one of the most dominant gendered discourses in terms of women's bodies – the (re)production and reinforcement of white, middle class, heteronormative femininity.

Heteronormative femininity operates as a dynamic, “aspatial” (Halford, 2008, p. 934) discourse that extends across space(s), including

⁵⁸ As Arthur C Doyle (2014) illustrated through his character Sherlock Holmes' penchant for such usage.

sport, exercise, and physical leisure (Azzarito, 2009; Capon & Helstein, 2004; Kennedy & Markula, 2011; Krane et al., 2004; Thorpe, 2008), and sex work (Halford, 2008; Hubbard & Sanders, 2003; Sanders, 2004b; Scoular, 2004). Displays of hyperfemininity are used in sex work to convey (hetero)sexuality, and unlike in sport, exercise, and physical leisure contexts, the hyperfeminine, hypersexual body is directly “put to work” for the purposes of making money (Carrier-Moisan, 2015; Cohen, Hardy, Sanders, & Wilkowitz, 2013; Maher et al., 2012). This presents sex workers with particular, often convoluted discourses concerning their bodies, many of which draw upon historical and socially constructed ideas about sex and gender.

Foucault (1978) notably theorised that sexual discourse acts to regulate the sexual behaviour of citizens by legitimising authority and defining certain practices as “normal” and “deviant” (Lyons & Lyons, 2004). This places sex work into the category of deviant, to the extent that sex worker bodies are overwhelmingly cast as bad or wrong in wider society (Abel et al., 2010b; Brewis & Linstead, 2003; Ditmore, 2010; Jordan, 2010; Kesler, 2002; Oerton & Phoenix, 2001; Schmidt, 2017). Dualistic, gendered discourses like this create context-specific or spatialized discourses that place women sex workers into questionable femininities in contrast to the moral values (and landscapes) of heteronormality (Hubbard, 2002). Such positions can be broadly defined by discursive identifiers – that is, victims, workers, and agents (Cavalieri, 2011; Sanders et al., 2009).

Gendered and sexual discourses thrive in places of sex work where women are seen to assume a traditional female role in performing to serve

the interests of (predominantly) male clients (Cohen et al., 2013; Schmidt, 2017). Johanna Schmidt (2017) determines:

This gender division, coupled with the dominant discourses related to sex work, means that engaging in prostitution results in (primarily) women being entangled in a complex web of power relations that affect their working and non-working lives, and often their identities, in various ways that are not common among those engaged in other forms of work (p. 35)

As Schmidt suggests, the power of these discourses is reproduced in other spaces to varying degrees through different channels. As Grosz (1994) argues of sexuality in itself; “sexuality is incapable of ready containment; it refuses to stay within its predesigned regions, for it seeps across boundaries into areas that are apparently not its own” (p. viii). The labels that women sex workers assume (and reject) can also be observed in varying gendered and sexual discourses throughout Aotearoa, and highlight a range of beliefs about women’s sexuality across a wider social context.

In speaking with women sex workers, their choice to embody certain labels highlights just that; a conscious ability to weigh up and respond to discourses that (make attempts to) define their bodies. In the face of pervasive dominant sexual and gendered discourses, throughout this chapter women sex workers demonstrate active engagement in technologies of the self, drawing on their embodied experiences to problematise gendered and sexual discourses, and participate in practices of control and/or freedom.

In the remainder of this chapter I explore three discourses of sex work in Aotearoa, manifested in field observations and participant interviews. In each section I consider how discourses of sex work meet with other embodied discourses and how these unfold through sex workers' experiences of sport, exercise, and physical leisure.

“A few regulars wanted to save me”: Sex workers as victims

Despite the decriminalisation of sex work in Aotearoa in 2003, deeply rooted historical understandings of sex work remain, such that many continue to condemn the industry for the perceived ongoing oppression of women (Abel et al., 2010b; Jordan, 2005). Those who denounce sex work worldwide refer to it as “prostitution”, so as to deny any suggestion of consented labour, at times replacing “prostitution” with terms such as “abuse”, “slavery” and “rape” (Barry, 1996; Farley, 2013; Jeffreys, 2010a). This rhetoric contributes to a discourse – which I will call the *victim discourse* – where all sex workers are globally considered as casualties of forced labour, or unacceptable working conditions.

As the first in the world to achieve decriminalisation, some tout Aotearoa as “the best place on Earth” to be a sex worker (NZPC founder and National Coordinator Dame Catherine Healy, cited in Hernandez, 2015). Individual worker's rights and workplace regulations, including occupational health and safety, create an environment that acknowledges women's value as waged persons. In conditions like these, the term “victim” in its traditional sense struggles to gain traction. However, I argue that women sex workers in Aotearoa do face a more pervasive, collective victimisation, through direct, and more often indirect, scrutiny

from institutional bodies including the New Zealand Government, police, and contemporary media. These institutions generate a view of sex work as an industry in need of control, placing women sex workers in the position of helpless victims.

The incidence of violence against sex workers as reported by the mainstream media contributes to the image of sex workers as victims, and while sex workers are extremely vulnerable to all forms of violence, tragic occurrences have a tendency to be normalised and accepted as part of the sex industry (Canter, Ioannou, & Youngs, 2016; Salfati, James, & Ferguson, 2008). Sadly, the stories of slain sex workers are often silenced by media, who at times attempt to speak for them through declarations of what is “true” about their lives, their bodies, and how they used them (Foucault, 1970, 1980).

Media sources in Aotearoa have openly circulated multiple (and often conflicting) sex work discourses since the 2003 PRA. Outlets range from independent student magazines to more mainstream news media outlets owned by overseas conglomerates. Through these outlets the agendas of politicians, academics, aristocrats, governmental agencies, and stakeholders are circulated, often culminating in a discourse of victimisation concerning the subject of sex work.

In a debate over the Prostitution Reform Bill, member of parliament and former minister Judith Collins (2003) voted against the second reading, citing that “In my opinion, prostitution is rape accompanied by payment – if the prostitute is lucky”. Likewise, in 2013, a *New Zealand Herald* headline lauded the Auckland police for “Standing up for City’s Sex Workers” (Calder, 2013), and in 2014 Detective Senior Sergeant of

Christchurch Darryl Sweeney told reporters that “Sex Workers Deserve Protection” (Dally, 2014). Although statements like these may outwardly appear to have good intentions, they also portray sex workers as weak and vulnerable, and in need of constant protection from the state.⁵⁹

When expressed by individuals in power, such as those within the institutional apparatuses and techniques of the media, messages are often interpreted as truth and the discourse becomes more entrenched while the voices of all that oppose such messages are marginalised and silenced (Foucault, 1970). Furthermore, sex workers themselves are impacted by these discursive ways-of-seeing, becoming implicated in the very power relations that produce the subject, should they submit to the rules and conventions of the victim discourse. Stuart Hall (1997) explains: “The subject can become the bearer of the kind of knowledge which discourse produces. It can become the object through which power is relayed. But it cannot stand outside power/knowledge” (p. 39).

Women I spoke with did not willingly submit to the victim discourse. On the contrary, many expressed anger and frustration at what they felt was an unfair depiction of sex workers as victims of circumstance, abuse, drug addiction, or patriarchy:

The clients I had who did pay for my time were really respectful [but] I had a few regulars who sort of wanted to save me and pretty much saw themselves as my boyfriends. (Tania)

⁵⁹ Foucault discussed the ways governments influence the bodies and practices of citizens in a series of lectures at the Collège de Franc in 1978 and 1979 (see Burchell, Gordon, & Miller, 1991).

There's the assumption that you must be sexually abused or else why would you do it? No. I was never sexually abused. There's a strong movement of people globally that we need saving from ourselves, which is very very very patronizing. I mean for me it was a conscious choice, I've done other forms of work and could do other forms of work, but this was the one that was right for me.

(Alexandra)

You hear these people go "someone's being discriminated against", and it's like, "how am I being discriminated against?" I get paid, my clients are lovely, I enjoy the job. It's not like I'm doing it because I have to do it, because I don't have to do it. It's an extra income for me, which is lovely. I do get annoyed with people that think we've been kicked to the curb or that we're all drug addicts, you know? We have people in this industry that are becoming lawyers, becoming doctors, you know? Very well educated people. (Laura)

As Alexandra and Laura demonstrate, the sex worker as victim discourse is frequently rejected by many workers today. The powerlessness and self-pity often associated with the word 'victim' are traits rarely demonstrated by women sex workers themselves, even when their circumstances are ones of great difficulty. Unsurprisingly, none of the 17 women I interviewed readily identified themselves as victims, often instead making reference to their freedom of choice or agency – a reflection of other pro-sex work discourses in action (such as the agent discourse examined later in this chapter).

Despite sex workers' outward rejection of the victim discourse, Foucault (1977b, 1980) reminds us that dominant discourses maintain their power by reproducing norms that become internalised and accepted as true. This may be noticed in some interviews where women expressed a lack of control over workplace conditions that sometimes rendered them targets of abuse, and rather than challenge the discourse, at times they justified their ill treatment, thus accepting a victim-like status. For example, former sex worker Kate recalls an incident when her body was judged for not conforming to a thin feminine ideal:

... maybe this guy liked really skinny girls, so anyone that wasn't 50 kilos was fat. But he kind of went "oh you're curvy aren't you" and I looked at him with his ... He must have been at least 40 kilos overweight with this huge gut on him and thought to myself "look who's talking". But yeah, diplomatically you don't go there, you just bite your tongue.

Bonnie faces similar criticism about her body:

Some people really strongly care about what you look like, and if there's too much of you they don't like it ... "Are you pregnant?" or "oh, you've got fat". It's kind of like "yes, yes I am pregnant" (sarcastic tone) just to justify yourself and make him feel a little bit better! ... Some people are just real assholes.

Furthermore, previous sex worker Monica talks about the lasting effects of such criticism, "the guys that said 'Ugh, ugh! What's this?' [prodding at hips]. 'Ugh, you're a bit bigger than I thought you were gonna be'. They're the ones that I remember". These types of pressures, which border on

harassment, target two potential vulnerabilities – that is, the marginalised status of being a sex worker by social standards of deviance, and the marginalised status of being a woman in a male-dominated society (Bartky, 1997).

While these instances give us some insight into some of the everyday exchanges that sex workers can encounter, it is important to note that these types of situations are not necessarily unique to the sex industry. Indeed, even in the face of such rudeness, it is widely accepted within service industries that workers should treat clients or customers with utmost respect, as expressed in the adage “the customer is always right” (Chapkis, 1997; Wolkowitz, Cohen, Sanders, & Hardy, 2013). Current sex worker Maggie reinforces this notion for the sex industry:

Sometimes I do [get comments about my body]. And some of them aren't very nice. I just say to them “well, if you think that way, next time you come in, you might like to book with another lady” ... You can't be disgustingly imposing on them, with what you say and how you say it. You can't be rude to them, because if they have one bad experience, they will not come back. At all. And then word will get out and then we end up with a hurt business.

Therefore, lack of reaction may not represent passive embodiment of the victim discourse, but merely the practice of “emotional labour” (Hochschild, 2003), as seen in other roles such as flight attending, nursing, teaching, and other hospitality or service-based professions (Chapkis, 1997; Hochschild, 2003; Sanders, 2013b; Wolkowitz et al., 2013). Kate and Bonnie's ability to reflect on their experience and make sense of what

could have been a potential grievance is where they find their voice, thus resonating to some degree with Foucault's technologies of the self (Foucault, 1988c). Furthermore, Bonnie derives an understanding of the situation that explains clients acting in such a way because of their own bodily insecurity. She also suggests some men comment on "fat" because they are genuinely admiring it:

Some people can go "ohh you've got[ten] fat!" and jiggle it, and it's like, "really"? Or grab it and go "ohh that's a good bit of meat!" and it's like, "stop it"! Yeah, sometimes they just kind of want to point it out. Some guys lack confidence so [act] as though they're confident about themselves. (Bonnie)

In one sense, this example highlights what could be identified as the victim discourse in practice whereby the client criticizes the worker's body, effectively degrading her and empowering himself in a process of domination. However, Bonnie is able to transcend the victim discourse by reflexively and critically unpacking the situation. Firstly she tells us that some men appreciate "a good bit of meat", which positions her as the rightful owner of the desirable commodity. Then, secondly, by referring to men's lack of confidence, she reverses the discourse, placing male clients as victims of their own embodied insecurities.

From a poststructural feminist perspective, Bonnie attempts to regain a sense of control over her body that she feels has been taken away by her clients, thus challenging the idea that women's bodies are unruly and out of control, and pointing out that in fact men's bodies are also victims of fleshy excess (Deveaux, 1994; Diprose, 2005; Grosz, 1994;

Hassard & Holliday, 2003). Grosz (1994) validates Bonnie's tactic: "Women are no more subject to this system of corporeal production than men; they are no more cultural, no more natural than men ... it is a question of not more or less but of differential production" (p. 144). Later in the interview Bonnie goes further to subvert the victim discourse (in an albeit malicious way) when she and Kristin criticize a client's body together:

Kristin: He can't even step into the shower. He can't step over the side of the bath. He can't step through the door either. There's only one door that he can get through. No other door.

Bonnie: And he's got a funny eye and he's all like [mimics client]. He's like the Hunchback of Notre Dame.

Kristin: He's horrible!

Bonnie: And he smells.

Kristin: Real bad (personal communication, November 3, 2014).

A Foucauldian analysis of Bonnie and Kristin's conversation points to the way the women produce their own realities by challenging the notion that they might be victims (Foucault, 1982). The process of articulating thoughts and feelings with Kristin allows Bonnie space to present alternative realities and truths that she knows manifest through her body at work (Foucault, 1985; Korczynski, 2013; McCance, Nye, Wang, Jones, & Chiu, 2010). Foucault (1982) calls this problematization, that is, the ways in which individuals come to think about themselves and the world around them as "moral domains" (Huijjer, 1999, p. 69), and is the starting point for practicing technologies of the self. Bonnie problematizes her situation most clearly when she labels "some people" as "just real assholes",

attempting to strip her client of the capacity for wilful harm and labelling him as simply worthless. However, her use of the word “just” nonetheless suggests a resignation that such treatment from clients is simply part of the job. This realisation could explain the fact that throughout the rest of the interview Bonnie didn’t express any further continuation of technologies of the self, instead giving the impression that she was satisfied with the situation:

I mean [rudeness] does hit a chord, but they’re still sitting in the room taking off their clothes, so they obviously don’t have an issue with [fat] ... and yes okay, we’re here for money, but at the end of the day if we’re not nice to them, we’re not going to have that money.

Bonnie works to disrupt the victim discourse by turning over the scrutiny that was applied to her body (and women sex workers’ bodies) and directing it at men by specifically calling attention to her clients’ bodies. Seemingly unmoved by men’s comments, on the one hand, she also shows resistance to discourses of heteronormative femininity by suggesting she doesn’t have to be perturbed by men’s criticism because being a woman gives her a sexual advantage over them: “They’re here because they want something, so if they want it they can come and get it.” (Bonnie) But on the

other hand, despite enduring what she herself identifies as “harassment”,⁶⁰ Bonnie shows an indifference that could also be interpreted as acquiescence to the victim discourse.

In a study carried out by Gillian Abel, Lisa Fitzgerald and Cheryl Brunton (2007) into the impact of the 2003 PRA on the health and safety practices of sex workers, management was an important source of support identified by sex workers in ensuring safe working conditions (Abel et al., 2010a). For Bonnie, it seems workplace management did little to protect her from client harassment, while for Tania, it was a case of management perpetuating the victim discourse through patent discrimination toward her Pacific Island brown skin:

From my own sex working experience as a woman of colour, it frustrated me because I worked pre-law reform. Yeah it was horrible. The brothel boss I worked for - he was such a racist prick. I asked him “Why don’t you hire Asian sex workers?” and he said to me “what for? I can’t have too many of you darkies here or too many of them here, coz then we’re going to have your kind coming here. That’s not the type of establishment I want.” It’s just bullshit.

⁶⁰ The New Zealand Government’s workplace health and safety regulatory body WorkSafe (2017) identify bullying at work as “repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards a worker or a group of workers that can lead to physical or psychological harm ... It includes victimising, humiliating, intimidating or threatening a person.” (p. 53). WorkSafe stresses that all workplaces in New Zealand are covered by the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (HSWA) and that each must ensure the health and safety of workers (WorkSafe, 2017). This places responsibility on the person conducting a business, but also acknowledges the worker’s duty “to take reasonable care to keep themselves and others healthy and safe” (WorkSafe, 2017, p. 10). This ambiguity often leaves workers to find their own strategies of coping with victimisation (Abel & Fitzgerald, 2010b; Sanders & Campbell, 2007). I am not suggesting that the New Zealand Government need to “protect” sex workers more – which could revictimize them – I do think other approaches that develop from within the “sex work is work” discourse (discussed in the next section) could do more to highlight women sex workers’ rights.

Like Bonnie, it appears that Tania felt victimised, but resented being cast as a victim. Tania's strategy involved subtly rejecting both the victim discourse and white heteronormative femininity and using her skin colour to her advantage: "I always worked in brothels where there were heaps of white girls ... Coz I thought 'If I'm different, I can go in there and clean up'". Long aestheticised, idealised, and fetishised in European discourse (Brislin, 2003; Keown, 2004), the Polynesian body is also subjected to stereotypical representation in sex work. Tania recognised this and constructed herself through racialised modes of being; "I had a jungle look. Then I had a R&B singer look (laughs)". Through her embodied practices, Tania was able to reject victimisation whilst simultaneously developing other discourses around race, making "other" bodies more visible and more desirable in sex work; "They love Māori girls, they love women of colour, and they'll pay big". While Tania perpetuates colonialist stereotypes, she also challenges dominant, normalised constructs of femininity as inherently white (Bartky, 1990; Cole & Zucker, 2007; Pietsch, 2009). In the process, participates in technologies of the self where she constitutes herself as a sexually empowered Pacific Island woman – in contrast to the victim discourse – but also, like Bonnie, in contrast to her clients

Grace: How did you feel in front of your clients?

Tania: Oh na, really confident ... you find men feel like, they feel inadequate about themselves. It might be their self-confidence, particularly confidence around women. Like, how do you hold a woman's breast? Or how do you suck her nipples? Stuff like that, so guys tend to learn through porn.

In this comment, Tania also embodies the role of (s)expert, drawing on her embodied knowledge to position herself as superior to male clients and further distancing herself from the label of victim. Thus Tania's practices and rationale also indicate her embodiment of technologies of sexiness as she (re)positioned herself within discourses of heterosexuality (Evans et al., 2010).

Melissa is another woman sex worker who does not identify as a victim, but acknowledges the potential that sex work has for classifying her as one. She uses sport and exercise in a way that directly attends to the risks associated with the profession. Melissa participated in martial arts and self-defence training after she became conscious of her vulnerability working as a young sex worker. She explains:

When I did Jiu Jitsu and kickboxing and training and all that, that was all just my own thing. Coz I worked when I was younger so I figured I needed something in case someone had a go so that I could defend myself. I've also done women's self-defense, done lots of them over the years. So yeah, just a matter of being able to look after myself if I got into a situation in the business. (Melissa)

In a way, by choosing to train her body with the ability to protect herself, Melissa inadvertently reinforces the victim discourse that depicts women sex workers as weak by showing that she acknowledges that a threat of violence does exist. Yet simultaneously, by physically training her body for defence, Melissa takes action against the discourse by refusing to be a victim. Researchers have found powerful cultures of pride and empowerment within focalised women's programmes built on physical

aggression, which also draw parallels with a Foucauldian understanding of power and the body (Cole & Ullrich-French, 2017; van Ingen, 2011a, 2011b). Drawing on a recreational boxing project with women and transgendered survivors of violence, Cathy van Ingen (2011a) believes aggression in these contexts to be “an important aspect of self-care” (p. 71), while Françoise Bourdreau, Ralph Folman and Burt Konzak (1992) found karate a practice where through technologies of the self, individuals acquire not only physical competencies but also certain understandings toward the self (Foucault, 1988c; Harvey & Rail, 1995). In the case of Melissa, we can also begin to see similar effects of self-care and technologies of the self in sport, exercise, and physical leisure. This begins with her critical self-awareness and problematization where she identifies that she is at risk (Crocket, 2017; Foucault, 1988c; Markula, 2003; Markula & Pringle, 2006): “I figured I needed something” (Melissa), and carries on to a process of self-transformation through training. This increases confidence in her abilities and redefines her body into what she calls a “lethal weapon” (Melissa). In this way, Melissa’s interpretations of the victim discourse are translated to the body in a resistive process through its transformation.

While working conditions are relatively safe in Aotearoa following the PRA, women sex workers I spoke with shared experiences of lingering discrimination, verbal abuse, and manipulation that threatened their livelihood. To borrow from Bourdieu (2001) once more, I understand these circumstances of victimisation as ones of symbolic violence, whereby power is exerted “through the purely symbolic channels of communication and cognition ... recognition or even feeling” (p. 2). The gradual

acceptance and internalisation of the victim discourse hides underlying power relations. Ironically, those in power who might provide opportunities for change, such as the government, the police, and the media, are also complicit in reproducing victim discourses. However, as women sex workers have shown, resistance can also come in the form of individual participation in technologies of the self to construct subjectivities in new ways.

Privy to technologies of domination and panoptic pressures inscribed on their bodies, women sex workers like Bonnie and Tania make sense of their situation by speaking through competing discourses of resistance where they are able to create new meaning (Weedon, 1997). Melissa also engaged in self-reconceptualisation, using embodied practices of martial arts and self defence to actively transform her body and assert her subjectivity. In doing so, these women disrupt heteronormative femininities which also conflate victimhood with womanhood (Bartky, 1990). Pushing back on the victim discourse in these ways, the women's experiences highlight a complex struggle for discursive recognition which continues to materialise on and through their bodies.

“A normal day's work”: Sex workers as workers

The Prostitution Reform Act has had arguably the biggest impact on the development and promotion of a discourse declaring that sex work be recognised as a legitimate form of employment, as opposed to a deviant, criminal act (Abel et al., 2010b; Chapkis, 1997; Jordan, 2010). This discourse – which I call the *worker discourse* – dismantles the idea of all women in prostitution as forced labour victims by recognising sex workers

as employed service providers. Its emergence coincided with increased acceptance of different sexual practices (Hulusjö, 2013), and an evolving worldwide sentiment toward social and political changes concerning women and workers (Chateauvert, 2014; Healy et al., 2010). The relatively simple move toward identifying as a sex *worker* as opposed to prostitute or whore can be a small, yet significant, act of resistance or “practice of freedom” (Foucault, 1988a).

In Aotearoa, the PRA was the product of years of focused effort – lobbying politicians and building key relationships – orchestrated by the NZPC (Abel et al., 2010b). The NZPC had been pushing toward law change since its conception in 1987, building a discourse where sex workers ought to realise their rights. As one founding member recalls:

We met on beaches, sat round pub tables, huddled in doorways, and spoke on the telephone to unseen, likeminded sex workers throughout the country. Sex workers were on the move. People started to talk about us as if we were a force to be reckoned with. This is really when we realised we were becoming an organisation. (NZPC, 2017)

After the success of the PRA, the NZPC maintained their ability to promote discourses that advocated for sex worker rights and recognition of sex work as a profession (Abel et al., 2010b). Researcher Maria Pérez-y-Pérez (2003) emphasises the significant role the NZPC had in the transmission of these discourses in Aotearoa: “In their attempt to reframe or rework the discourses of prostitution from carriers of disease and deviance to

discourses of ‘professional workers’, the NZPC set up a framework for reference of ‘good work practice’ and ‘safe work practice’” (p. 62).

Today the NZPC continues to promote this message by acting as a somewhat unofficial sex workers’ union. Their presence further promotes sex work as legitimate work by demonstrating that sex workers are entitled to representation and advocacy just like employees of any other industry. They also continue to promote the worker discourse in various spaces. The safe sex poster below (Figure 6) was produced by the NZPC in the late 1980s with funding from the Department of Health (Jordan, 2012) and placed in sex work positive spaces such as brothels, NZPC community bases, and independent media such as the *New Internationalist* (Healy & Reed, 1994). The poster highlights sex workers as service professionals and reverses discourses of sex workers as diseased by shifting the focus onto clients.



Figure 6: Safe sex poster commissioned by the NZPC (1980s). From *Te Ara: The Encyclopedia of New Zealand* (Jordan, 2012). Retrieved from <https://teara.govt.nz>. Copyright 2018 by NZPC.

Images and messages such as this exemplify the NZPC's core values as stated on their website: "Since inception, NZPC has advocated for the recognition of sex work as work, and the repeal of those laws that criminalise, and discriminate against, sex workers" (NZPC, 2017). Representations like this function well within sex work spaces to encourage women sex workers to act operationally, as any service industry worker should, and remind clients that sex work is a legitimate form of employment with regulations on health and safety that sex workers adhere to as formal employees.

Mainstream media in Aotearoa also offer discourses of sex work as work, aimed at the general public. Although often harbouring separate intentions to the NZPC – using titillation and voyeurism to attract their readers and increase revenue – they do, at times, present women sex workers in the role of employed service providers. While sex work has previously been a "closed door affair", with legalisation (and media) it has moved from a private space into a public one for people to see. A gathering of online newspaper headlines demonstrates the discourse used by the media in aiming to eliminate the perceived secrecy behind sex work and illustrate it as a viable, commonplace occupation:

“Touring for sex takes Christchurch woman round NZ”

(The Press, Spink, 2016)

“Behind the red lights of New Zealand’s brothels”

(Sunday Star Times, McAllen, 2015)

“Christchurch sex workers: Life on Manchester St”

(The Press, Robinson, 2015)

“Inside Tauranga’s sex industry”

(Rotorua Daily Post, Gibbs, 2011)

“Lifting the lid on South Canterbury’s sex industry”

(Timaru Herald, Hudson, 2016)

Ostensibly, these captions play on the image of sex work as mysterious, despite law reforms. Words like “behind”, “inside”, and “lifting the lid” suggest that sex work remains hidden and lurking “in the shadows” (Miller, 2017). But despite hindering the worker discourse, these headlines and their stories also act to bring sex work out of hiding (regardless of whether it is hiding or not), and showcase the women themselves as working individuals operating in the same market economy as everyone else (Abel et al., 2010b; Chapkis, 1997; Shaver, 2005; Wolkowitz et al., 2013).

Many of the women I interviewed reinforced the worker discourse. Themes of normality were active within this discourse, with women asserting that many of the realities of sex work were the same as any other types of work. When asked about her everyday embodied experiences, Melissa relayed her working day as mundane, “normal”, and compared it to my experiences of work as a researcher:

Grace: How does your body feel after a shift of work? Do you feel tired? Energised?

Melissa: Just normal really, I don't think about it ... Just like a normal day's work that you would have, probably. You know, go home, have your tea and blah, blah, blah, that's it. Go to bed, go to sleep, wake up and it's another day.

It is a political response from Melissa who, while breaking down inequalities, positions her body not as a sex worker, but as a worker. She brought the worker discourse to the fore via a comparison with my own body, confidently challenging the power relations between not only her and me as individuals, but those operating within sex work and other forms of work. It also felt to me that she was invoking the fact that side by side we were both white, female, working bodies, and all other factors like education, skill level, income, upbringing, beliefs and above all, occupation, shouldn't be important. At the time I felt challenged, followed by embarrassed for suggesting that our bodies might be different and her experience working should be influenced by emotion. I replied somewhat sheepishly with "good answer". As a feminist researcher I considered the power imbalance that traditionally exists between researcher and participant (Beckman, 2014; Etherington, 2007; Hesse-Biber, 2013), and while taken aback and embarrassed at first, I was also humbled and grateful to be viewed as Melissa's equal. The power that Melissa showed me, in the face of the victim discourse, certainly highlights the possibilities for changes in (and challenges to) understanding.

Drawing on Abel et al.'s (2007) study on the impacts of the PRA on the health and safety of sex workers, Gillian Abel, Lisa Fitzgerald, Catherine Healy and Aline Taylor (2010b) report that even within a decriminalised system, sex workers "reluctantly accepted that possibly there would never be a time when they would be on an equal footing with workers in other occupations" (p. 241). But this was not the case for sex workers in this study. Women like Melissa are empowered to challenge the social perceptions of their job by speaking through (and back to) the worker discourse. Kate and Melissa explain their job in more detail, making clear the essential and multifarious responsibilities and requirements of their jobs:

It's not just about the sex, it's about the service. Body awareness is good, but to have some sort of an idea of what a service type industry [is ideal]. It's greeting that client when they come in. It's not rushing them perhaps ... [greeting them with] "Oh hi Don, how are you?" and then they'll remember a conversation [we] had 3 weeks ago. I used to work on creating an environment where that client was completely distanced from his normal reality for an hour ... we all have different ways of working. (Kate)

You're there to make them feel good. It is my job. It's a service, darling. People are spending money and your job is not to make them feel bad, you don't want to go and get a massage and start feeling worse for it do you? (Laughs) It's about making people feel good. (Melissa)

These women's experiences at work reinforce the findings of Barbara G. Brents and Crystal A. Jackson (2013), who identified five types of specific labour that sex workers employ within their job: 1) Physical labour; 2) Aesthetic labour; 3) Bodily labour; 4) Interactive bodily labour; and, 5) Emotional labour. This type of skill consolidation is relatable to many professions, but most specifically in similar service work roles such as nursing, hairdressing, massage, and fitness industry professions (Hardy, 2013; Wolkowitz, 2002; Wolkowitz et al., 2013). Similarly, Shannon Bell (1994) identifies the sex worker as a "worker, healer, sexual surrogate, teacher, therapist, educator, sexual minority, and political activist" (p. 103).

Participants in my study, particularly Kate and Melissa, understand that sex work isn't just about having sex, or performing "dirty work" (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999; Wolkowitz et al., 2013), but involves a larger skill set than many realise. These understandings of sex work as multifarious operate in opposition to victim discourses, placing the sex worker in the labour force alongside other working New Zealanders. Shared common ground and inclusion in the workforce and market economy gives women sex workers a strong platform from which to feel empowered and embody resistance toward the victim discourse.

The worker discourse is heavily reproduced through considered practices of the body. There is an understanding in sex work that the body is the most tradable asset, and therefore should be a fit, healthy body, free from the historically embedded stigma of disease. Women sex workers are encouraged to work on their bodies through self-discipline, so that they are suitable for work. The NZPC endorse sport, exercise and physical leisure

as an important way to maintain physical health, communicating the message through their *New Workers' Kit - Stepping Forward* booklet:

Join a gym, take yoga or Pilates classes, start a martial art, the options are endless. Working in a dimly lit environment for hours on end is not the same as regular exercise. It doesn't have to cost a fortune; to start going for daily walks all you need is a pair of comfortable shoes (NZPC, 2010, p. 19).

Gillian Abel, Lisa Fitzgerald and Cheryl Brunton (2009) found the same embodied health discourse operating in their study on health and safety practices following the PRA. They found a number of sex workers were keen to describe their health in a broader context, including strategies they used in non-work contexts to maintain their health and wellbeing, "They stressed the need to plan their working lives to provide enough money, time and space to relax, and de-stress through recreation, sport, travel, and hobbies" (p. 130).

This understanding of the body was also expressed by many of my participants, with all of them acknowledging the value of exercise (regardless of whether or not they engaged in it) and the importance of staying active outside of work. For example, when asked about what sport or physical activity meant to her, Rose replied "Oh just everything, functioning in everyday life. Yeah, you deal a lot better with everything, just being active". Despite what the NZPC says about sex work not being the same as regular exercise, some women were happy in the knowledge that they were getting enough exercise from doing sex work regularly.

Previous sex worker Alexandra describes what I conceive of as “sex working(out)”:

Grace: Did you do any exercise or anything like that? [whilst working as a sex worker]

Alexandra: I had lots of sex! That kept me pretty energetic ... I was always pretty active as a lover ... I had, I still do actually when I think about it, I have very highly developed vagina muscles, so I always had good workouts there.

Similarly, Melissa commented, “It’s a physical job. So it’s exercise as well. It’s very good for you, so that keeps you really fit”. Kate is of the same mind: “I actually treated sex work like a workout as well (laughs). To a degree. Any body movement is exercise so you can integrate that into whatever you do”. She also comments on her strategy for giving her body a break from the physical demands:

So [this particular client] could really go hard⁶¹ [at having sex] (laughs) for quite a long time, so yeah. I had clients like that, and physically I was probably one of the few people that could handle that level of physical activity, but that was because of my fitness levels. If I was really really really tired, I would talk him into a two-girl.⁶² (Kate)

Tania also uses the “two-girl” to alleviate her body from strenuous sex work, drawing links between sex work and exercise, *and* sport:

⁶¹ Colloquial expression. To “go hard” at something means to approach a situation with maximum effort. The phrase originated from basketball culture where players “go hard in the paint”, that is, drive the ball aggressively inside the painted keyhole.

⁶² “Two-girl” is a paid arrangement involving two women sex workers.

I prefer two-girls, and even if they're an orgy room, coz you can extend⁶³ and then, I mean, it's a big work out, but then you can 'tag team'. Like wrestling! (Laughs). WWF! (Laughs). [I] Forgot to mention that I love wrestling too!

These women talk about sex work as contributing to their physical health in a way that they understand as effectively achieving two tasks at once. Martin Roderick (2006) argues that work and leisure activities are distinguishable from each other by their social meaning and context. Here, sex work is understood as being more than just a way to make money, but a way to (re)conceptualise and work on the self, shattering prevailing discourses of what constitutes sex work and what constitutes sport, exercise, and physical leisure.

While sex working(out) is understood to be an advantage for some women sex workers, exercising *for* sex work, or what I think of as "sex working(on the body)" is quite different, and some women rejected the notion that because they are sex workers they must work on their bodies. This denial of the fit, healthy body works on two different levels as women challenge the feminine ideal. Firstly, as owners of their bodies and their embodied services, it affords women power to control what kind of body they choose to advertise, reconciling that if a potential client doesn't like what he sees, he doesn't have to hire her services, as Maggie describes:

A man, a gentleman came through the door, and I said "right, so you can book me in". And he goes "Oh, no thanks Maggie, but no

⁶³ "Extend" refers to convincing a client to extend their time slot – favourable to sex workers because they can earn more money.

offence". And I said, "that's alright, no offence taken". And then he wanted the other girl, so I said "yip, book yourself in, it's all sweet as with me".

By accepting that her body may not be what every client desires, Maggie proves herself resilient and perceptive about where her body sits in a broader market economy. Nonetheless, as a part of the competitive working environment, losing business is less than ideal for any worker, and Maggie also commented on the importance of technologies of femininity (Cole, 1993; Wesely, 2003) in manufacturing a body that is recognisably female, yet in some way exceptional:

Make up is essential. And hair is good, and earrings and jewellery, and perfume ... It's quite important because number one, in the industry you dress to impress. Whoever comes through that door, there's a whole big lounge full of girls. You've got to stand out, without a doubt.

Secondly, by choosing not to conform to conditioning the body for work, some sex workers consider that "flesh is flesh" and that men (clients) are biologically driven by sexual desire and will accept a woman's body even if it doesn't conform wholly to standards of normative feminine beauty.

Bonnie's comments reiterate this, "I mean guys are like 'Oh I don't care what you look like'". Her narrative suggests a rationalisation that men are simple creatures, giving women like Bonnie a degree of control over their own bodies and those of their clients. But this thinking can also have an opposite effect by dehumanising women, making them feel like commodities rather than owners of labour:

Sometimes we get guys that walk in the door, knock, and then [ask] “who’s available?” and then because they can see you, sometimes they’ll just say “oh you’ll do” and it’s like (sarcastic tone) “oh, thanks, I’ll do.” (Bonnie)

Thus, it appears as though resisting idealised discourses of fitness, health, and feminine beauty can have some serious implications for women sex workers’ ability to be recognised as legitimate workers.

No doubt because she is so new to the industry, Jess communicates her hesitancy about whether or not she has obligations to sex work (on the body), or whether she should adopt a more lackadaisical attitude like Bonnie:

Grace: How important do you think your body is to your work?

Jess: I don’t know because guys are pretty easily satisfied. Like it is important, it’s a massive part of it, but I’m not gonna, well I might, but I’m not gonna actively try and keep my body tip top for them. It’s not for them. If I was going to do it, it would be for me. But na, I think it’s important but to an extent, coz they’re the ones paying for it. I dunno (personal communication, March 18, 2014).

Jess expresses significant conflict in how she should understand her body now that she is a sex worker. Her wavering thought processes hint at how she might have understood her embodiment a few days before starting the job. Her indignant ownership of her body is thrown into question as she attempts to negotiate the worker discourse.

The worker discourse highlights the multifarious, operational and routine aspects of sex work, normalising the practice and the bodies of sex

workers. The degree to which women manage their bodies using exercise for sex work can be linked to how they understand their subjectivities as workers. Women who go beyond this discourse capitalise on their bodies to embody another discourse of sex work where the body is viewed as an investment. This marks a difference in understandings of women sex workers' bodies that go beyond sex *worker* to an identity as an *agent*.

“My body is my business”: Sex workers as agents

With the “sex work is work” discourse well established in sex work spaces and expanding into wider Aotearoa society, a discourse has emerged that goes beyond sex work as a means to “paying the bills” to an understanding of sex work as a professional, profitable career. This discourse – which I call the *agent discourse* – categorises the sex worker as an entrepreneur who interprets her job and her subjectivity by understanding her work as a burgeoning trade (Brewis & Linstead, 2000). Sex workers who embody this discourse tout an awareness of the market, their commodity value within this market, and focus on providing a service to men while capitalising on their sexual abilities (Abel et al., 2010b; Brewis & Linstead, 2000). This goes outside of understandings of sex work as work to reveal an opportunity for women to present themselves beyond the working class, to a position of executive professionalism. Joanna Phoenix (2000) describes the discourse where sex workers are:

rational economic agents involved in weighing up the costs and benefits of particular courses of action, wherein individual women appraise themselves of, and in relation to, the respective financial and social costs accrued from being involved with men. (p. 46)

The agent discourse featured often in interviews with women sex workers, but is rarely seen in spaces outside of sex work. This is because of the way the discourse operates in direct opposition to the victim discourse – the more dominant discourse circulating in public spaces. Were sex workers to openly advertise the fact that they viewed themselves as powerful, successful businesswomen, it would not only cause unease amongst the public, but it could likely deter clients who want a sexual experience with a woman that exemplifies normalised, heterosexual femininity through modesty, vulnerability, and docility. It also portrays men as sources of income that can be exploited, placing them in a position of inferiority (Phoenix, 2000). Disrupting the status quo could damage sex workers' business.

There are, however, exceptions to this unspoken rule, exemplified in Hamilton-based Lisa Lewis, who is known as Aotearoa's most high profile sex worker, charging \$1200 an hour (Hume, 2010; Ikram, 2011; Pepperell, 2009).⁶⁴ Lewis became well-known in 2006 when she disrupted an All Blacks⁶⁵ rugby game, running onto a Hamilton pitch in a bikini. Since then she has capitalised on her reputation, shifting in and out of the media in various undertakings both in and out of the sex industry. Lewis has always been honest about her career as a sex worker, something many avoid as a result of perceived stigma. In an interview with news Fairfax

⁶⁴ After momentarily making contact with Lewis in 2016 through social media she redirected me to her lawyer who unfortunately failed to respond to my email invitation for Lewis' to participate in my project.

⁶⁵ New Zealand's national men's rugby union team. Known for their long history, impressive win rate, and associations with to New Zealand national identity (see Jackson, 2004; Jackson, Batty, & Scherer, 2001; Jackson & Hokowhitu, 2002; Motion, Leitch, & Brodie, 2003; Scherer & Jackson, 2010).

media outlet *Stuff* titled “Lisa Lewis enjoys call girl work” (2009) she affirmed:

I should be neither pitied nor hated ... All I am guilty of is providing a service that is sought-after. I am not hurting anyone else, I am not hurting myself, and I am not ashamed of seeking to be financially independent.

In 2009 Lewis was nominated for the Veuve Clicquot Business Woman Award. The international award recognises the contribution that women have made to business, and has been described as the “Oscar” for women entrepreneurs and business leaders (Veuve Clicquot, 2017). Like other sex workers, Lewis’ body is crucial to her brand, and she is meticulous in maintaining it as a fit, healthy, sexy symbol of her success. The woman who nominated Lewis for the Veuve Clicquot, Cathy Odgers, describes her “entrepreneurial drive” by referring to her dedication and physical training as paramount to “ensure she can deliver the quality of service and required aesthetics her profession demands” (Pepperell, 2009). Odgers continues: “Lisa has kept her body in incredible shape using a complex cardio and weight-training regime combined with a stringent diet that many women would run away from in horror” (Pepperell, 2009). A *New Zealand Herald* article had Lewis herself professing that she trains “harder than an All Black” (“Girlfriend ditches All Black after one-night stand,” 2014).

Lewis has been involved in numerous controversies and patent publicity stunts, including trying her hand at amateur boxing (Kerr & Edwards, 2016); having an affair with a high profile All Black (Walters & McSweeney, 2016); and launching public tirades on migrant sex workers

and the NZPC (Tan, 2018a, 2018b), to name a few. However, these situations seem to do little to perturb Lewis; in fact, they appear to be a part of her brand strategy. Her constant media exposure and dynamic approach to her career brings the agent discourse into the public, generating discussion and change in understandings of how sex workers bodies operate outside of dominant sex work discourses.

The agent discourse was noticeable in many of the interviews with women sex workers. In particular, Tania, Melissa, and Laura identified themselves as part of an economy and took advantage of their positions, thus operating within and contributing to the discourse of sex workers as agents. Sex workers who understand themselves as agents are acutely aware of the significance of their bodies to their success. In an industry that demands bodies that are healthy, feminine, and above all sexualised, many sex workers take to exercise in order to increase their profitability. Tania offers an example of this as she discusses her sex work(on the body) routine. At the height of her sex working days Tania worked out “five times a week, on top of sex working as well” for the main purpose of keeping her body “in shape” for work. Even though she has “given up” sex work, Tania still declares “my body is my business”, and to this day chooses to work out with people who understand this philosophy, namely athletes: “I always like to train with people I know have some kind of sporting background, you know, discipline”. Discipline, of course, in Foucauldian terms aligns with technologies of domination (Foucault, 1988c), where Tania is seen to be submitting to disciplinary practices on her body and surrounding herself with forms of surveillance so that she

may shape her body in accordance with dominant discourses of athletic (slim, toned, controlled) femininity.

Yet, Tania's awareness of her body and the forces acting upon it suggest she is no docile prisoner to such discourses. By understanding her behaviours as embodied practices, Tania subscribes to and strengthens the agent discourse, participating in what could be considered technologies of the self. Her body, which has been heavily scrutinised since childhood, and since stigmatised as a sex worker, now pushes back on oppressive discourses by shaping her body through vigorous gym workouts. In particular, she prefers to work out in the company of retired sportsmen: "The guys I train with, one was an international Olympian body weight, he's like Arnold Schwarzenegger, and the other guy I train with was a professional boxer. They're both retired now but they train". Furthermore, Tania offers an interesting parallel between her gym buddies and herself as a former sex worker:

They're non judgemental ... I mean they're well-travelled men, sportsmen, so they don't discriminate ... I guess it's the idea that you sell your body for sex or men pay for sex that it's almost like, it's acceptable to go and have a one night stand or have an affair, but it's not acceptable if your body is your business. The only people I know I can talk to tend to be sportspeople, usually professional sportspeople, because they put their body on the line, the body is their business; it's very similar to a sex worker.

Tania demonstrates critical thinking combined with engagement with the body – elements for engaging in practices that may ultimately create

change to discourses of femininity or practices of freedom (Markula, 2003; Thorpe, 2008). She has found that through her body, she can relate to others like “the guys” through shared embodied experience in sport, exercise, and physical leisure. She is critically aware in aligning herself with professional athletes who realise the importance of their bodies to their work, which underscores her agency. Tania’s ability to relate to other bodies – including ones that represent socially celebrated, normative models of health and fitness – also effectively pushes sex work and sex worker bodies closer toward normalisation in Aotearoa.

While she attempts to position her body amidst normative representations of health and fitness, at other times Tania also crosses discursive boundaries of white heteronormative femininity, unreservedly positioning herself as “other” (Butler, 1990; de Beauvoir, 2014):

Serena Williams, when I look at her I think “oh yeah, I can identify my body with her”. I mean you’ll get some people say “oh she looks like a tranny”⁶⁶ or “she looks like a man”, but if you’re a woman of colour, you’ve got to identify with someone who’s your body shape, or somebody similar genetically.

When you’re a Pacific Island woman, you’re not like a Palagi.⁶⁷ So you’ve got to work really hard on your body. Because I think we have natural muscle and we have higher testosterone than Pākehā

⁶⁶ Slang (often derogatory or offensive) term for a transgender person.

⁶⁷ Samoan term for white, non- Polynesian or Pasifika people, usually of European descent.

women or Asian women.⁶⁸ So it's just about being familiar with your body and then [knowing] how to push it.

Highly adaptable in her actions and rationale, Tania proves to be particularly effective at managing aspects of her subjectivity, using her body in various discursive positionings. She subscribes to the agent discourse by not only disciplining her body to produce a fit, healthy, (hetero)sexy body (Samie, 2013), but demonstrates a deep awareness of her body as different and manages it accordingly: "I embrace my body. I've learnt to find clothes and how to dress it, you know, be confident about it" (Tania).

Like Tania, avid exerciser Melissa believes that sex working (on the body) is an important part of her job, choosing to meet with a personal trainer once a week in order to present a body to clients that is attractive and thus high earning: "My body is my temple, my money maker. If it's not looking good ... well, some guys love big girls don't get me wrong, but I think it helps if you've got a nicer body". The "nicer" body mentioned by Melissa is in contrast to "big girls", indicating a culture of thinness within the agent discourse in sex work (Bordo, 1993b). Therefore, what can be seen as a potentially empowering discourse actually favours women with "nicer bodies". This could be why not all of the women interviewed spoke through the agent discourse, because their bodies did not conform to the ideal shape of that of a fit, healthy, entrepreneurial sex worker. For

⁶⁸ Tania draws on a contentious, yet prevalent claim linking black and brown bodies with scientific measures and regulation of testosterone. This type of "T talk" (Karkazis & Jordan-Young, 2018) points to testosterone as a multivalent cultural symbol and highlights how historic associations of heteronormative femininity with whiteness continues to put women of colour under scrutiny (Dworkin, Swarr, & Cooky, 2013; Pieper, 2014).

example, when asked if she thinks her body is well suited to her work, sex worker Rose replied: “Nope I don’t. But I just seem to be able to get away with it. For this job you need to be tall, long legs ... I do know if you do have ‘that’ image, you are busy all the time”. ‘That’ image – presumably one of idealised, potentially heteronormative femininity – demonstrates the demarcation between sex worker and agent and the outright demand for, and construction of these types of bodies in sex work spaces.

But while bodily awareness and investment may be important within the agent discourse, and fit, healthy bodies are privileged, it does not mean there is not space for other bodies. Laura explains how her bigger body is an asset:

The guys that come and see me want to see a big girl. So for me to be skinny, I would never see these clients at any rate. My clients are a totally different kettle of fish to what other sex workers may see. They want to come and see a big girl, because we’ve got more to hold onto, more to cuddle.

As a “big woman”, Laura challenges thin, heteronormative femininity, and highlights the agent discourse as potentially flexible and accommodating to other bodies. Confident in her body’s position in the sex industry, Laura also reveals a feature about her approach to sex work that places her in the position of ruthless, strategic businesswoman:

... really I don’t care what they look like, I don’t care. It’s really more of a money sign you see on them [clients]. They’re an income. That’s how we’d train new girls, we’d tell them don’t get hooked up on what their looks are, they’re a dollar sign. The more you stick to

that dollar sign, you won't get too emotional and attached to your clients.

Like other sex workers, Laura criticises her client's body, but her degradation goes a step further by disembodiment and dehumanising her clients, reducing them to "income", and constructing her subjectivity in the process (Orbach, 2010). Moreover, Laura defiantly challenges the traditional work/leisure binary revealing more of her self-interests:

Laura: To me the job's not physically tiring, because I enjoy it. I don't get tired with it.

Grace: Oh okay, so you get pleasure during the sex?

Laura: Oh yeah! I make sure I do! A lot of these girls go "oh but we're not there for our pleasure" ...Who said that?! Come on! They need to get off, yes, but what stops you from getting yourself off? Come on! They get a buzz out of it too! Hell yeah, I'll climax. You know, if they get me going right there they can have everything! [Laughs]. 'Coz I get everything! I love that! That's what I mean, I look at sex work as a business yes – but I get fun out of it. You have to.

This attitude can be considered what sociologists of work, sport, and leisure have referred to as a "labour of love" (Freidson, 1990; Roderick, 2006; Stebbins, 2017), wherein Laura is able to access not only economic income, but pleasure and self-actualisation.

Melissa speaks through the agent discourse by comparing herself to women who have sex, but are not sex workers:

Some of them are worse than we are! You know? They're fucking this one and that. But we're getting paid for it! We're business girls, not sluts. It's different. People go "you're a slut", I say "no I'm not, I'm a businesswoman darling. Sluts just give it away!" (Laughs)

At face value, Laura and Melissa's rationale might appear quite harsh, especially considering their judgement is not a direct, reactionary response to harassment or harm, such as Bonnie encountered in the previous section. But it is important to note that these comments are not necessarily made with malice, but are characteristic of a power struggle wherein they are resisting historical and conventional discourses of femininity (and sex work) while simultaneously constituting themselves as sex positive or sex radical agents (Foucault, 1988a).

I interviewed Jess on her second day being a sex worker, yet she showed signs of the agent discourse in a way that became clear without her having to explain or even put into words. Entering sex work spaces as an outsider, I came to understand the way the agent discourse circulates through the accumulation of wealth. Jess and I were in the middle of an interview when a woman walked into the room waving a one hundred dollar note at her:

"Sorry babe, have you got cash to break this hundy?"

"Yip, just a minute."

Jess reaches into her tote and pulls out a sandwich zip lock bag brimming with cash. I have never seen that much money in one place, so casually. They make the exchange as I sit trying to look nonchalant and it dawns

on me, I have unpaid credit card bills, a student loan so big I don't bother to open the letters anymore, and I have been in tertiary education for nearly a decade, and yet, I feel like a chump! (Field notes, 9 November 2014)

I wondered for some time after the interview with Jess about why I had been so struck by the agent discourse, realising that I had never been so immersed in the spaces of sex work, therefore I had never been exposed to the discourse so directly before. This meant that sadly, I had never really considered women sex workers to be savvy entrepreneurs, and I was amazed by their ability to dismiss oppressive discourses about sex workers in lieu of a more constructive one. Despite enduring stigma and marginalisation, the earning potential that women sex workers have in Aotearoa is real and those who take advantage of it as agents of their embodied employment can reap the benefits of financial independence and professional success in a neoliberal climate (Mossman, 2010).

Sex work as a commercial enterprise operates successfully when sex workers are able to embody the idea of the businesswoman and focus on “the bottom line”. Joanna Brewis and Stephen Linstead (2003) believe sex is often “the antithesis of what organizations are about – control, instrumental rationality and the suppression of instinct and emotion in the service of production” (p. 1), yet Tania, Melissa, Laura, and Jess demonstrate that sex *work* can be highly organisational in its operations. As agents, they maintain power by owning and directing goods and services (i.e. the body) while acquiring their share of wealth.

When fit, healthy bodies are disciplined for sex work, their application to embodied labour situates them as bodies that appeal, allure, and even endure in terms of sexual performance. These bodies therefore earn more (Bartky, 1990, 1997; Bordo, 1993a, 1993b; Foucault, 1977a, 1978; Trethewey, 1999). While they might not always agree with it, Tania, Melissa, Laura, and Jess have some understanding of these economics and are co-constructors of the sex workers as agents discourse. They each continue to shape the discourse (and other discourses) through their discursive language, practices and bodies. The NZPC also play a role in shaping the agent (discourse): “You are your business’s best asset and without maintenance you can become a liability” (NZPC, 2010, p. 19).

Echoing Foucauldian technologies of domination, poststructural feminists have also previously argued that regarding the body as an “asset” which requires “maintenance” is highly problematic (Bartky, 1997; Bordo, 1993b; Butler, 1993; Diprose, 2005; Haraway, 2004; Young, 2005). For example, Grosz (1994) warns against a mind/body split that results in viewing the body as a tool or instrument. For Grosz, disconnecting body and mind privileges consciousness above corporeality and reduces women to objects. It also reinforces women’s bodies as unpredictable and further removed from equality with the bodies and minds of men (Grosz, 1994).

Tania, Melissa, Laura, and Jess’ experience of the body might then resonate more with a neoliberal, postfeminist perspective that, as Jess Butler (2013) describes it, “emphasises gender equality and sexual difference, individual choice and empowerment, femininity as a bodily property, the shift from sexual objectification to sexual subjectification, and the commodification of difference” (p. 44). In particular, these

women's experiences as agents echoes a global shift toward neoliberal individualism, where personal effort and ambition is rewarded (Ahl & Marlow, 2012; Oksala, 2013). The sex workers as agents discourse operates under a similar rationale, placing women into a (theoretically) equal position alongside men, and each other in the market economy, where they have the opportunity to better themselves economically and socially.

Foucault (2008) warns that the neoliberal subject should remain constructed within multiple discourses, rather than under strict conditions of economics: "The individual's life must be lodged, not within the framework of a big enterprise such as the firm or... the state, but within the framework of a multiplicity of diverse enterprises connected up to and entangled with each other" (p. 241). For now, it seems, women sex workers will continue to move within and between these discursive multiplicities and entanglements with bodies that become marked, and leave their marks in return.

Summary

Women sex workers' bodies are sites of multiple discourses, where cultural and social norms are written, inscribed, engraved, and marked on the body (Butler, 1989; Foucault, 1977c; Grosz, 1994; McLaren, 2002; McNay, 1992; Probyn, 1991). They are also sites of resistance, where conscious, critical problematisations of the discursive boundaries of the body lead, in some cases, toward practices of freedom (Markula, 2003).

This chapter has explored the ways sex work discourses contribute to women's subjectivities, from victim to worker to agent, and how these

intersect with gendered discourses of heteronormative femininity. These discourses are not limited by space, traversing contexts of sex work, sport, exercise, and physical leisure and operating on and through sex worker's bodies via both technologies of domination and technologies of the self, often concurrently (Chapman, 1997; Johns & Johns, 2000; Johnston, 1996; Markula, 2003; Thorpe, 2008; Wesely, 2001). Through technologies of the self, women sex workers have the capacity to (re)construct and transform themselves as subjects, which suggests that while they cannot fully escape dominating power relations, they can and do think and act critically in engagement with such discourses in their everyday lives.

While discourses imbue spaces of sex work, and sport, exercise, and physical leisure, they do not always imbue the bodies within them. While some women may have felt victimised, none of them are victims. Some consider themselves agents, while others are content being a worker. And yet still, as the women's experiences shared in this chapter have shown, sex workers' subjectivities are complex and do not easily fit into the discursive positions often seen in popular depictions of victim, worker or agent. As Monica sees it, "People get the impression that you're either sort of like *Pretty Woman*⁶⁹ or you're some scummy streetworker you know? But there's everywhere in between." Indeed, sex workers' bodies are continually (re)constructed through discourses that attempt to define them. These discourses can only dominate and regulate women so far as they permit, at which point they can – and do – use their bodies

⁶⁹ A 1990 American film portraying a young beautiful prostitute who is "saved" by her knight in shining armour – a client – sparking the "Pretty Woman" myth (see Dalla, 2000).

(consciously or otherwise) to embody, negotiate, resist, or transform the very discursive relations that also constitute them (Foucault, 1988b). In any case, regardless of what discursive labels they accept or reject, women sex workers are part of the flow of power, using their bodies to shape and construct multiple discourses inside and outside of sex work.

Deveaux (1994) believes that “Feminists need to look at the *inner* processes that condition women’s sense of freedom or choice in addition to external manifestations of power and dominance – and Foucault’s understanding of power is decidedly inadequate to this task” (emphasis original, p. 234). Therefore, in the final empirical chapter I explore women’s affective and emotional experiences of their bodies, and sport, exercise, and physical leisure. Drawing on the feminist affect and emotion theories of Elspeth Probyn and Sarah Ahmed in particular, I discuss how power circulates in sport, exercise, and physical leisure, and sex work and how women’s affective bodies are integral to creating knowledge and understanding within these spaces.

CHAPTER 6

Moving Beings, Being Moved:

A Feminist Affect and Emotion Analysis

In this final empirical chapter I build on the influence of habitus, capital, and field, together with embodied discourses and technologies, to consider how women sex workers feel and interpret their moving bodies and construct knowledge about themselves and the spaces they occupy. Affect and emotion theories together with poststructural feminist theory provide a unique lens with which to re-centre the body and encourage new ways of knowing.

As discussed in chapter two, feminist poststructural theorists are beginning to see the promise of affect and emotion theories in women's embodied experiences of sport and sex work. A more nuanced understanding of how affect and emotion circulates between these spaces and the entangled bodies involved is crucial in exploring the relational forces that shape women sex workers' embodied subjectivity.

This chapter begins with a short outline of my reading of affect and emotion, as informed by Elspeth Probyn (2000, 2004a, 2004c, 2005a, 2005b) and Sara Ahmed (2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2010b), and their relevance to this study. I then go on to engage in depth with women's affective and emotional experiences of disgust, shame, and pride, articulating women's feelings in dialogue with my own affects and emotions, and feminist poststructural theory. I conclude this chapter by considering the transformative and productive properties of affect and emotion across individual, collective, and political bodies.

Applying Affect and Emotion

This chapter is predicated on an understanding of affects and emotions as both embodied sensations and discursive representations. Throughout this analysis I tend to use “affect” when referring to physiological experiences within the body, and “emotion” when theorising socially located expressions; however, the two are inextricably linked and often overlap each other, leading me at times to use them interchangeably. Both Probyn and Ahmed appreciate this inherent ambiguity and manage their ways around it accordingly: “For me it matters less that one be pure in the use of emotion or affect than that one remain alive to the very different ideas that circulate about what is, in the end, intimately connected” (Probyn, 2004c, p. 29)

Probyn (2005b) and Ahmed (2004c) – like other feminist affect theorists – have benefited from thinking about affect using imagery of a circulation or transmission of feeling. This means that affects and emotions are not simply located in the body, but also circulate among objects, generating and shaping surfaces and boundaries of social forms and moving into and through the body (Ahmed, 2004c; Probyn, 1991), as epitomised by the current colloquial turn of phrase “catching feels”. Although experienced subjectively, emotions enable connections to be made between individuals based on what Ahmed (2004a) calls their “stickiness” (p. 130). Thinking about which emotions “stick” to bodies and which “slide” (Ahmed, 2004c, p. 8) over them allows us to understand how women sex workers discursively shape affective subjectivities in spaces of sex work and sport, exercise, and physical leisure.

Individual embodied affect makes it possible to exfoliate unwanted stereotypes and stigma from the body to uncover a surface where feelings and emotion vacillate, which in turn, adds to rich meanings of collective experience. It is important to consider affect in this study so that pre-existing understandings of women's bodies as uncontrollable and unreliable are not reproduced. Additionally, women sex workers are often perceived as detached and unfeeling as either objects (Beeks & Amir, 2006); cold, hard capitalists; or in some way defective or unwell in their ability to have sex without creating emotional attachments (Bonthuys & Monteiro, 2004). All of these assumptions are quickly dismantled by the reality of their various affective experiences.

Affects and emotions are largely “invisible and unheard, yet intensely ‘felt’” (Fullagar & Pavlidis, 2018, p. 459) by women in their everyday lives, and offer unique knowledge in terms of lived experience. In the remaining sections of this chapter I draw largely on Probyn and Ahmed for their readings of disgust, shame and pride, in attempts to understand women sex workers' affective experiences and highlight frames of power, politics and subjectivity.

“That's gross”: Disgust

Disgust is expressed by Probyn (2005b) as having the ability to “turn on” (p. 134) and bring to attention the body's proximity, sight, and closeness of smell and touch. Following this initial reaction, overwhelming horror takes hold – a fear that the disgusting object has gotten too close and may infect or engulf one's body (Ahmed, 2004c; Probyn, 2005b; Tomkins, 1991). The object of disgust, Ahmed (2004c) believes, represents a form of

“badness” (p. 82), translated by the body as offensive or threatening, at which point disgust is processed and managed by the body in an attempt to distance itself from the object. Disgust registers both *in* the body internally, and *on* the body externally, and exposes different social discourses – past and present – within its context, including (but not limited to) expectations of gender and sexuality. Disgust thus generates the borders of the individual and the social body (Ahmed, 2004c; Kristeva, 1982).

What is considered disgusting varies with cultural and social context (Douglas, 2003). Sanitizing the body and the spaces it occupies is understood as an important practice within the sex industry (Brewis & Linstead, 2003). Gordon Waitt and Elyse Stanes (2015) remind us that this extends to the wider service industry by referring to bodily sweat: “The sweaty body in the public and service economy domains do [sic] not sit comfortably with socio-cultural embodied truths of [feminine] embodiment fashioned by the affective economies of capitalism” (p. 35). Indeed, sex work is perceived as a dirty, *disgusting* job (Abel et al., 2010b; Hoang, 2011; Kantola & Squires, 2004; O’Neill & Campbell, 2013; Sanders & Campbell, 2007). In Sarah Kingston’s (2013) research into community perceptions of prostitution, an interviewed area police constable known as “Terry” describes it as: “a disgusting trade ... Women involved in that are disgusting ... those men are coming, they’re disgusting, money men, disgusting, women, disgusting, prostitution disgusting full stop” (p. 155).

Some women sex workers experienced similar feelings of disgust in relation to their clients, thereby deflecting disgust away from themselves to build a professional worker subjectivity. This was illustrated most fittingly

by Bonnie and Kristin's criticisms in response to the victim discourse in the previous chapter. Their judgements of fat bodies in particular highlights stringent (hegemonic) cultural expectations of male bodies in Aotearoa as hard, muscular and physically capable (Keppel, 2012; Longhurst & Wilson, 2009; Pringle, 2002). But fat bodies are not the only disgusting bodies encountered by sex workers, nor are gender and sexuality the only underlying criteria. Tania, for example brings race and ethnicity into her experiences of disgust. On speaking about Indian clients, she comments:

They try to barter and they're really *nasty* in the room. They'll bite you, try and rip the condom ... and I guess people don't like the smell coming out of their pores, you know? The masala and that (laughs). (Tania, emphasis original)

Tania's evaluation of her Indian clients' bodies reveals the embodied disgust operating through her sentinel senses – her experiences of aggressive bartering, violent touch and invasive smells. Tania uses the guise of “people” to hide her contempt that has clearly manifested through her own body. Upon giving umbrage she laughs in an awkward attempt to hide racialised overtones, but only manages to reveal her shame in her disgust – a relationship that is acknowledged strongly by both Probyn and Ahmed. Probyn (2005b) writes: “in its public nature, these expressions of disgust can be made to meet with shame, whereby it is the utterer who is shamed” (p. 145). In this sense, Tania's body becomes an authority on disgust, for which she is shamed – perhaps because of her potential racism, or perhaps because she feels that her body has also become disgusting by

being too close to disgusting clients, because of the way disgust “sticks” to bodies (Ahmed, 2000), as Tomkins (1963) argues, “Anything which has had contact with disgusting things itself becomes disgusting” (p. 131).

Sex workers also appeared disgusted by clients’ bodies that were older than them: “It’s the age of them, like, that’s how old my dad is. So it just makes me feel kind of, I don’t know, like (shudders) shivery” (Sabrina). Sabrina’s disgust was enough to make her skin crawl (Ahmed, 2004b). She winced and physically convulsed, as the threat posed by the bodies of others registered on the skin (Ahmed, 2004b). As a current sex worker, Sabrina’s disgust at the bodies of her older clients, while overwhelming, seems not enough for her to remove her body from the situations where they so closely interact. Sex work, with its classification as “dirty work”, requires a certain amount of emotional labour, so Sabrina (and Tania, Bonnie and Kristin) must systematically reject her own affective responses in order to maintain professionalism (Holmes, Perron, & O’Byrne, 2006; Simpson, Slutskaya, Lewis, & Höpfl, 2012; Wolkowitz et al., 2013).

As objects of sexual desire, sex workers’ bodies are also prone to flattery from clients, which sometimes elicits feelings of disgust. The majority of women I interviewed appeared – at the least – uncomfortable when talking about comments that clients had made about their bodies:

Grace: What do clients say about your body?

Mere: They reckon it’s gorgeous. Most of them, like 70 percent out of all my clients get me to stand up during sex, so he can look. And in my room I’ve got a big mirror so they pretty much get me to

stand there so they can see my whole body in the mirror, my legs especially.

Grace: So how do you feel when they say stuff, or when you're in front of that mirror?

Mere: I feel quite yucky coz I'm all by myself and I'm like "I already knew I had good legs" (laughs), naaa! (Laughs)

Current sex worker Mere is aware that her body is admired by her clients, and even makes a joke about her knowledge of the fact. A compliment from a client about her body does not serve as a kind offering however. A compliment in a sex work space can cause disgust, as demonstrated by Mere's comment that she feels "yucky". Compliments are what Elizabeth Arveda Kissling and Cheris Kramarae (1991) describe as "functionally complex speech acts", proving useful for subtle harassment. Her comment about the fact that she knows she is all by herself further emphasises Mere's embodied disgust. She recognises she is alone with her client (suggesting he could overcome her), and in order to maintain professionalism, she must engage in emotional labour, carry out her services and only then can she remove herself from the disgusting object.

In keeping with Kissling and Kramarae's theory, none of the women interviewed expressed any real predilection when it came to receiving compliments from clients about their bodies. Jess also shows her disgust in receiving client's comments:

Grace: Do you get many comments about your body at work?

Jess: (groans) I don't... yeah I have had comments. I don't like them. I dunno, they make me feel weird. Like, they don't make me

feel sad, they don't make me feel angry, they just make me feel weird ... Just like... ugh (shudders)

Grace: You don't like it?

Jess: I'm not going make it seem like I hate what they're saying, but it's just uncomfortable.

Listing the emotions she does *not* have, Jess tries to come across as aloof, yet her body shudders at the thought of clients commenting on her body. Like Mere, she makes attempts to maintain her professionalism by refusing to openly condemn her clients, but her reactions reveal her disgust from within her body, toward the body of the client. It is not solely the compliments that affect Jess, but from where, or whom the compliment comes from. She explains:

I get the best comments from my boyfriend, because they mean so much more. *So much more.* I don't really even listen to comments, like I'll hear them but I don't take them in. The only person I listen to is my boyfriend. (Jess, emphasis original)

The difference, Jess tells us, is between someone whom we hold dear, and someone who is a stranger. A compliment from a stranger feels like it is imposed on her, something done *to* her, and calls attention to her body as a woman – a reminder of her inferiority to men (Rakow, 2015). A compliment from her boyfriend has more meaning for Jess, which she positions in contrast to her disgust. Presumably, this is a male who has earned access to her body without simply paying a fee and so his words are heard and appreciated as (her) truth.

Bonnie shares her disgust in an encounter with a client that highlights sex work as a fitness/exercise space: “I have someone that, because he was on medication, he could have sex for two hours straight. And then he’ll sit with you in a giant puddle of sweat with you and it’s like, ‘that’s gross’”. Unlike other exercise spaces (gyms, sports fields, studios) though, “working up a sweat” in sex work spaces is not necessarily indicative of a healthy, toned, fit body (Johnston & Longhurst, 2009; Maguire, 2008; Markula & Pringle, 2006; Waitt, 2014). Bonnie’s disgust at her client’s sweat occurs in alignment with dominant discourses of heteronormative femininity and subversive discourses of sex work, highlighting the significance of context (Douglas, 2003). Moreover, in following Iris Marion Young (1990) and Elizabeth Shove (2003), Gordon Waitt (2014) argues that “sweat-free bodies are key elements of a respectable femininity and moral cleanliness” (p. 677). Thus, in her disgust in her client’s sweat, Bonnie is able to contribute to her subjectivity as both woman and sex worker.

In more definitive exercise spaces, women sex workers continue to experience disgust. Melissa evokes disgust when she lays down her justification for avoiding such spaces; “I don’t like gyms. The personal instructor comes to my house. I don’t like gyms. I don’t want other people’s bugs and sweat and smelly bums and stuff and the perving, you know?” At the gym, other people’s bodies threaten to make their way into Melissa’s body in the form of germs and bacteria through touch and smell, and perverted panoptic gazes that sexualise her body according to socially defined standards without her consent (Foucault, 1977a). Feeling watched and subjected to unwanted sexual interest garners the same feelings of

disgust as her olfactory and tactile senses (Cain, 1993; Koskela, 2000). This mix of affect and emotion inevitably sways Melissa into hiring a personal trainer who visits her home. In so doing, Melissa maintains a strong separation between home and sex work:

I'd never work from home, coz that's your castle, and you separate your work from that work, same as everyone. Everyone goes to work and comes home. Same as me. I will go to work, come home to my castle. That's my space.

While disgust acts as a barrier for Melissa to separate parts of her subjectivity – that is, her working self and her home self – she inadvertently blurs boundaries between home, exercise, and sex work by sex working-out: “because clients like to look at a nice body don't they? ... someone who's in shape and is quite energetic”.

In addition to disgust felt in relation to other bodies, sex workers also directed disgust toward their own bodies. Experiencing disgust from the inside out shows how socially constructed standards play out through the body and are reframed as personal preoccupations (Ahmed, 2004c; Probyn, 2005b). At age 68, Alexandra expresses disgust in her body *now* as opposed to when she was younger: “Nobody would see me naked now because I don't like the way my body is at all. Possibly if I had done some sort of sport or fitness thing it wouldn't be as gross as it is now (laughs)”. Alexandra's comment is intensified when placed in the context of a life where being naked was normalised. Without referencing sex work – which in itself requires nudity – she explains:

I was always perfectly happy in my body. My mother used to lie around naked in the garden. We would go away for holidays to remote places and we used to all run around naked. I mean we weren't "nudists" as such, but it was what we did. So I grew up feeling totally okay about my body. When I went to Paris, at night time I often life modelled for art classes, and then the hippy era came in and we worked naked in the gardens. When I eventually came back to New Zealand I bought a house where I could work naked in the garden. It was very important to me. (Alexandra)

In a u-turn from her former self, Alexandra's disgust in her now "gross" body engages her in embodying and (re)producing cultural norms, discourses and histories of femininity that vilify old bodies and venerate youth (Ahmed, 2004c). Ahmed (2004c) would suggest that in a sense, Alexandra "must already know" (p. 10) that the ageing woman's body, by social standards of femininity, is disgusting (Tortajada, Dhaenens, & Willem, 2018; Vares, 2009).

Discourses of femininity were also felt by sex workers as self-disgust in relation to specific areas of their bodies, namely their feet, as both Maggie and Sasha point out:

Grace: So is there anything you don't like about your body?

Maggie: My feet.

Grace: Yeah? What is it about them you don't like?

Maggie: They're fugly.⁷⁰

Grace: (Laughs) Feet aren't particularly good looking are they?

⁷⁰ Colloquial term – a shortened form of "fucking ugly".

Maggie: They're fugly! They're a size 10.

Grace: Would you rather them be smaller?

Maggie: [nodding] I think they're fugly.

Sasha: I've got the ugliest toes, I've got one toe that's bigger than my big toe. Yeah, it's just like, really weird, like why would they do that? (laughs). And then I've got a hairy toe! Don't laugh!

(laughing)

Grace: (Laughing) Please girl!

Sasha: (Laughs) I've got a hairy toe!

Grace: Yeah, I've got hair on my toes!

Sasha: Yeah, no that's been a horrible part of my life

Grace: Yeah?

Sasha: Yeah, I just don't like my body.

In disgust, Probyn (2005b) writes "we find an intense scrutiny of the object" (p. 142), something Maggie and Sasha do when talking about their feet. Their disgust in the size of their feet and toes reflects dominant discourses of femininity in relation to men, as Jane Ogden (1992) illustrates through the extreme cultural practice of foot-binding: "Women tend to have smaller feet than men. And the Chinese tradition of foot-binding emphasised this difference" (p.2).

Meanwhile, adding to Sasha's disgust, her "hairy toe" also threatens her womanhood by revealing her body's defiance to Western norms of hairlessness (Toerien & Wilkinson, 2003). My initial laughter is indicative of my embarrassment, and possibly even shame *for* her, revealing my own adherence to the same discourses of femininity. This was quickly replaced

by my laughter in realising the absurdity that I found in her scrutinising her body so harshly, also evidenced by my own admission that I too had hair on my toes. In a manner of speaking, Sasha and I were momentarily “foot-bound” together by affective encounters of shame.

Sasha and Maggie’s disgust directed toward their feet aligns with women sex workers’ frequent rejection of dirt, when one considers that the feet are the body’s connection to the earth. The theme of dirt was central to women sex workers’ experiences of disgust and their subjectivities as sex workers. By distancing themselves from bodies and body parts (including their own) that are dirty, fat or oversized, sweaty, old, diseased, racially othered, and perverted, through their disgust, women sex workers can present their bodies as clean and not-disgusting, placing them within the established boundaries of feminine and “normal” (Holmes et al., 2006; Kristeva, 1982). In other words, by insisting on being clean and normal, and disparaging other disgusting objects, women sex workers situate their bodies as far from disgusting, offering a subtle yet unique deflection using disgust to interrogate stigmatised representations of sex workers as dirty (Hoang, 2011; Kantola & Squires, 2004; O’Neill & Campbell, 2013; Sanders & Campbell, 2007).

“Living a double life”: Shame

April 16, 2014

Sitting with the women in the lounge area I was enjoying myself. I was a little surprised. The only thing making me uncomfortable were the tufted leather sofas that looked like they were from the 18th Century. The only way to physically relax was to squeakily shift your butt back and recline fully. The other women had no trouble pulling this off, but I wasn't too keen on channeling my inner Cleopatra⁷¹ so I just perched on the edge and sipped my water bottle while the girls did the lounging and enjoyed their bourbon⁷² and cokes.

Talking with them was easy, not so dissimilar from chatting with my own girlfriends. After a while gossiping, the Madam⁷³ came over, a cool character herself. But this time I could see she had an agenda, as she was smirking. Without any hesitation she announced that the client “over there” had been asking about me. My heart took a jab from a small

⁷¹ A reference made to popular depictions of the ancient Egyptian queen lounging on a daybed. Resurrected by Elizabeth Taylor, Theda Barra, and Marilyn Monroe (see Bronfen, 2013).

⁷² I was aware of the ethical and methodological implications that alcohol can bring to a fieldwork situation – described in sporting cultures by Michele K Donnelly (2014); and Catherine Palmer and Kirrilly Thompson (2010). Thus, I also knew of the possible benefits to the research “having a drink with the girls” could bring. However, maybe I didn't feel comfortable, or I just didn't feel like having a drink at that point in time, but at the risk of coming off prudish, I sidestepped these complexities by politely declining the offer of an alcoholic beverage.

⁷³ Term for female brothel owner or manager.

heavyweight whose corner was in the back of my ribs. “Eww, me?” I thought to myself. My hand flew to my mouth, trying to cover up my shock at the absurd proposition. When I felt I could keep my expressions in check I removed it and tried to act cool, aware of the potential to offend the women by suggesting I was above it. I let out a little “ha!” through an awkward, goofy smile.

“What’d you say?” asked one of the women for me.

“I said she doesn’t work here...”

“Ha, yeah...”

I broke the silence with a shake of my head and felt the sting of eyes all over me. I stealthily caught a look at the client. Leaning on the bar, casually talking to another male was a middle aged man in a drab walnut suit. He was not very tall, with a slim to average build. Clean shaven, thinning brownish hair, brown skin, foreign maybe? Altogether unremarkable. I’d seen a thousand men like him before. But this time it made me feel queasy. Thoughts turned into images in my head of being alone in a room upstairs with this stranger, this man who finds me sexually attractive, who wants to pay me to have sex with him. Noo. It was becoming too much. No way. Nope. I felt trapped. I wanted to run

but I didn't know how to open the security door to the outside world. My thought processes were interrupted:

"Try it girl, you might like it!"

The others laughed.

"Yeah you should, make a quick buck."

The women were still waiting for my reaction, I didn't know what to say. Were they serious? Were they testing me? Or just mocking me? With all the focus on me, now I started to feel the intense embarrassment and shame. It started with a feeling of regret, where I just wished that what had just happened, simply hadn't. I wished I had worn a slightly longer skirt, hadn't smiled the way I do, hadn't made myself open to such a situation. I wished I hadn't come. I wished I wasn't a woman.

I knew my face would be blushing considerably by now, a fact I knew at least I could rely on, and correspondingly I felt flushed and my armpits began to itch.

"Yeah true, I could do with a bit of cash!"

I heard come out of my mouth.

Awkward pause...

"Yeah, naaa, I'm all good"

I clarified with a thanks-but-no-thanks-grimace.

I tried to turn my sights away from the space where everything had just imploded before me in an attempt to divert attention and encourage others to quickly move onto a new topic.

Seated with sex workers in their place of work while they waited for clients, I found myself caught between disgust and shame. It was my body that the client wanted, my body that was responding in such a visceral way, and my body that I resented for putting me in such an awkward situation. In Ahmed's (2004c) words, my shame was "felt upon the skin surface" (p. 104), overwhelming and consuming me. I had entered the privileged space as a neutral "player" and interfered with the rules of "the game". My disgust at the client and the thought of having sex with him quickly turned to shame for judging him, and in turn, judging the women. I had inevitably situated my body as more privileged than the bodies of clients, and the bodies of sex workers. In my guilt I lowered my head in an apology of sorts, and left the establishment soon after.

The interest that I brought to the brothel that day revealed my shame in the fact that I was so invested in sex workers bodies and their experiences that I forgot that I had a body too. My body was that of a woman, capable of making money from sex, in the same way my participants do. My body was brought to the level of sexual object no more or less than the sex workers who practice within this reality every day. I felt shame at having my sexuality and my womanhood exposed. Yet being reduced to a physical body was also invigorating, in a visceral, corporeal way that I can understand in terms of my lamented gymnastics body that

felt similarly valuable all those years ago. Feelings of pride began to emerge as I teetered on being accepted as one of the group. But I quickly fell from the podium back into shame and removed my body from the space where it simply did not fit.

Probyn (2005b) acknowledges the ways disgust and shame are linked, describing their relationship as “close and complicated” (p. 134). Just as I experienced, the two affects clash – the physicality of my disgust was met with the “stomach-turning self-abjection of the shameful nature of [my] action” (Probyn, 2005b, p. 134). My body wanted to be relatable and accepted within the sex working space, but it was stuck in an in-between space where it could not, and indeed cannot “fit in although it desperately wants to” (Probyn, 2004a, p. 345).

In their study of surfing identities and exclusion, Gordon Waitt and David Clifton (2013) realised that shame was triggered by “the inability of the body to reproduce the naturalised movements that define being a surfer” (p. 490). This analysis reveals my shame when placed in that critical moment. Incapacitated and credulous, while I was happy to act like “one of the girls” in the interim, when faced with the reality of sex work, my body could not relate. Thinking through my shame in this way shame caused me to reassess, at the level of my body, questions about the proximity of myself to others, making space for understanding (Probyn, 2005b). In the rest of this section I discuss women sex workers’ deeply embodied experiences of shame in sport, exercise, and physical leisure and sex work spaces, and consider their origins and women’s strategies for overcoming shameful feelings.

Women sex workers experienced shame through their bodies in a range of sport, exercise, and physical leisure spaces. Monica recalls a childhood experience of pride, quickly followed by shame. When asked about how winning her school running race made her feel she replied:

Well I was sort of proud but I didn't want to show off, so it was sort of low key. Coming in second or third was good, I was pretty happy with that as well. But yeah, it was certainly nice to come first. But sometimes people would tease you about coming first: "Ohh you think you're so smart, you came first" you know? It's like "No I don't! I just tried my hardest!" You know, when you're a kid you just think "ohh", put your head down, you know, you didn't want people not to like you or something. (Monica)

Like disgust, shame operates as a human reaction, while at the same time drawing on wider social pretensions (Benjamin, 1968; Probyn, 2005a). An "exposure of the intimacies" (Probyn, 2005a, p. 41) of our selves in public, means that shame influences Monica from outside her body in the form of social pressures that discourage prideful celebration. These pressures, which Janet Holmes (2018) identifies as "Tall Poppy Syndrome" operate as an "important mechanism for restraining unqualified self-promotion or boasting" (p.36), and align with traditional Aotearoa values of humility (Bruce, 2008, 2009; Cosgrove & Bruce, 2005; Kane, 2010; Motion et al., 2003; Pierce, Hodge, Taylor, & Button, 2017; Scherer & Jackson, 2010). This social shaming has egalitarian roots in Aotearoa (McLeod, 1968) and from a feminist perspective, is deployed to maintain gender order (Holmes, 2018). From a gendered sporting perspective, it is clear that Tall Poppy

Syndrome works by discouraging girls like Monica from participating in sport (Cooky, 2009; Lenskyj, 1990, 1994a).

Shame like Monica's allows discourses like these to flourish as they reinforce inequality through the bodies of participants. Monica's shame in her performance begins with her interest; what Probyn (2005a) describes as a kind of "affective investment" (p. 13). By being invested in participating and potentially winning, Monica risks the disconnect that can occur between people and ideas. Her shame happens when her interest in winning is not reciprocated by others, as Probyn (2005a) explains: "Shame illuminates our intense attachment to the world, our desire to be connected with others, and the knowledge that, as merely human, we will sometimes fail in our attempts to maintain those connections" (p. 14).

As an adult, Monica demonstrates that shame still circulates in sport, exercise and leisure environments. On being asked if she felt comfortable being in the gym, she replied:

No. I felt overweight and embarrassed to even be there really, coz there were skinny chicks and fit people there that were running about 20 kilometers on the treadmill, and I'm puffing away doing about 2 or 5 or something. (Monica)

Monica's efforts at exercising were made insignificant by bodies around her, her body feeling the shame of trying to be fit, healthy, and "skinny", but failing in the process. This shame highlights the emphasis placed on women's bodies in exercise spaces to be thin, which ultimately sees Monica quit the gym where her body is not "fit" and does not "fit".

It has been suggested that women's bodies may be more prone to shame, as seemingly uncontrolled sites of carnality, excess, and volatility (Bordo, 1993b; Grosz, 1994; Johnson & Moran, 2013; Kristeva, 1982; Probyn, 2005a). So in addition to this potential gendered disadvantage, Monica finds herself in a gym – a place that is known for heightening and mobilising fears and anxieties about the body (Mansfield, 2005, 2008). As she struggles on the treadmill her laboured breathing lets her know that she is unfit and overweight, and thus attracting unwanted attention. Monica's "fat shame" provides an insight into how the cause of her shame – her body – also served as a device for Monica to think about, contain, and either regulate or remove her body (Eller, 2014; Farrell, 2011; Pausé, Wykes, & Murray, 2014). Although she opted for the latter to lessen her feelings of shame, emotions like shame are sticky and are liable to resurface for as long as she perceives that her body does not follow the scripts of heteronormative femininity (Ahmed, 2004c). Like Monica, Iris experienced shame as a constraint on her participation in sport as a child:

I have a skin thing and that gave me a lot of anxiety because it was visible and [it was] eczema. I wasn't skilled at covering up, so a lot of the sports stuff like tennis, netball was fine because we wore tights in winter and so on, but there was always that anxiety that, to participate in the summer I had to get rid of the eczema.

Iris' shame was quite literally marked on her skin, singling her out as abnormal, infected, and potentially contagious. Unlike Monica, Iris was able to keep her shame somewhat concealed. However as an adult, the

potential for encounters of shame became increasingly frequent as Iris struggled to hide her identity as a sex worker:

I was part of a tramping club, we used to go out a lot for weekends away, and there were people from all walks of life involved. But after a while I found I had to quit because I was living a double life where they didn't know that I was a sex worker and I got tired of worrying and trying to hide it from them. I didn't want them to know because I didn't think it was important. I just wanted to be a tramper to them. But I hated having to lie to them. So I quit.

Iris' story reveals her initial interest, desire and pleasure, as well as the hurt at feeling like she does not fit in, and the impulse to withdraw.

Following Probyn (2005b), Iris' shame illuminates "the body's capacities for reaching out and spilling across domains that we would like to keep separate, or hidden from view, or conversely cause the body to hide, to run away" (p. 134). Even though her tramping club was diverse in its membership – "there were people from all walks of life involved" – the stigma and shame of being a sex worker was too complicated for Iris to negotiate, as fellow retired sex worker Tania aptly rationalises:

You're going to get shit from people – stigma, you know – people who will discriminate [against] you because of the nature of the work, and it could be your family, your friends, your boyfriend. So it's always like you're in the closet. You're living this secret life ... because of stigma and discrimination.

But unlike sport, exercise and leisure spaces, shame in sex working spaces was rarely, if ever, directly spoken about in interviews – and if it was, it

was usually accompanied by some type of counteracting strategy, like Maggie's "switch off" approach:

If the world wants to try and judge you and stuff you just switch off. I switch off quite constantly when I'm outside having a smoke and I hear people walking past here and they go "ohh, that's a fucked up place, those fucking bitches", and I just sit there and I'm like [to herself] "that's nice dear", and I just sit out there as long as possible in the fresh air and just breathe. But really in my head I want to jump all up in them and say to them "How dare you talk about my work like that. I work in that building. Do not enter, if you dare."
(Laughs) "Leave your willy at home!" (Laughs)

Maggie expresses what she would *like* to do in this situation, which is explained by Probyn (2005b) wherein "the logic of pride movements reproduces an antagonism between 'us', the shamed, and 'them', the guilty" (p. 130). Probyn (2005b) believes that returning the epithets for their shameful attitudes can be a useful tactic for bodies who have been shamed, but Maggie, engaging in emotional labour, chooses not to react, instead suppressing her rage and transforming her shame into what appears as acceptance, but what Probyn cautions can be evidence of a culture of resentment hiding behind a "sanitised veneer" (p.130).

"Eat your heart out!": Pride

Described as "that happy emotion that makes us want to be public" (Nathanson, 1987, p. 184), pride may not necessarily make sex workers want to broadcast their lives to the world, but it can offer respite from negative emotions like disgust and shame (Kyrölä, 2016; Probyn, 2005b).

Like disgust and shame, pride affects us individually, collectively, and structurally, and this is something I came to discover in sex work spaces (Nixon, 2017b). At each spatially defined event, pride represents connectedness, organising bodies accordingly (Stets & Turner, 2014).

At the level of the individual, pride is embodied via achievement, capabilities, and appearance through contact with others in a symbiotic relationship that differentiates between bodies. Connections are formed through identification and collectivity maintains spaces of belonging and inclusion based on shared experiences of pride. At a structural level, pride manifests through power by reinforcing dominant power dynamics whilst maintaining the capacity to challenge structural inequalities. Within these levels level, pride is experienced by bodies in positive and negative ways, some of which can be seen in women sex workers.

While dominant cultural and social ideas about sex work deem it disgusting and shameful, women sex workers appear to present themselves in a way that represents “fierce pride” (Stein, 1975, p. 283) in their bodies and their work. Tania demonstrates the importance of what she identifies as confidence, as she gives advice for any woman considering becoming a sex worker: “You’ve got to be confident, you have to be comfortable, you have to be strong in yourself, know who you are, and take no shit”. This sentiment resonated across sex workers, not simply because they are women – and therefore potentially susceptible to experiencing discrimination – but because they are women sex workers.

The nature of sex work means that sex workers’ bodies are subject to intense scrutiny, yet for Alexandra, who grew up “running around naked”, pride was cultivated and embodied in the habitus from an early

age. Having fewer inhibitions about her body than others, Alexandra claimed that during her time as a sex worker she felt good in her body, and that it was “perfectly suited” to sex work. Growing up naked and being around nakedness allowed Alexandra to abandon the embodied shame that humans are presumed to naturally inherit (Velleman, 2001; Walker, 2017), and this is perhaps why Alexandra chose the profession of sex worker in the first place:

I always knew that I'd love it [sex work] ... So I started working and I was so happy that I finally found exactly what was right for me. I loved using my body, and I love the love. I was addicted to the love really, coz I'm just an old hippy, and wherever there's love, I'm there! So I just had love affairs with people and they gave me all this money and that's how it worked.

Alexandra exhibits pride in her body, and pride in her profession. The combination allows her to experience transcendental “love” that, alongside feelings of pride, maintained her dedication during her 25 years' sex working. Pride occurs at the achievement of something meaningful (Tracy & Robins, 2007), which suggests Alexandra speaks of how she has successfully overcome the shame that threatens women's bodies and sex workers' bodies. Her experience is echoed by other sex workers who expressed immense pride in and for their bodies in response to often coexistent feelings of disgust and shame.

Alexandra – who identifies as a European New Zealander – also comments that as a sex worker she had a “nice body” that was “always brown all over”, raising interesting questions about the mutually

constitutive relationships between pride, femininity, race, and ethnicity. In her research on gendered and raced bodies on beaches in Aotearoa, feminist geographer Lynda Johnston (2005) draws on Ahmed (1997, 1998) to examine practices of sun-tanning in relation to the construction of gendered and racialised subjectivities. Pākehā women whom Johnston spoke with at Mount Maunganui beach agreed that when their skin was brown they felt “more attractive ... more confident.” (Participant Julie, p. 113). Generating similarities with Alexandra’s comments, in seeking to be brown, this form of pride might be an affective rebuke of white shame, thus revealing the permeable and transformative potentialities of skin (Johnston, 2005). This was supported by Māori women sex workers, who understood their ethnicity and skin colour as a socially marginal position, but an advantage at the same time. For instance, Rose talks about her body growing up, when she comes to terms with being Māori as a difference:

Back in those days I didn’t worry about body image because people look at me and go “Oh you’re brown”, kind of thing, and it was like “Oh, okay, I’m brown, I’m different.” So body image wasn’t really an issue.

Being different, Rose suggests, grants her immunity to the pressures of feeling a need to conform to white, heteronormative femininities. Similarly, Mere invokes a proud Māori subjectivity in response to potentially feeling marginalised as a sex worker:

Grace: Do you think that sex workers are treated differently to other people in Aotearoa?

Mere: Yeah ... But me, being a Māori, I don't care what people say about me working at this job.

Mere suggests that she is resistant to any judgments because being Māori means she is already marginalised, and as a result has either inherited or developed resistance. Rose and Mere may have experienced some form of shame in being Māori in their pasts, and have converted this into pride, they may also be drawing on sources of collective Māori pride such as Māoritanga⁷⁴ to reify their difference to whiteness. These women feel and wear their pride very literally on their skin, using it to reinstate their agency and constitute subjectivity.

Kate's experience in the industry leads her to deduce that "most sex workers are not that self-conscious about their bodies", and are instead "comfortable ... with their sexuality, with their bodies, regardless of how big or small or toned they are". Kate speaks on behalf of sex workers, in a way that Probyn (2005a, 2005b) understands as a tendency by projects of identity politics to demand better representation. She writes: "From the shadows of shame, the politics of pride has extended these efforts to unequivocally posit that there is nothing to be ashamed of if your body is gay, black, disabled, fat or old" (Probyn, 2005b, p. 127). Indeed, many sex workers push past perverse feelings of shame in their bodies and in their choice of work on a daily basis, adopting embodied ways of *feeling* to inform their embodied ways of knowing. Previous sex worker Nina illustrates this type of practice by feeling proud, deriving meaning, and then using that knowledge:

⁷⁴ Māoritanga can both refer to – and is inclusive of – Māori culture, practices, beliefs, and way of life.

I used to be quite proud of my figure, especially in my years [sex] working actually, especially dancing. I learnt quite early on I guess that, you could use your body to gain attention, and to make money ... yeah, so I learnt that women have a lot of power with their bodies and you can use it to get attention, get what you like.

Although pride affects women like Nina by allowing them to feel empowered, its potential for individual gain is nonetheless sometimes put to the test in their encounters with clients. The men who use sex workers' services occupy an intimate proximity to women's active, naked bodies, and while many sex workers may feel proud of their bodies, they are under close scrutiny on a daily basis. Sometimes the presence of pride can also hint at vulnerability (Probyn, 2005b). In such instances, pride can be used as a mask to conceal any signs that could suggest anything to the contrary (Ahmed, 2004c; Ahmed & Swan, 2006; Probyn, 2005b). In her research on manifestations of pride, Nixon (2017b) finds that pride can operate as a "protective mechanism" to transform bodies into something "larger, tougher, an entity that takes up space, that will react with force when that space is infringed upon" (p. 182). In the case of the sex worker who has learned to exude sex work pride through technologies of the self and technologies of the sexiness such as dieting and working out, there is also a functioning aspect to pride, which works to project an image of assurance and keep potentially damaging affects at bay (Probyn, 2005b). Nina demonstrates this suitably when she realises that the pride she once took in presenting her body as a sex worker, expressed through her body practices, is gone:

I think since I've quit the sex industry I'm probably a little bit more lax than I used to be. Like, I used to never leave the house without makeup ... I was quite big on looking visually perfect and paranoid about it, it was crazy. But I'm quite a natural person out of—when I left the sex industry.

While Nina may still embody pride in her everyday life, it seems as though her understanding of pride has changed. The pride that Nina embodied as a sex worker was immersed in presenting a body that conformed to the technologies of femininity and sexiness. The rigid regimes of makeup and looking “visually perfect” are essential to appeal to clients’ heteronormative tastes. Some time on from sex working, Nina now appears to consider her body less in terms of capital:

I look at my body differently because of what it's been through over the years, so I've got a bit more respect than I used to for my body. I used to put almost anything I liked through it and take it for granted. When I hit 30 I think things changed and I had a bit more respect and how to treat myself a bit kinder and more careful.

Nina's experience highlights the fluidity and mobility that pride demonstrates as it moves across time, between subjects, from moment to moment. It is a moment of reflection and change, as seen in Nina, or a continual state of being in one's naked body, like the pleasure and love that Alexandra feels. Individual experiences like these truly reflect the multifarious nature of pride and the deeply personal understandings that women have with their bodies.

As diverse and private as these encounters may be, there is also a connectedness between the individual feeling, and collective pride. This relationship facilitates certain slippages, where exchanges of ideas about pride point to the dynamism between emotional, discursive and political spaces (Nixon, 2017a). Women sex workers became involved in this process in the way they spoke about their bodies principally in the context of sex work and pride in their jobs. Expressing pride in her sex working body and pride in sex work, Tania said she felt “really confident” doing her job, and demonstrates the slippage that indicates movement of emotions within and between the individual and the collective:

I found the clients didn't feel confident around me at all, yeah, as soon as you take your clothes off ... I think most of the time when men pay for sex it's almost like they're in this fantasy world, well they are in a fantasy world, but they're sort of like “how can this chick want to sleep with me?”

In this excerpt, Tania speaks about the embodied pride she felt in relation to her male client's shame. Notably, her client's shame does not stick to her, suggesting that shame may not have a dominant presence within sex working spaces. Instead, Tania invokes feelings of embodied, collective pride that circulates in sex work spaces, sticking to sex worker bodies in a fantastical fashion. She continues with this celestial motif:

I'd say to clients “I'm not a porn star, I'm a whore star, there's a difference (laughs). Because as a whore star we have limits, we don't do all the kissing and all that shit! Come on! Slap you silly!”
(Laughs) (Tania)

Tania's choice of words also draws on historical tensions and attitudes surrounding sex work shame and flips them in an inherently political statement. Her choice in using the heavily loaded word "whore" invokes sex radicalism and hijacks sex work stigma, resurfacing her body to form attachments with other sex workers through the "we", whilst creating and maintaining distance (through a sarcastic threat of violence) between her and her male clients (Ahmed, 2004c).

Pride generated and circulating in sex working spaces provides a valuable insight into the links it makes with group membership and culture. Waitt and Clifton (2013) found that the dynamics of pride and shame in surfing cultures suggest that embodied pride is a major contributor to one's identity as a surfer (Waitt & Clifton, 2013, 2015), drawing an interesting parallel with sex workers. Surfers and bodyboarders, it seems, perform manoeuvres in the surf while embodying pride in their ability and disregard for personal safety. From this deeply affective practice, pride allows men to produce athletic, masculine identities. Having a surfer identity enables one to be a proud member of "the group", and build and maintain bonds with other surfers by recognising common ground such as other affective experiences of pleasure, risk, and difference to others (Booth, 2008; Waitt & Clifton, 2013). Clifton Evers (2006, p. 236) writes of his particularly affective experience surfing:

The danger, relief, joy, and pride experienced at this surf spot bonds together a particular group of blokes—the "local crew." Blokes in this local crew do not bond simply because they all surf or live in a

particular area. Nor do they have some essential essence of masculinity inside each of them that draws them together as “men”. They are bonded by the fear, joy, pride, and so on that their bodies go through together ... Our experiences develop felt connections between our bodies.

In a similar way to surfers, sex workers mobilise pride in order to foster a shared identity. Maggie, for example, attempts to counteract shame by responding sternly to anyone suggesting that as a sex worker she should be ashamed: “look, if you’ve got a problem, say it to my face, don’t say it behind my back, I’m not embarrassed, I work at Top Girls, in your face! Eat your heart out! Come see me boys! (Laughs)” Whilst colourfully expressive, Maggie’s pride in her job, body, and identity, cannot stamp out the common experiences of shame. But under the direction of a collective, such singular pride may be intensified and multiplied, making it easier for individuals to transgress negative emotions.

Sex work pride is produced and reproduced in workplaces, community spaces, in movements, marches and parades, at conferences and workshops, and in online spaces (Abel & Fitzgerald, 2010a; Beer & Tremblay, 2014; Bernstein, 2010; Holden, 2011; Read, 2013). Sex worker subjectivity is promoted by affective connections between bodies in these spaces. Belonging and mutual respect nurtures a sisterhood that provides a source of pride as well as collective knowledge and safety. Maggie gives an example of collective sex work pride in action:

The girls are absolutely lovely. I love them to bits. You know, it’s one tight, happy family ... Say if I’m sitting down here and I hear a

ruckus I'll go from here and I'll stand at the bottom of the stairs and I'll just travel up real slowly, step by step and I'll just listen out, and if I can hear something that doesn't seem right or sound right, I'll open up that door and be like (clicks and points finger) "behave."

Sex work pride circulates in sex work spaces with sufficient influence to elicit behaviours that Maggie describes – behaviours that protect individual members and reinforce the collective. This locating of proud bodies into one is notable in gay and queer pride movements that appropriate the word "pride" in declaring their triumphs over shame, and show how "other" bodies stick together through affect and emotion (Ahmed, 2004c; Johnston, 2007a, 2007b; Markwell & Waitt, 2009). In spaces such as Pride festivals and parades, individuals who identify as LGBTQIA+⁷⁵ are encouraged to be "out", "proud" and "visible" with their sexualities (Markwell & Waitt, 2009, p. 155). By attending these events, individual experiences of embodied pride allows the (im)mobilisation of pride into a collective movement (Johnston, 2007a; Johnston & Waitt, 2015; Markwell & Waitt, 2009).

LGBTQIA+ Pride draws parallels with sex work pride and the collective body that became legitimised through the 2003 Prostitution Reform Act. Since legislation passed, the NZPC has continued to provide a space for sex workers to mobilise pride by speaking back to, and through the media, participating in marches, and holding events – as seen in Figure 7 – and empowering people in the industry to know their rights.

⁷⁵ LGBTQIA+ is an acronym short for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, + other sexuality and gender diverse identities.



Figure 7: “Sex work pride”. Sex workers celebrate the NZPC’s 30 year anniversary in Wellington, 2007. From *Stuff.co.nz*. Photographed by Monique Ford (Manch, 2017). Retrieved from <https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/industries>. Copyright 2018 by Fairfax Media.

Sex work pride appears to be flourishing at a collective level, but some sex workers continue to find their individual embodied pride under siege, proving that emotion is ambivalent and does not operate in a vacuum. For example, although Mere claims not to care, she is reminded of sex work stigma in her everyday experiences: “I don’t care what people say about me working at this job. But yeah you get a lot of judging. Like even when you walk down the road it’s, you know, ‘heeey’ (suggestively). But, yeah”. While pride may circulate through sex work spaces at various levels, it can still be affected by movement of other emotions, such as pain, fear, disgust and guilt. Mere provides another example, this time of the way multiple affects shape her experience of exotic dancing:

Yeah, confidence is alright in front of one person but once it’s another person there, or like, if there’s a few people there, it’s a bit, I

dunno, I start doubting my body. Like, [thinking to myself] “Is it good? Is it this, is it that? Does it look nice?” When it’s just one person or two I can focus on them but, yeah when it’s a few, I can’t.

The “focus” that Mere has with a client involves interest and desire for connection, as well as one-on-one consideration and proximity of bodies (Ahmed, 2004c). However, the moment the client becomes the *group* of clients, Mere becomes alienated, disconnected from her proud self, and her proud identity as a sex worker. The group of male clients outnumber Mere, creating “tension” described by Ahmed (2010b) as “being felt by some bodies, it is attributed as caused by another body, who thus comes to be felt as apart from the group, as getting in the way of its organic enjoyment and solidarity” (p. 67).

Of course, while being a proud sex worker can be difficult to maintain, being a sex worker is not the only subjectivity that women have to draw on in terms of pride. Sport, exercise, and physical leisure also offers space for women sex workers to encounter and interpret various affective experiences. LGBTQIA+ communities appreciate this fact and apply it to their cause, as seen in the advent of sporting events such as the Gay Games, bringing together “sporting bodies, sexuality, and pride” (Waitt, 2005, p. 441). However, sex work groups, it seems, have not taken up sport, exercise, and physical leisure in the same way that LGBTQIA+ groups have. One of the reasons, Tania suggests, is because individuals sex workers may be too entrenched in their livelihood to see any benefits:

I mean I get asked by other businesses if Angels wants to be involved in like, netball, you know, playing socially with other

businesses, but I guess, that's what I like about sex work because its focused on the individual person and how much fitness you want to do and how you look after yourself. But I don't know how the team would feel about it, because it's like "how much are we getting paid for it?" and "are we going to get anything out of it?" (Laughs). That sounds really selfish (Laughs). But it's about you know, money is time and your time is really valuable.

Despite a lack of any organised sport, exercise, or physical leisure operating within sex work, many sex workers expressed pride through exercise and physical leisure *individually*, which in turn, strengthens collective sex work pride. This shone through from women's earliest encounters in sport, through to current participation in exercise and physical leisure activities. Maggie reflects on her earlier swimming achievements from participating in the Special Olympics:

Grace: How did you feel when you were winning? After getting all your medals and stuff?

Maggie: I was shocked and horrified.

Grace: Why?

Maggie: Coz I didn't reckon that I was actually doing that well. To achieve that ... and to win those medals you know, that was just fantastic. Gold, silver, bronze. Yeah.

Grace: Do you have them displayed at home?

Maggie: No. I just keep them hidden away.

Grace: Don't you want to display them?

Maggie: Well I have them up on my Facebook page. So only my close friends can go in there and have a look at my photos.

Maggie's comments are especially interesting in the way she expresses pride in her efforts and proudly displays her awards on her Facebook page, yet mentions that they are hidden from public view. While the motivations for doing so are not entirely made clear, by being selective in who may share in her achievements, Maggie puts limits on her pride that keeps her in line with tacit, valued "Kiwi" qualities of humility and modesty. These values are embodied in our country's own female sports stars (Bruce, 2008, 2009; Cosgrove & Bruce, 2005), notably in swimmer Sophie Pascoe, a Paralympic and Commonwealth Games multi-medallist and Aotearoa's 2011 Halberg Disabled Sportsperson of the Year (Malili, 2018; Smith, 2013). In her biography *Stroke of Fate*, Pascoe is described by a long-time friend as "one of the most modest people I've met" (Lucy Hills, as cited in Smith, 2013), and her high school principal reveals: "When she came back from the world championships in Durban in 2006 Sophie didn't tell us she had won a medal" (Linda Tame, as cited in Smith, 2013). While uncanny, I am not suggesting that the commonalities between Maggie and Pascoe are directly linked, yet nor do I think it is purely a *stroke of luck*. Rather, Maggie's modesty reflects a type of pride that circulates through sporting discourses, empowering women to succeed, and then determining how success should be celebrated (Bruce, 2009).

Rose also demonstrates humility where her pride in her achievement becomes quickly stifled by self-deprecation. She explains how as a teen she was the only player on the softball field that made it

home, but concedes that it must have been because the other team allowed it:

we went to the regional trials and things like that but [from] what I know, I was the only one who got home. They must've been nice to me, truthful, but softer because I managed to be the only one who got home.

While humility is commonplace in Aotearoa – a country that is seen as modest in lifestyle and attitude (Hay, 2002; Holmes, 2007) – the way Rose's pride is so quickly denied perhaps says more about shame's ability to protect one's self. By doing the shaming (to) herself, she thereby beats anyone else to it.

The mutable nature of pride can also be seen in Sabrina when questioned about her range of flexibility – an often celebrated, exciting physical ability. Earlier in the interview Sabrina mentions that, although retired from competitive gymnastics, her body still possesses the appealing talents that go with the sport:

Grace: Can you still do back somies⁷⁶ and stuff?

Sabrina: Yeah, I can. I haven't lost much ... I can still do the splits.

Flexibility was a big part of Sabrina's embodied memory of gymnastics, and the pride she takes in her body's abilities endures: "When I was full on training I could do the splits, I could do over-splits⁷⁷, I could do the splits all ways⁷⁸ and it wouldn't hurt". I knew from my time as a gymnast that

⁷⁶ "Somie" is gymnastics jargon and is a shortened term for somersault.

⁷⁷ "Over-splits" is an overextension of the splits with the angle exceeding 180 degrees.

⁷⁸ "Splits all ways" refers to the three types of splits - front-ways (left and right) and side-ways.

this was an achievement, and Sabrina's evident pride was enough to trigger "ugly feelings" (Ngai, 2009) of irritability, envy and shame in me. I knew I couldn't do those things anymore, and I found myself wondering who might have been the "better" gymnast, perhaps illustrated by my specific line of questioning. These feelings were compounded by a sense of (irrational) injustice at the fact that she willingly gave up gymnastics, while I was forced into retirement by my own defective body (Brown, 1993, 1995; Lobb, 2012). Upon reflection, my affective, "wounded" (Brown, 1993) body exposes my lack or failure, thus revealing a sporting and competitive femininity between us, bringing us together, and simultaneously pushing us apart, in what Andrea Lobb (2012) calls "suspended solidarity":

half way between a joining together in a recognition of being "in the same boat" and an impulse towards dis-identification and repudiation as each party catches in the other a mirroring of her own painful limitation and perception of inferiority. (p. 8)

Interestingly, when asked about how her body reacts in sex working spaces, Sabrina downplays her flexibility:

Grace: Do you use your flexibility in your job?

Sabrina: Yeah.

Grace: Do your clients like that about your body?

Sabrina: Yeah, I kind of have no choice coz my body just...

Grace: [after a pause] Goes that way?

Sabrina: (Laughs) Yeah. It just does what it wants.

In Sabrina's latter comment she relinquishes control of her body to become a mannequin of sorts – adaptable as far as her limbs allow – and

the pride she once exhibited in her flexibility is gone. Sabrina's embodied pride comes only in the context of sport, and crucially, in relation to me, where her flexibility gains validation, approval, and respect. In a sex work context, Sabrina is not able to translate her flexibility into feelings of pride. Even though it is pleasing to clients, it means little to us, as gymnasts.

Summary

Demystifying the perception that sex workers are emotionless vixens, women in this study demonstrate overwhelming affective and emotional awareness. The emotions that were shared with me from love to loathe, and lust to disgust, were enough to stick to me as a woman and a researcher, inspiring feelings of not only empathy, friendship, understanding and respect, but also negative ones that I am less proud of. Speaking with women sex workers about their experiences of sport, exercise, and physical leisure reveals other affects and emotions beyond the usual joy, fun, flow, and pleasure that sport, exercise, and physical leisure is commonly associated with (Hanin, 2000). But more than that, women sex workers' affective and emotional experiences of sport, exercise, and physical leisure are representations of their moving subjectivities.

This chapter has traced the flows of affect and emotion across sport, exercise, and physical leisure spaces, to sex work spaces, and in between. As women sex workers move through these spaces they form attachments with other bodies and places. As judges of what is disgusting to them, women sex workers truly own their disgust as their embodied right. In disgust they pull away from bodies (including their own) that threaten to sully or infect their discursive subjectivities. In shame they feel their

failure to embody such idealised, normative subjectivities. As Ahmed (2004c) urges, “If we reconsider the role of shame in securing the (hetero)normative, then we can see that ... shame works as a narrative of reproduction” (p. 108). Indeed, shame is reproduced throughout social space for women sex workers because of the historically constructed stigma attached to the job. But both shame and disgust do something productive for women sex workers by bringing them into alignment, connecting their bodies, and transforming negative affects and emotions into collective pride. Anchored in identity politics, sex work pride works to “supply” women sex workers with ample pride to mobilise in their everyday negotiations of femininity and social stigma in spaces of sex work and sport, exercise, and physical leisure.

In thinking (and feeling) through affect and emotion, it is possible to understand how power shapes bodies as well as spaces. In struggles over the way their bodies are affectively and emotionally registered in social space, women sex workers may be doubly disadvantaged by sex work stigma and gender constraints, making them feel disgusting and shameful. But the productive and malleable constitutions of affect and emotion mean that women sex workers can transform these negative feelings into pride by becoming aligned with other bodies with whom they (can) relate. “Catching feels” then, becomes an invaluable part of women sex workers’ ongoing embodiment and subjectivity, as they create and express knowledge by moving, being moved, and moving others.

CHAPTER 7

“Sporting Ladies”: Toward New Understandings

Combining a feminist poststructural framework, embodied ethnographic methodologies, and analysis inspired by key social theories, this thesis has created space(s) for women sex workers to share their experiences of sport, exercise and physical leisure. These experiences have provided insights into women sex workers’ embodied practices, feelings, and beliefs, presenting a previously “untapped source of knowledge” (Stanley & Wise, 2002, p. 120) about how women sex workers experience and relate to spaces of sport, exercise, and physical leisure.

The final chapter in this thesis is divided into three parts. I begin with a review of previous chapters and discuss the theoretical and methodological processes used to explore women sex workers’ experiences of sport, exercise, and physical leisure. This is followed by a concise summary of findings. I also reflect on some of the limitations to my analyses. I follow this by reiterating the key findings of this research project in relation to my initial research questions. Finally, I close this thesis by considering the implications for this research and the possibilities for new research agendas.

Summary of Chapters

In Chapter One I introduced the focus of this thesis by way of a personal encounter in order to unpack and illustrate some of the thoughts and feelings that led me to conceptualise the intersections between sex work, sport, exercise, and physical leisure, and women’s bodies. I established a need for more research that includes women sex workers’ lived everyday

experiences, responding to what I perceived to be a lack of inquiry into the possibilities of women sex workers' embodied experiences outside of work contexts. I chose not to engage in feminist debates for or against sex work, but rather focused on finding new ways to conceptualise women sex workers' active bodies by contextualising them within and across spaces of sport, exercise, and physical leisure. In doing so, I have acknowledged the diversity of women's everyday realities, resisting the tendency many researchers have to accept common understandings about what constitutes a sex worker (Nencel, 2017). Herein I argued that sport, exercise, and physical leisure can offer valuable corporeal spaces in which to explore embodied experiences and circulations of power. Specifically, the project explored women sex workers' experiences of sport, exercise and leisure by asking the following research question:

How do women sex workers experience sport, exercise, and physical leisure?

This was supported by the following sub-question:

How are women sex workers' bodies imbued with meaning within and across spaces of sport, exercise, physical leisure and work, and how does this contribute to processes of embodied subjectivity?

From these questions I established some of the key terminologies and their relevance before progressing to a comprehensive review of literature.

In Chapter Two I explored theoretical considerations of women's sporting and sex working bodies in literature. I discussed how studies linking sport with sex work have tended to focus on two key areas: sex work in relation to mega sporting events, and the intersections at sites of

recreational pole and exotic dancing. I argued that while such studies are important, they typically ignore the embodied experiences of sex workers themselves. Studies that do focus on sex workers inevitably locate them as fixed within the sex industry, denying the possibility that they engage in physical, embodied experiences outside of sex work contexts, or that these women move in and out of the industry during their lives alongside changing sporting and physical experiences and changing relationships with their bodies.

By juxtaposing previous literature on women's sporting bodies with literature on women's sex working bodies I uncovered parallels in the way ideals of heteronormative femininity continue to be (re)produced in spaces of sport and sex work, often dominating other embodied differences. This prompted me to theorise about what embodied subjectivity within and outside of work might mean for women sex workers, and whether sport, exercise and physical leisure have anything to do with any such understandings (McGannon & Spence, 2012; Theberge, 1991). Accordingly, in the second half of Chapter Two I focused on major contemporary social theorists Pierre Bourdieu, Michel Foucault, and feminist emotion and affect theorists Elspeth Probyn and Sara Ahmed to consider the application of their theories to contexts of sport and sex work, assessing the value of each for their understandings of power and subjectivity.

In Chapter Three I outlined the methodological framework for this project, drawing on feminist poststructural ways of knowing and the use of embodied, ethnographic methods including participant interviews and observations. I explained how these were central in creating space for women's rich experiences to be shared on their own terms, and in a variety

of places and spaces including physical, symbolic and discursive. In this, I also interrogated my own positionality in relation to these spaces and bodies, to acknowledge my body as a site of knowledge production, and outlined my attempts to engage in my research reflexively and ethically. These methods created a space filled with sensuous, uncontrollable, messy, bodily experiences that required detailed ethical considerations and feminist analysis to identify and interpret women's narratives as illustrative of embodied dispositions, discursive practices, and affects and emotions.

In analysing and writing up such rich material, I engaged the embodied experiences of my participants in dialogue with key theoretical approaches. In the first two empirical chapters – Four and Five – I took inspiration from feminist poststructural researchers' engagement with the concepts of social theorists Bourdieu and Foucault to examine women sex workers' experiences as part of a complex interplay between structuring, discursive lived bodies and social relations. Building upon and extending these two chapters, in Chapter Six I drew upon feminist affect and emotion theories in a bid to move beyond analyses that can too easily reduce experiences to binaries of structure/agency and empowerment/oppression. In so doing, my use of social theory in this thesis could be considered a generative framework (McNay, 2003) in that it encompasses a synthesis of social theories as a foundation for examining the entanglements of bodies and embodied meanings. As I explain below, each theoretical approach had strengths and limitations for revealing women sex workers' embodied experiences across spaces of work and sport, exercise, and physical leisure.

Theoretical Reflections and Empirical Insights

More nuanced analyses of sex work are beginning to recognise women sex workers' everyday lived experiences, but as yet there is no literature that addresses women sex workers' experiences of sport, exercise and physical leisure. This void is where I situate the theoretical contributions of this thesis.

It was in Chapter Four that I found feminist poststructural interpretations of Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field, and capital relevant to theorising women's earliest encounters with sport, exercise, and physical leisure. Adopting a poststructural feminist reading of Bourdieu's theoretical framework, I traced women sex workers' experiences of sport, exercise, and physical leisure from their earliest childhood memories to their most recent, taking note of the way their bodies bent and adapted (to) their surroundings. It became clear throughout Chapter Four that sport, exercise, and physical leisure have a myriad of different meanings to women sex workers, and their bodies are at the centre of this meaning-making process.

From a feminist poststructural perspective, Bourdieu's thinking tools made it possible to unfold and perceive the deeply embodied dispositions that emerge through the interconnectedness between women's bodies and the fields they occupy. Fields of family, education and sport helped shape girls' early understandings of gender, which were often intersected by other deeply embodied dispositions such as race and class. Many childhood experiences and dispositions would appear to have remained embodied in women's habitus later in life. However,

circumstances have changed over time, including women's moving bodies and the fields they occupy. In sex work fields, women's adult bodies are endowed with heterosexual feminine and sexual capital. In this way, women sex workers' everyday field negotiations of the seemingly mundane (Skeggs, 1997), also involve a perpetual shaping of embodied habitus and accumulation, and trading in, and of capital. As women grow older their experiences and interpretations of sport, exercise, and physical leisure, and their embodied subjectivities in relation to these continue to develop and evolve over time (McNay, 1999a).

While Bourdieu's concepts made it possible to locate structured field constraints, the diverse, conflicting and contradictory bodies of women sex workers do not always "fit" into prescribed sporting or heteronormative feminine habitus' or subject positions. Moreover, I often felt that considering women's bodies – especially as girls – from a Bourdieusian perspective encouraged a passive understanding of socialisation (Prout, 1999), with less attention given to girls' and women's agency, or potential to resist the structures of capital within particular fields. Hence, in Chapter Five I engaged Foucauldian concepts of discourse and technologies of domination and self for a more intricate understanding of gendered power and women sex workers' adult bodies.

Moving beyond Bourdieusian understandings of power as capital to consider the ways power operates as a network, Foucault's theory of discourse provided a historically grounded context of sex work where workers actively accept, reject, challenge, promote, reproduce and construct multiple discourses in relation to their moving, working, gendered, (un)healthy bodies. Discourses specific to sex workers are

evident in women's narratives as they continually position themselves through discursive representations of a working body. Three dominant sex work discourses emerged from dialogue with sex workers and observations of the sex work industry, placing women sex workers into discursive subject positions (victim, worker and agent). Women sex workers interact with these discourses in individually unpredictable ways. However, when they constitute subjectivities along discursive boundaries of worker and/or agent, thereby rejecting the victim subject position, women sex workers become authors of sex work discourses, constantly redefining *who* or *what* a sex worker is; to themselves and others.

A number of critical sport scholars have drawn upon Foucault's work to examine sport and exercise as technologies of domination (Markula & Pringle, 2006). While this concept was useful in my study, perhaps more telling were sex workers' practices of technologies of the self. This concept revealed some of the ways that women sex workers engage in practices to construct subjectivities that embody positive sex work discourses. For example, identifying oneself as a *sex worker* is an important distinction that many women acknowledged by not only speaking through the discourse, but also by keeping (or trying to keep) their bodies in a state that they understood to be "healthy" and therefore productive, through exercise. Other women were deliberate in their use of exercise to invest in and produce bodies, femininities, and subjectivities that are capable of earning them more money, status and power within the sex work industry. These findings provide insight into how women negotiate gendered norms as bodies marked by sex work discourses and

how exercise and physical leisure intersects with sex work in shaping women sex workers' embodied subjectivities.

Engaging Foucault's theories in discussions of women sex workers' experiences of sport, exercise, and physical leisure casts new light on the power dynamics and manifestations of marginalisation and stigma that operate on and through women's bodies. This approach also facilitated new understanding of women's agency, including my own. Prior to this research, and at times throughout writing this thesis, I admit that I thought of gender as McNay (1999b) describes it; a "straightforward and one-sided process of inculcation and normalization" (p. 97). But in engaging Foucault's later conceptualisations of power with women's embodied experiences (including my own), I came to adopt a more complex understanding of women's embodied subjectivity as not reducible to binaries of domination and resistance, but as individual, everyday practices of investment and negotiation (Butler, 1989; McNay, 1991). Although some are concerned that Foucault's focus on discourse works to undermine agency, this was not the case in this study. Rather, this chapter revealed how women sex workers demonstrate practices of the self in ways that allow them "to play these games of power with as little domination as possible" (Foucault, 1997, p. 298).

In Chapter Six I extended this understanding by engaging in a conversation with feminist theories of affect and emotion, thus progressing toward an even more comprehensive understanding of women sex workers' experiences and subject formations. Through experiences of disgust, shame and pride, women sex workers continually (re)negotiate their bodies in relation to other bodies including other workers, women, and

clients. Individual experiences of disgust serve as warrants for judging others and can be seen in the body's attempts to sever ties with objects that threaten to contaminate with material and symbolic 'dirt' and/or abnormality. Women sex workers used disgust counteractively to deflect, distance and disinfect themselves in constructing subjectivities that challenge common misconceptions about sex workers. Closely related, the historically embedded, yet personally felt experiences of shame expressed an awareness of an often axiomatic outcome of being a woman, a sex worker, or both. For example, some women felt shame when their bodies were criticised by male clients, thus highlighting masculine domination over non-normative femininities *and* the imbalance of power between stigmatised sex worker and customer.

Yet shame also provides a foundation for feelings of pride to transpire, in some cases reversing and reframing shameful experiences as catalysts. In this way, feelings of pride, or at the very least "taking pride in one's shame" (Ahmed, 2006, p. 175), offers women sex workers collective belonging, strategies for maximising other positive affects, and possibilities for gaining further social, economic and other tangible benefits. As their bodies move in and between spaces of work, sport, exercise, and physical leisure, women sex workers frequently rely on the "sociality" (Ahmed, 2004c) of their affective attachments for embodied knowing and subsequent group identification; important makings of their (inter)subjectivities.

I consider Chapter Six a crucial layer of critical feminist analysis in addition to the preceding (male)stream theories of Bourdieu and Foucault. But more than that, this chapter illuminated the complex, lived co-

constitutions of subjectivities and power dynamics through the very medium of women's relational – and indeed, *relatable* – bodies (Pedwell & Whitehead, 2012). Subsequently, theories of affect and emotion proved to be particularly poignant for understanding women sex workers, who can be portrayed in mainstream media and public discourse as detached and unfeeling, as their affective narratives suggest otherwise.

Throughout this project, I found feminist theories of affect and emotion effective in addressing my own tendency to revert analyses back to oversimplified explanations, or what Probyn (2000) might call “the twinned problematics of discipline or transgression” (p. 13). Indeed, the flows of affects and emotions are multi-layered and complex, felt and experienced in countless ways. Bodies within and across spaces affect other bodies in ways that cannot be anticipated, measured or neatly categorised, as Ahmed (2004c) suggests the, “capacity for wonder is the space of opening up to the surprise of each combination; each body, which turns this way or that, impresses upon others, affecting what they can do” (p. 183).

Despite such benefits, I think it is important to also note the limits of invoking an affective approach to feminist research. In particular, a recognition is necessary that, while affect and emotion have tremendous capacity for creating positive effects and ripples (belonging, political accountability, social change), circulations of affect and emotion are just as likely to reinforce feelings of and desires for heteronormativity. Thus, theories of affect and emotion should not be framed as a cursory “solution” to complex social issues simply via personal affective relations, but rather as embedded in context, thereby acknowledging the intertwinements of

both the affective and the structural (Pedwell & Whitehead, 2012). As demonstrated in this thesis, combining feminist affect and emotion theories with other relevant social theories is a practical way to do this (Ahmed, 2010b).

Methodological Reflections

The materiality of women's embodied differences and similarities is woven throughout this thesis as a part of a feminist poststructural inquiry into women's experiences *across* categories (Yuval-Davis, 2006), considering the spaces where multiple identities are performed rather than on differences themselves (Davis, 2008; Staunæs, 2003). I began this research with visions of creating space for women, marked by difference, to relate and share in their common experiences, thereby contributing to broader understandings of more diverse groups of "women's" experiences of sport, exercise and physical leisure. However, women sex workers have declared and continue to appropriate their many differences – to men, and to other women – prompting some insight into the complex and subtle ways women embody multiple subject positions that allow them to identify with some, and not "others". This is exemplified through an analysis of my own body in relation to my participants. For instance, I shared many of my participants' experiences of gender and sport, exercise, and physical leisure. Nonetheless, I am not a sex worker, and thus am not afforded (real, symbolic, or discursive) membership to any collective of sex workers.

However, difference has also predicated knowledge (Grosz, 1990). Acknowledging differences between women, including their occupations, has enabled an intersectional and nuanced understanding of how women

sex workers can identify and form attachments in specific spatial and temporal moments, while simultaneously embracing multiple other embodied subjectivities in the course of their everyday lives (Valentine, 2007). To this extent, this thesis has shifted conversations about sex workers away from their involvement in the industry by asking questions about how they relate to different bodies and spaces, and exploring the many things a woman sex worker can *do* within and across spaces of sport, leisure and work.

Employing a methodology that integrated principles of feminist ethics and tikanga Māori was instrumental to the development of this research, and facilitated an understanding of women's bodies that would not have been possible without a reflexive frame of thinking in relation to my own body. Understanding embodied ways of knowing and embodied differences enabled me to keep in mind – throughout the entire research process – that my body, beliefs, and feelings are grounded in specific structures, histories, discourses and experiences, just like those of my participants (Ellingson, 2006). In recognising these constructs I subjectively drew on aspects of my selfhood including my culture, feminist ethics, and embodied experiences of sport, exercise and physical leisure in encouraging women sex workers to share (in) the actualities of their everyday lives.

Ethnographic methods in this study were crucial in accessing the spaces of women sex workers' everyday lives. Although interviewing proved a useful qualitative technique in this study, women sex workers' lived, everyday experiences cannot be captured by relying solely on interview research. Further research might benefit from employing a

variety of other embodied and multi-sensory participatory methods and community based inquiries that continue to foreground the voices and bodies of sex workers, and include and build relationships with organisations, community groups and individuals. These might include autoethnographies (Ellis, 2004; Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2010; Spry, 2001), focus groups (O'Neill & Campbell, 2013; Wilkinson, 1998, 1999), participant diaries (Hyers, Swim, & Mallett, 2006), visual methods such as photovoice (Cheng, 2017; Phoenix, 2010), and observations and “go-alongs” (Kusenbach, 2003) outside of sex work spaces.

Key Research Findings

Engaging Bourdieu, Foucault, and affect and emotion theories, using a feminist poststructural lens, this thesis illuminates women sex workers' experiences of sport, exercise and physical leisure as altogether complex, contradictory and multilayered. Their bodies are diverse and heterogeneous, marked by overlaps and intersections of experience, gender, age, ability, race, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality, class, discourses, affects, emotions, and space.

Women sex workers' embodied experiences and subjectivities are also tied to their livelihood. Being a sex worker constitutes aspects of selfhood involving default membership to a collective, and a discursive, ascribed identity, whether embraced or not. The ways women sex workers embody these similarities and differences are played out in their everyday work, exercise, and physical leisure practices, as they participate in shaping their bodies and the spaces they occupy.

Once euphemistically dubbed “sporting ladies”, women sex workers today assume this position in vastly different ways. Women sex workers experience sport, exercise, and physical leisure individually through experienced, intersectional, affective bodies, in relation to other bodies, contexts, moments, and spatially and historically defined discourses. This speaks to my primary research question of how women sex workers experience sport, exercise, and physical leisure, and goes some ways to establishing a lived, everyday embodied conceptualisation of women sex workers that does not define their bodies solely by their occupation and places of work.

However, their bodies are often defined in other ways. As they move in, through and between these corporeal, gendered environments, women sex workers highlight enduring, yet mutable, elusive discursive boundaries of white, middle class heteronormative femininity and sex work stigma. In doing so, their embodied experiences speak to my research sub-question, in particular the point that asked “How are women sex workers’ bodies imbued with meaning within and across gendered spaces of sport and work?”

Through these spaces, women sex workers’ bodies become imbued with meanings that are constructed upon problematic binaries of good/bad, masculine/feminine, white/black/brown, clean/dirty, healthy/diseased, skinny/fat and agent/victim. These processes begin from an early age in spaces of family, school, and sport, often with lasting embodied effects. For example, many women sex workers made references to their body weight as a negative feature of their embodiment,

reinforced and inscribed by comments from classmates while at school, clients while at work, or seeing heteronormative bodies at the gym.

Pressures to conform to gendered discourses of heteronormative femininity, if not met, can render women's bodies as different or deviant in terms of skin colour, body type and size, sexuality, ability and age, as Susan J. Hekman (1998) points out: "although bodies are cultural texts, some texts are more important than others and the hegemonic texts that sculpt female bodies cause pain and suffering for 'real', 'material' women" (p. 69). In spaces of sport, exercise, and physical leisure, the effects of narrow discourses of femininity can be experienced as exclusion, leading girls and women to disengage from participation.

In addition, as women move in spaces of sex work, their bodies are gendered, sexualised, and stigmatised. Discourses are continually marked on the bodies of women sex workers, with stigmatisations including "victim", "slut", "drug addict", "sexually abused", and "drop-out". In Tania's words, sex workers are often regarded as "the lowest scum of society". These and other discourses are deeply felt by women sex workers, further inscribing and cementing meanings of gender and sexuality onto their bodies in spaces of sex work, which can also, at times, affect their everyday experiences of sport, exercise, and physical leisure.

Importantly, however, women sex workers are not passive in these processes. For some of the participants in this study, embodying normative dispositions, being "imbued" with discourse, or feeling the affects of representational systems, are not necessarily oppressive experiences. On the contrary, women sex workers demonstrate differing understandings and practices of agency.

In the case of a heteronormative femininity, some women sex workers actively embrace such discourses by capitalising on their bodies to their full advantage. Some women are able to transform the order itself or offer new alternatives. Some undermine heteronormative femininities, while others appear unperturbed or impervious to any discursive effects. Women sex workers' experiences of heteronormative femininity are thus negotiated with multiple shifting intersections and interpretations.

Aware of the explicit emphasis on embodied femininity that both sport, exercise, and physical leisure and sex work are known for, historically and today, this was a finding that took me somewhat by surprise. Upon closer reflection, it occurred to me that it was my own experience of heteronormative femininity that had led me to believe that other women felt the same pressures that I do. Coming to this rather personal and confronting conclusion, or "thinking the social through myself" (Probyn, 1993, p. 3) allowed me to truly let go of my propensity to universalise gender in order to better understand women's experiences.

So while body dissatisfaction among women sex workers is congruent with wider discourses of heteronormative femininity (Budgeon, 2015; Frost, 2005), and most, if not all, of the women in this study engage in some form of daily beauty practice, these cannot signify docility or blind acquiescence to oppressive gendered and sexual scripts. Women sex workers are active in constituting themselves within and across the fraught spaces they occupy, oftentimes destabilising binaries that at other times they are complicit in reproducing. They embody, resist, exploit, redefine, create, and deploy femininities that are mercurial. They exercise agency by electing to appropriate certain gendered practices and embodiments, while

leaving others in the box. Simply put, femininities are never created in a vacuum, even those narrowly defined by boundaries of heteronormativity.

While femininities are diverse, women sex workers' experiences of sex work stigma were consistently negative. However, women sex workers have recognised the ways they are stigmatised and demonstrated their abilities in destabilising the victim discourse by drawing on resources such as collective pride to effectively constitute alternative subject positions. Indeed, women sex workers negotiate their subjectivities in ways that are non-linear, through temporal moments of negotiation, mediation, resistance and articulation (Budgeon, 2015; Gill, 2008; Markula, 2003; Thorpe, 2008). Engaging *multiple* embodied, discursive, and affective femininities, women sex workers therefore self-conceptualise and construct subjectivities that work to disrupt enduring stigmatisations of the sex worker on the "wrong" side of binaries such as good/bad, agent/victim, and healthy/diseased. In addition, women sex workers' embodied subjectivities trouble further normative dualisms of masculine/feminine, skinny/fat, white/black/brown, active/passive, and work/leisure through practices that can enable them to simultaneously embody elements of both, reject both, and/or offer completely new alternatives. In this way, women sex workers also undermine the paradoxical binary opposition of conformity/transgression (Hines, 2006; Yekani, Michaelis, & Dietze, 2010).

The deeply embodied and contextual narratives shared by women sex workers have revealed the complex interplays between structural and agentic embodied experiences, and provide compelling evidence of how they think, act, and feel (about) their moving bodies. While women sex

workers think, feel, and act through their moving bodies in individual ways, it is clear that in doing so, they also collectively dispel historical notions of women as objects; sex workers as objects; and women sex workers as objects. In other words, in thinking, feeling, and acting through their bodies, women sex workers become knowing subjects, and therefore cannot be conceived of as merely objects of male desire (Budgeon, 2015; Gill, 2008). Such arguments may be challenging for those who consider sex work as inherently objectifying, but I hope by now this thesis has shown that both sex work and femininity are ambiguous and contradictory.

Sport, exercise, and physical leisure has impacted and continues to impact each of the women sex workers in this study in different ways through fields and structures, discourses, practices, feelings, and experiences. It has been, and continues to be, a place of sanctuary, refuge, discipline, connection, inclusion and exclusion. It is an affective and emotional outlet, a political tool, a privilege, and a right. It evokes feelings of disgust, shame, pride, pleasure, love, hate, rage, and pain. It invites anyone with a body to participate, but is often predicated on values of competition and judgement. Women sex workers' experiences of sport, exercise, and physical leisure are mapped out both similarly and differently in the lives of individual women, but collectively there is an understanding of the potential roles that sport, exercise, and physical leisure can have in constructing one's subjectivity. This addresses my research sub question by highlighting specifically the profound ways in which sport, exercise and physical leisure contribute to processes of embodied subjectivity. For example, sport, exercise, and physical leisure for many women sex workers facilitate relational attachments, and the

ability to construct the self in relation to other bodies including family, friends, and even pets (Grosz, 1994). For others, sport, exercise, and physical leisure offer space and the means to exercise (self)discipline, or express (self)branding, entrepreneurship and agency in order to stand out in a market of “sexy” bodies (Genz, 2015). In this way, sport, exercise, and physical leisure afford women sex workers social and cultural resources that shape multiple bodies, subjectivities and lives amidst complex power relations.

Sex work and sport, exercise, and physical leisure offer spaces of power that mutually constitute and reinforce dominant discourses that press upon bodies in various ways. Women who move in, through and between the boundaries of these fraught spaces do so with an embodied sense of knowing. Gained through experience in one field, this knowledge can also directly and indirectly inform women’s understandings of their bodies in other fields. As this thesis reveals, this valuable knowledge includes an awareness of one’s embodied potential in terms of: capital relative to fields; problematising, speaking and acting through and against discourses; and, mobilising affective and emotional intensities.

Practical and Policy Implications

As women sex workers navigate their bodies in and through spaces of sex work, sport, exercise and physical leisure, their ability to negotiate these environments is facilitated by the wide range of support structures, and in particular the inclusive ethos of the NZPC. Building upon the findings from this thesis, it might be suggested that a valuable extension on the steady proliferation of “collective” pride that the NZPC circulates could

include constructing more encouraging physical and digital spaces for women sex workers to connect with each other.

The roles that sport, exercise, and physical leisure play in shaping women sex workers' bodies and subjectivities have potentially promising implications for women sex workers who may be feeling disconnected from self and/or others, and/or may be seeking to engage in positive physical experiences outside of work. Spaces that do not overemphasise competitiveness or limited notions of heteronormative femininity might also be a place for sex workers to “work out” conflicting gender constraints, engage in self-care, and share common experiences and interests, as seen in less traditional activities such as women's boxing (Cole & Ullrich-French, 2017; McCaughy, 1997, 1998; van Ingen, 2011a, 2011b), Crossfit (Podmore & Ogle, 2018; Prewitt-White, Connolly, Feito, Bladek, Forsythe, Hamel, & McChesney, 2018), and outdoor/adventure recreation and therapies (see Gray & Mitten, 2018).

The women in this study have demonstrated a multitude of individual benefits that sport, exercise and leisure offers, but the solidarity that a *team* environment can foster is a theme that is largely missing from women sex workers' adult accounts of sport and exercise. Introducing team-based physical activities aimed at engaging women sex workers might mimic some queer and lesbian sports teams and exercise groups that have been highly successful in increasing the visibility of, and sociability within, marginalised genders and sexualities (Caudwell, 2007a; Elling, De Knop, & Knoppers, 2003; Lenskyj, 1994b; van Ingen, 2004).

In addition to more physical spaces for sex workers to participate safely and freely in sporting and physical activity opportunities, I believe

that construction of digital spaces (through social media in particular) with and for sex workers could facilitate the logistics of sport, exercise and physical leisure activities, while also providing a platform for information sharing, education and community (Jackson, 2018). As Kim Toffoletti, Jessica Francombe-Webb, and Holly Thorpe (2018) argue in the introduction to the edited collection, *New Sporting Femininities*:

the interactive and accessible features of social media offer radical potential to expand notions of gendered embodiment, pointing towards the kinds of nuanced critiques required to make sense of the representation and production of diverse gendered sporting subjectivities under postfeminist conditions. (p. 11)

While I realise there are online communities existing in sex working circles, other digital spaces could be focused less on work life, instead engaging embodied sport, exercise and physical leisure pursuits and celebration of women's physical capacities, forces, and intensities outside of sex work spaces. The creation of new sporting spaces for and with sex workers could bring bodies together, enabling vital circulations of individual and collective sex work pride, as well as other important, positive affects (Ahmed, 2004a; Pavlidis & Fullagar, 2013a), and provide women sex workers space to embrace their embodied spatial potentialities, while occupying more public space at the political level (Valentine, 2013; Young, 1980).

This is not about building cross-bridges between sex workers and sport, exercise and physical leisure, because as this thesis has shown, they already exist. Rather, it is about further acknowledging sex workers as a

part of the landscape of sport, exercise and physical leisure, and using such spaces to include, practice and celebrate diverse and shifting subject positions in sex work and sport. Of course, any such initiatives should acknowledge the potential constraints for sex workers' participation in such initiatives, as Tania has stated, "money is time and your time is really valuable".

Future Directions and Final Reflections

My hope is that this thesis offers an important starting point for other researchers to consider the spaces of sex workers' everyday experiences, including those of sport, exercise and physical leisure. Future studies of sport and sex work would do well to move beyond studying the effects of mega-events and sport tourism on the sex trade, and take seriously the embodied experiences of sex workers and their own interactions with sport for both work and leisure. Such projects have the potential to help us move a little further along the road toward destabilising the boundaries of masculinity/femininity, as well as the implicit work/leisure binary that constitutes the contemporary "work/life balance" (of power) (Caproni, 1997; McDowell, 2004; Roderick, 2006).

The complex relationship between the sex industry and neoliberalism is a theme that has been broached throughout this thesis. Sex work and neoliberalism are not intrinsically linked, nor are either universal, but the embodiment of the neoliberal values of individualism and entrepreneurship did emerge in my empirical analysis, and warrant more careful consideration. In particular, the contested body of the woman sex worker in neoliberal social conditions raises questions about

its relationship to mainstream postfeminist discourses that may ostensibly provide viable rationalisations for doing everyday gender, but bring with them new issues of depoliticised, commodified, entrepreneurial heteronormative femininity and “hyperindividualism” (Hirschmann, 2010, p. 274). While popular constructions of postfeminism celebrate women’s differences, they typically fail to offer critical perspectives on the ways gender and power structure bodies, spaces, and subjectivities.

Building on established feminist critiques (see Gill & Scharff, 2013; McRobbie, 2007; Ringrose & Renold, 2016; Toffoletti et al., 2018), more research that critically engages the shifting intersections of postfeminism, neoliberalism, and late capitalism as they work on and through spaces and bodies of sex work and sport is needed to better understand embodied sex work femininities and subjectivities. Here I see promise in a critical dialogue between feminist theory and queer theory as an approach to offer insights into women sex workers’ embodied experiences in postfeminist, neoliberal spaces. As I have alluded to throughout this thesis, sex workers already engage in “queerness” by challenging (hetero)norms and embodying contradictions in gender, sexuality and subjectivity. Further research is needed to explore how neoliberal and postfeminist discourses enable and constrain the ways women understand, experience and contest how meaning is made of their own and others bodies within and across sporting and working spaces.

I am wary of the fact that, while this research has sought to problematise gender, in some ways it has perhaps (unintentionally) reinforced essentialised understandings of gender (Laing, Pilcher, & Smith, 2015). A queer focus, going beyond the “heterosexual gender matrix”

(Butler, 1990, p. 35), might explore queerness in the context of neoliberal conditions and its capacity as a resistive response to postfeminist sensibilities found in sex work and sporting spaces. “Queering” sex work and sport, exercise, and physical leisure together as interrelated could also offer opportunities for a more comprehensive and inclusive analysis of the diverse bodies that move in and through these spaces (Caudwell, 2007a; Fitzgerald et al., 2018).

I would also advocate here for further research that integrates decolonised understandings of Māori and Pacific Island bodies in Aotearoa; other cultures including hybridities and migrant workers; (capitalist) class and worker relations; and more situated geographies of sport, exercise, physical leisure and sex work spaces, to name a few. In short, there is still much to do in this area, and I look forward to further research that considers, critiques, and queers bodies and spaces of sex work, and sport, exercise, and physical leisure.

In sum, this thesis contributes to, and brings together the growing international and interdisciplinary literature on studies of sex work, sport, exercise and physical leisure, and women’s bodies. It is applicable to a range of global audiences and academic circles, informing theoretical and methodological conceptualisations of doing research with and for women, and women who are sex workers. Through a feminist poststructural lens, I paid close attention to the minutiae of women’s lives, foregrounding experiences of gender and other embodied differences in dialogue with carefully selected social theories that highlight the messy circulations of power through bodies and spaces. Such complexities illustrate the importance of developing research with and for sex workers in ways that

continue to move beyond binary frameworks including masculinity/femininity, work/leisure, and conformity/transgression, which as women sex workers in this study have shown, do not represent their everyday lives and subjectivities.

Through this research, I have provided space for women sex workers to share their embodied experiences of sport, exercise and physical leisure, generating important discussions about how their bodies are understood by themselves and others. This research encourages new ways of thinking about women sex workers in, and crucially *outside*, of sex work. I encourage researchers to continue to ask different questions about the embodied experiences and intersections of sex workers' multiple subjectivities, and to create more spaces for more embodied ways of knowing. Feminist projects that seek to ask new questions and search for ethical and creative approaches to including the voices of marginalised groups of women ultimately allow for broader understandings of the diversity and complexities within the embodied realities of their everyday lives.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Email Correspondance with NZPC National Coordinator

Dame Catherine Healy



Grace O'Leary <gracecatherineoleary@gmail.com>

ATTN Catherine Healy: University of Waikato Research on Women in the Sex Industry

Grace O'Leary <gracecatherineoleary@gmail.com>

Wed, Sep 4, 2013 at 1:48 PM

Kia ora Catherine,

My name is Grace O'Leary and I'm a doctoral candidate at the University of Waikato.

My research thesis focuses on New Zealand women in the sex industry and their experiences of sport. This is an area that has not been addressed in the past and I am aiming to create space for women in the sex industry to share their experiences of sport and physical activity as past and/or current participants, supporters, fans, and/or service operators to sport tourists and/or athletes. I am hoping to understand the relationship between sport and women's associations with their bodies, identities, and their hauora.

I was wondering if you were available to help me as I refine the focus of this project. Your thoughts on the project would be invaluable in order to ensure my research is conducted in an open, honest, safe and respectful way. The aim of this project is to create space for the voices and lived experiences of women in the sex industry. These are voices that are often overlooked when it comes to discussions about women's health and physical activity, and my research seeks to provide new space for their stories. Any guidance would be hugely appreciated at to how best to approach this topic and potential participants.

I would love the opportunity to meet with you to discuss further. Please email me at your convenience or feel free to call me on 027 310 8399.

For further inquiries you can also contact my supervisors Prof Lynda Johnson on
and/or Dr Holly Thorpe on

Thank you for your time, I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

Grace O'Leary

NZPC

Reply-To: NZPC

To: Grace O'Leary <gracecatherineoleary@gmail.com>

Wed, Sep 4, 2013 at 4:44 PM

Kia ora Grace

I would love to meet and talk about the ideas you have for the research project. We could Skype and meet later. Would this be useful?

best regards

Catherine Healy

National Co-ordinator

New Zealand Prostitutes Collective

Appendix 2: Recruitment Posters

Women Needed



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Research project

Did you play sports as a kid?
Do you enjoy working out?
Or maybe you hate sport and exercise altogether?
I want to talk to YOU!

I'm researching sex workers all across Aotearoa and their experiences of sport/exercise/physical leisure, and their thoughts and feelings about their active (or not!) bodies

Why? To gain a newer perspective on sport in Aotearoa by chatting to women whose point of view is yet to be widely acknowledged

Who? Women aged 18+ who have previously or currently work in the sex industry

What? An **INTERVIEW** – a 20–30 minute chat
or an **OBSERVATION** – me coming to your sporting/leisure activity to observe things like where, with who, & how you like to be active
or do **BOTH!**

Where? Your choice – your work, your gym, NZPC, cafe

When? Your choice

All information you provide is completely *confidential*

For more info or
to sign up
contact:

Grace O'Leary
PhD Researcher
University of Waikato
<undisclosed email>
<undisclosed phone>



Women Needed



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Research Project

Are you currently or have previously worked in the sex industry?

I'd love to talk to you about your

sport/exercise/physical leisure experiences

since you were a child, teenager, and today.

Maybe you:

- Go to the gym or like getting out walking or running
- Are part of a sports team
- Support your family members playing sport
- Are a sports fan
- Have strong memories of sport and P.E. at school
- Hate exercise altogether!

I would love to hear your experiences to get a better picture of how women sex workers understand sport, exercise, and physical leisure in Aotearoa.

What's involved?

- a 30-40 minute informal interview;
- an observation of you doing your thing in your sporting/leisure activity,
- Or both!

All information you provide is *completely confidential*

For more information or to sign up please contact:

Grace O'Leary
PhD Candidate

University of Waikato
<undisclosed email>
<undisclosed phone>

OR

Dr Holly Thorpe
PhD Supervisor
University of Waikato
<undisclosed email>
<undisclosed phone>

Appendix 3: Christchurch Post-Quake Online Media Headlines

“Christchurch’s red light district moves to suburbs”

(Newshub, Rowe, 2011a)

“Christchurch prostitutes forced to relocate”

(Newshub, Rowe, 2011b)

“Homeowners enraged as sex ‘skanks’ move in”

(The New Zealand Herald, Leask, 2011)

“Couple’s home now in red-light district”

(The Press, Gates, 2011)

“Sex and the suburbs - Police and prostitution in Christchurch”

(Police News, Stringer, 2012)

“‘We don’t want them here’ - Residents appeal for sex workers in Christchurch suburb to be moved on”

(TVNZ, Pugh, 2017)

“Pressure builds for Christchurch City Council to ban sex workers from residential areas”

(The Press, Law, 2017)

Appendix 4: Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form

Participant Information Sheet



Let's Get Physical: Sport and Leisure Experiences of Women in the Sex Industry

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. Your participation is greatly appreciated if you decide to take part, however if you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you of any kind and I thank you for considering.

Purpose

This research is conducted as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree at the University of Waikato. The aim of this project is to explore women's past and present sporting experiences as participants, fans, facilitators of family participation, and/or interactions with athletes or sports fans. In particular I am interested in the relationship between body perception, sport involvement, and identity.

What will participants be involved in?

Interviews: Should you agree to take part, you will be asked to participate in an informal interview lasting around 40 minutes at a public location decided upon by you. Your responses will be recorded during this time for analysis. Questions will be focused around involvement in sport and past and current experiences; and ideas around treatment and wellbeing of the body.

Observations: You may also be asked to participate in one or more observations. This involves me attending sporting or leisure based physical activities that you would normally participate in. Examples could include visits to the gym, sports practices, walks through the park, yoga classes – whatever it is you are a part of. I will simply observe you from a distance and make notes on your interactions with people and your environment.

Confidentiality

Only myself and my supervisors will have access to the information gathered from you. Any aspects that could identify you in the final report will be eliminated, for example your real name will not be used and every effort will be made to disguise your identity. Afterwards, all documents and recordings that connect you to the study will be destroyed. All of the information (including audio-recordings, signed consent forms, transcripts, and any other correspondence) will be stored at all times in a locked cabinet in my home. Any information contained on computer databases will be accessible by password only and this password is changed regularly. Transcriptions of the recordings and a copy of the paper will be kept for 5 years in secure storage before being destroyed.

Use of Information

The information gathered throughout the research process will be used to write my doctoral thesis. It is likely that this information will also be used in conference presentations, journal publications and media releases. An electronic copy of the final thesis will become widely available through the University of Waikato Research Commons at <http://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/>

Participant Information Sheet



Your time

Unfortunately due to financial restrictions I am unable to offer you money or koha for your valuable time. Your involvement is therefore greatly appreciated and will contribute to greater understandings about the health and physical activity needs and wants of women in the sex industry.

Declaration to participants

If you take part in the study, you have the right to:

- Refuse to answer any question, and to withdraw from the study up to one month after giving consent;
- Ask any further questions about the study that occurs to you during your participation;
- Read and revise transcripts from your interview
- Be given access to a summary of findings from the study when it is concluded.

If you have any questions or concerns about the project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:

Researcher: Grace O'Leary

University of Waikato Doctoral Candidate

Email:

Phone

Chief Supervisor: Dr. Holly Thorpe

University of Waikato Sport & Leisure Studies Senior Lecturer

Faculty of Education

Email:

Phone:

Participant Consent Form



Let's Get Physical: Sport and Leisure Experiences of Women in the Sex Industry

I have read the **Participant Information Sheet** for this study and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions about the study have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that:

- My participation is entirely my decision;
- I will not be paid or offered any other reward for participation;
- I am free to withdraw from the study at anytime and withdraw my data up until data analysis commences on Oct 1, 2014
- I will not be identified in any publication of the research findings however 100% full anonymity cannot be guaranteed;
- All information collected will only be viewed by the researcher and her supervisors, and remain strictly confidential;
- I can withdraw any information I have provided up until one month after participation has commenced;
- Personal identifying data (audio-tapes, field-notes) will be destroyed at the end of the project. Any other raw data will be retained in secure storage for five years, after which it will be destroyed.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the **Participant Information Sheet**.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Additional Consent as Required

Research activities agreed to (please tick):

	Yes	No
I agree to participate in an interview with my responses being tape recorded	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to participate in observation(s) with my activities being recorded	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix 5: Business/Organisation Information Sheet and Consent Form

Information Sheet for Businesses and Organisations



Let's Get Physical: Sport and Leisure Experiences of Women Sex Workers in Aotearoa

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to be involved. Your input is greatly appreciated if you decide to be involved, however if you decide not to be involved there will be no disadvantage to you of any kind and I thank you for considering.

Purpose

This research is conducted as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree at the University of Waikato. The aim of this project is to explore women's past and present sporting experiences as participants, fans, facilitators of family participation, and/or interactions with athletes or sports fans. In particular I am interested in the relationship between body perception, sport involvement, and identity.

What will participants be involved in?

Interviews: Participants will be invited to take part in an informal interview lasting around 40 minutes at a place of their choosing (e.g. workplace, café, park, NZPC centre). All responses will be recorded during this time for analysis. Questions will be focused around past and current experiences in sport; and wellbeing and treatment of the body.

Observations: This involves me attending sporting or leisure based physical activities that the participant would normally partake in. Examples could include visits to the gym, sports practices, walks through the park, yoga classes. I will simply observe from a distance and make notes on the participant's interactions with people and environment.

Researcher Presence and Activities

My experiences within your organisation have the potential to inform my study greatly. I therefore request your consent to make unobtrusive, informal observations while on site that can be used as part of this research, and develop connections which could lead to further observations or interviews. In such instances, all involved persons and organisations remain completely anonymous and unidentifiable in the final report.

Use of Information

The information gathered throughout the research process will be used to write my doctoral thesis. It is likely that this information will also be used in conference presentations, journal publications and media releases. An electronic copy of the final thesis will become widely available through the University of Waikato Research Commons at <http://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/>

Confidentiality

Only myself and my supervisors will have access to the information gathered. Any aspects that could identify participants, businesses, and organisations in the final report will be eliminated, for example real names will not be used and every effort will be made to disguise identities. Afterwards, all documents and recordings that connect you and your organisation to the study will be destroyed. All of the information will be stored at all times in a locked cabinet in my home. Any information contained on computer databases will be accessible by password only and this password is changed regularly. Transcriptions of the recordings and a copy of the paper will be kept for 5 years in secure storage before being destroyed.

If you have any questions or concerns about the project please contact:

Researcher: Grace O'Leary
University of Waikato Doctoral Candidate
Email: gracecatherineoleary@gmail.com
Phone: xxx xxx

Research Supervisor: Dr. Holly Thorpe
University of Waikato Senior Lecturer
Faculty of Education
Email: xxx xxx

Consent Form for Businesses and Organisations

Let's Get Physical: Sport and Leisure Experiences of Women Sex Workers in Aotearoa

I have read the **Business and Organisation Information Sheet** for this study and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions about the study have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand I may ask further questions at any time. I support Grace O'Leary's project under the conditions below:

1. Participation is entirely voluntary and based on informed consent
2. Participants, businesses and organisations will not be identified in any publication of the research findings without consent
3. All information collected will only be viewed by the researcher and her supervisors, and remain strictly confidential
4. Personal identifying data will be destroyed at the end of the project. Any other raw data will be retained in secure storage for five years, after which it will be destroyed.
5. I am free to withdraw the business/organisations' input to the study up to one month after giving consent without giving a reason

Additional Consent for Researcher Activities

I consent that this business/organisation will allow Grace O'Leary to: (please tick)

	Yes	No
Carry out unobtrusive observations within the business/organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carry out interviews with consenting participants within the business/organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signed: _____ Name: _____

Business/Organisation: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 6: Interview Schedule

Interviewer Questions

Basic Details

Age	Gender	Race/ Ethnicity	Occupation	Experience in the sex industry
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Sport & Leisure

1. What is your **first memory** of sport or physical activity or playing games? (*Usually before school*)
2. Did you participate in any sports or physical activity **at school**?
Prompts: Motivations, barriers, likes, dislikes, associated people, peak flow, fitness, intensity, pleasure, pain, frequency, ability
3. When did you stop participating in (a particular sport)? Why did you stop? How do you feel about this now?
4. What was your body like back then? What was ‘good’ and/or ‘bad’ about your body? How did sporting participation make you feel about your body?
5. Do you have the same level of participation today as you did back then? Why? / Why not?
6. What activities do you participate in **now**? (*Prompts: Individual/team, female/mixed, competitive/social, motivations, barriers, likes, dislikes, associated people, feelings, flow, fitness, intensity, pleasure, pain, frequency*)
7. How do you feel after a **good session** of sport/physical activity? (*cues - tired, weak, happy, relaxed, healthy, energetic, calm, motivated, confident, sexy, strong, pleasure, pain, proud*)
8. What about a **bad session/lost game**? Have you had one? (*frustrated, disappointed, angry, sad, stupid, numb, weak, tired, shame*)
9. Do you or have you ever worked out / trained / played so hard that you’re in pain? What’s that like? Do you have a “**happy place**” that you go to? Or do you grin and bear it?
10. Do the people you participate with know about your occupation? If so, how did they respond? If not, how do you think they might respond? Do you feel you have to hide your occupation?

11. Do you ever come into contact with your **clients** in sport/leisure settings? How does this make you feel? Do you ever do sport/leisure with work colleagues?
12. Do you feel comfortable in sport and physical activity settings? Are there sporting and physical activity spaces that are more welcoming and supportive than others?
13. How does [your sport/activity] make you feel about your body? (Are you confident in your **abilities**?) Does this influence how you feel about your body at work?
14. Have you ever wanted to try something else / a certain sport or activity?
15. Are any of your immediate **family** members involved in sports (children, sisters, brothers etc)? Do you support their participation in any way?
16. Have you come into contact with any **clients** through sporting events (*e.g., the Rugby World Cup, etc*)? How do these interactions make you feel about sport? If not, have you heard of any of your colleagues who have had good/bad experiences related to sporting events (*e.g., athletes themselves, coaches, fans, sports tourists*)?
17. Do you follow any sports on TV / paper etc? Why/Why not? (*Cues - Olympics, AB's, Warriors, Lydia Ko*).

Sex Work

18. How important is your body to your work? Does it do everything you want it to? How do you feel in front of your clients?
19. Do you enjoy your work? Why / Why not? Which parts of it do you enjoy? Not enjoy?
20. Where do you prefer to work? Why? What's it like? (*Warm, quiet, mirrors, lighting*)
21. Is your body well suited for your occupation? Has your body changed since you began sex work?
22. Do you have any body modification/enhancement practices (*e.g. tanning, make-up, **exercise**, waxing*)? How does this make you feel about your body? Is this important for your job? How do you prepare for a shift?
23. What does it take to be a sex worker? Do you think you need to be a really "**sexual**" person to be a sex worker? (*Were you? / Are you?*)
24. Do you have different **personas / identities** when you're working? Do you do work alone and/or with others? What is your preference?

25. Do you think you need to be **fit** to be a sex worker? / Do you feel like your physical activity/fitness levels effect your ability to do your job (either positively or negatively)? Would you consider your work as exercise? What kind of fitness do you need? (*Strength, flexibility, endurance...*)
26. Do you get many **comments** about your body? (from clients, partners, friends) How do these make you feel? Have they prompted you to do something about it (*e.g., dieting, exercise, etc*)?
27. What type of body do you think is most **desirable** in the sex industry? Do you see women working to obtain particular types of bodies to enhance their earning potential? What type of activities do you see other sex workers doing, and how do you feel about this? Do you think there is desire among clients for a **'fit' female body**? Do you (or any of your peers/friends) work out to try to obtain this type of body so that it either helps you attract more customers, or please your current clients, or helps with the fitness of levels of your work?
28. What kinds of bodies do your **clients** normally have? Do you prefer certain bodies?
29. How does your body feel after a shift of work? (*cues - tired, weak, happy, relaxed, healthy, energetic, calm, motivated, confident, sexy, strong, or nothing / normal*) Do you do anything to help you feel better after/before work? Is sport or exercise something you do to help you feel better?
30. How long do you think you'll stay in this job? (Or when did you leave the sex industry?) **Why?**
31. Do you think there are any **misunderstandings/stereotypes** that people have about sex workers? (*E.g. sex workers are all victims or abused*). Do you ever try to challenge or change these? Why? How?

Health / Body

32. How would you describe your **body** now? What do you **like / dislike**? (*Cue – what might be one word to describe your body?*)
33. Do you think you have a good relationship with your body? Do you ever listen to it? What kinds of things does it tell you? (*prompt: hungry, hurt, sick, tired, strong, excited, weary, fine*)
34. Would you say you are a **"healthy"** person? Why? Why not? What makes a person "healthy"? Unhealthy? Does your work culture/environment influence your feelings about your body as either healthy or unhealthy? Where are these messages coming from? Are these messages different from what broader society says about what is a 'healthy' body? How do you make sense of these different ideas about 'health'? Where do your understandings of 'health' come from? (*i.e., family, culture, magazines, mass media sex industry support, etc*)

Appendix 7: Example of Transcript Analysis (Affect)

affects / emotions / feelings

JOY & PLEASURE

PAIN

ANGER

DISGUST

PRIDE

SHAME

SAD & DEPRESSED

You can't be good at everything, can't win the race all the time. Yeah I lost a few races, didn't bother me. Move on, get on with it. It never ~~traumatised~~ me or anything. Didn't need **Prozac!** [laughs]. You know, nothing like that!

You can't win all the time, and it's good to lose coz **it teaches you how to feel.** You can't win all the time can you? (Melissa)

They try to barter and they're really *nasty* in the room, they'll bite you, try and rip the condom. I mean a lot of clients try and rip the condom off, but, yeah. And I guess people don't like the smell coming out of their pores, you know? The masala and that [Laughs] (Tania)

Some days I won't exercise if I'm **depressed** but I find when I do exercise I **feel a lot better** (Kararaina)

I don't get a hell of a lot of comments, it's not like an everyday thing. You might get one once a month or something. But I don't fish for it. I prefer to give them comments, and nice, **it's about making them feel good. I know what I am** so **it's usually clients that are a bit down and out** (Melissa)

You're there to make them **feel good** ... It's a service darling. People are spending money and your job is not to make **them feel bad**, you don't want to go and get a massage and start feeling worse for it do you? [laughs] **Its about making people feel good** (Melissa)

Mere You know how it is with brothers and sisters, **you sort of have your moments, you know, get angry. Well I used to go for the one I was angry at - at the time [laughs].** Whoever it was! **Yeah take it out on them!** Bowl them over!

Grace [laughs] Crack up. So if you'd end up smashing them how would you feel straight after?

Mere Actually I'd **feel quite good** [laughs]. **Then I'd feel sorry for them, go and apologise**

On her experience with endo: when I was nineteen I found out... I moved house, long story short, moved house, woke up one morning and [...] something wasn't right, like I couldn't move. My lower part of my stomach **felt like someone was stabbing me with a knife** or something **really freakin' painful** (Nina)

Appendix 8: Conceptual Mind Maps

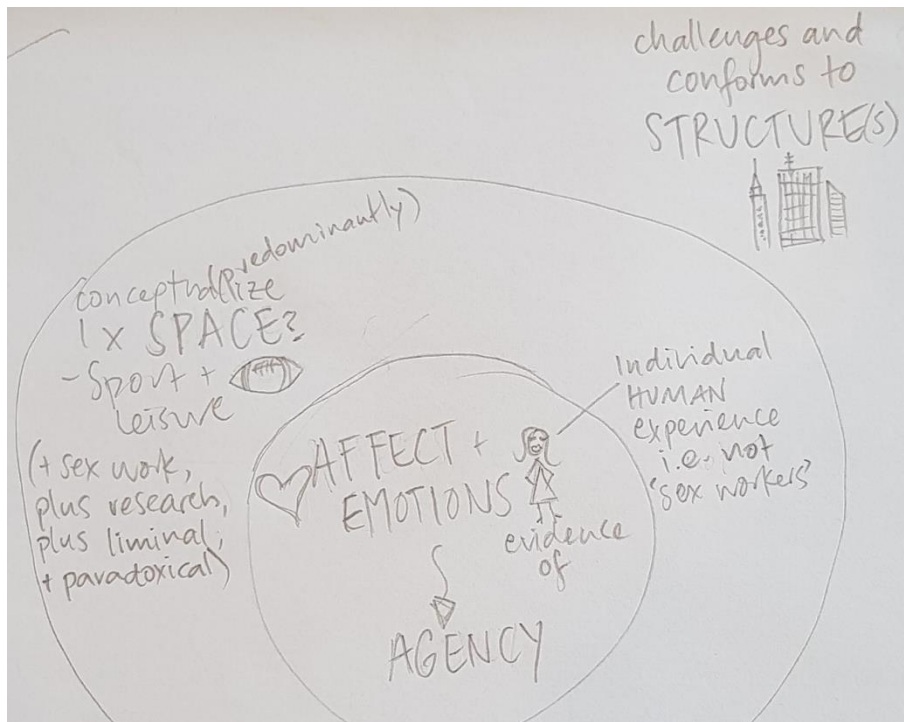


Figure 8: Conceptualising affect and space.

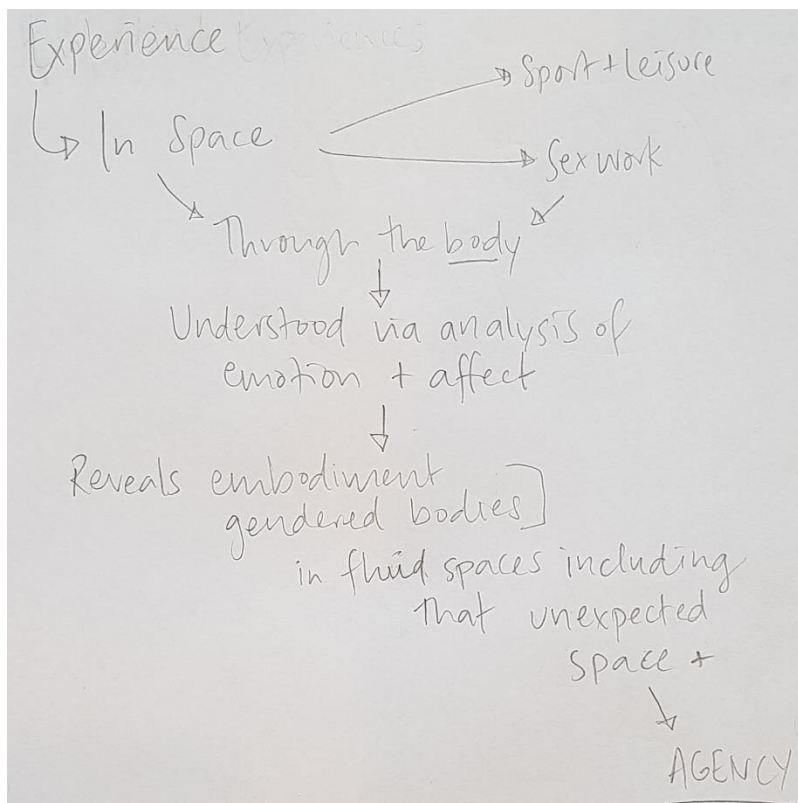


Figure 9: Thinking about embodied experience.



Figure 10: Linking bodies to space and place.

Yes they construct new/
alternative femininities...

How do they engage
in constructing femininity?

Femininities

Sport in school/childhood
Exercise in adulthood

Thru sport ⇒ dominant construction
of neoliberal post-feminist
femininity (This has its
own limitations).

But what else? ⇒ conventional
femininity
⇒ alternative femininities

- They straddle gender - maintain + challenge traditional gender order (+)
- They know who they are, where they stand (+)
- Problematises dominant femininities (-)

Figure 11: Theorising femininity.



Figure 12: Sex worker femininities/subjectivities.

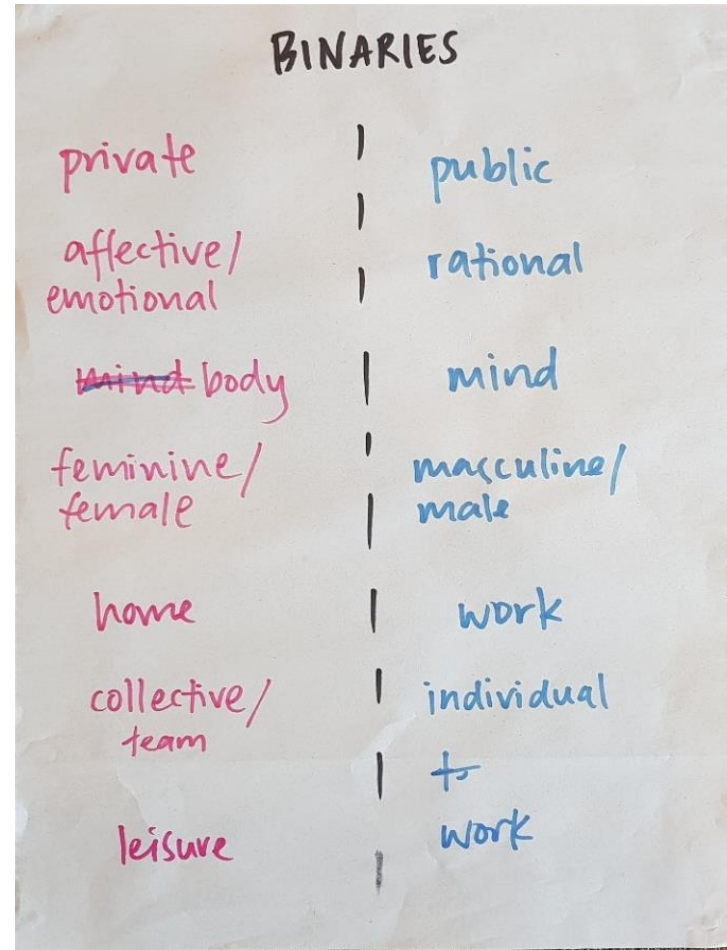


Figure 13: Thinking about socially constructed binaries.

Appendix 9: University of Waikato Research Ethics Committee

Approval

Dean's Office
Faculty of Education
Te Kura Toi Tangata
The University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Hamilton, New Zealand

Phone +64 7 838 4500
www.waikato.ac.nz



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

MEMORANDUM

To: Grace O'Leary

cc: Dr Holly Thorpe

From: Associate Professor Garry Falloon
Chairperson (Acting), Research Ethics Committee

Date: 17 December 2013

Subject: Supervised Postgraduate Research – Application for Ethical Approval (EDU0100/13)

Thank you for submitting the amendments to your application for ethical approval for the research project:

Let's get physical: Sport and Leisure Experiences of Women in the Sex Industry

I am pleased to advise that your application has received ethical approval.

Please note that researchers are asked to consult with the Faculty's Research Ethics Committee in the first instance if any changes to the approved research design are proposed.

The Committee wishes you all the best with your research.

Associate Professor Garry Falloon
Chairperson (Acting)
Research Ethics Committee