

THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

*RED LIGHT, BLUE LIGHT:
Prostitutes, Punters and The Police
in a Northern City*

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by

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RED LIGHT, BLUE LIGHT

PROSTITUTES, PUNTERS AND THE POLICE IN A NORTHERN CITY

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INTRODUCTION: The 'Problem' of Prostitution

*Prostitution is a social fact deplorable
in the eyes of moralists, sociologists
and, we believe, the great majority of
ordinary people.
(Wolfenden Report, 1957:79)*

INTRODUCTION: The 'Problem' of Prostitution.

Prostitution, in one form or another, has existed throughout recorded history, indeed one of the most salient aspects of prostitution is the tenacity with which it has persisted. From ancient Greece to contemporary society, the market for the 'service' that men demand and are willing to pay for, and which women are able to supply and willing to sell, has been astonishingly consistent. Deeply rooted in social, economic and political life, prostitution has shown itself to be adaptable to any wider changes in society - religious, legal and moral - and relatively impervious to control. Historically, prostitutes have been praised, tolerated or vilified; attitudes to prostitution have varied between those who see it as a beneficial and socially essential function which provides the lonely and perverse with a sexual outlet, to those 'moral crusaders' who view prostitutes as immoral social parasites and their profession as a hideously degrading and intolerable social evil that should be suppressed.

As a human activity, prostitution prompts plenty of cliches - it is called 'the oldest profession'. All sorts of assumptions are made about it, all sorts of myths surround it and all sorts of negative and highly derogatory connotations are attached to it. Given that prostitution is so widely condemned why, indeed *how* has it survived? The 'folk devil' status of the prostitute is almost as old as the profession itself as is its categorization as 'a problem'. So what is it about the activity, and its participants, that is regarded as so odious, annoying, harmful, and immoral?

In order to understand how and why specific individuals, groups of people, behaviour patterns or broad cultural trends are labelled as distinct social problems and deemed important enough to merit special attention, treatment or control, it is necessary to consider some of the broader issues involved in defining deviance and 'social problem' situations. In its broadest context, the term 'social problem' can be described as the way in which society sees certain individuals or certain conditions as threatening or in some way counter to its interests. ¹ In essence, it needs to be shown that the deviants are a basic threat to various moral schemas and that their activity is a basic threat to the social order. However, the criteria for judging society's ills are candidly moralistic; what emerges as 'a social problem', who emerges as 'a deviant', is subject to a variety of forces, including group interests,

conflicts and value judgements - particularly the definition of an individual or condition as 'good' or 'evil' or some other evaluative dualism. The problem with prostitution is that it is seen as more than just a *social* problem; its very existence seems to denote some sort of *moral* failing - either of the individual or of society as a whole. Waller (1936) formulates social problems thus:

Social problems are social conditions of which some of the causes are felt to be human and moral. Value judgements define these conditions as social problems. Value judgements are the formal causes of social problems just as the law is the formal cause of crime... social problems are moral problems.

(Waller, 1936:925)

Nisbet (1971) suggests that there is a 'reciprocal relationship' between moral consciousness in a society and the perceived existence of social problems (Nisbet 1971:2-3). However, as Fuller & Myers (1941a) point out:

The moral problem represents a condition on which there is no unanimity of opinion throughout the society that the condition is undesirable in every instance. ...With the moral problem, we have a basic and primary confusion in moral values.

(Fuller & Myers, 1941a:30)

Much of the concern over prostitution is due to it being regarded as a moral problem *and* a vice which is either anti-social or in some way bothersome to others. According to Benjamin & Masters (1964), a vice can be defined as '...a fault or blemish of character or conduct, a contravention of moral law' (Benjamin & Masters, 1964:369). Prostitution has always been regarded as a female vice; the ultimate betrayal of female virtue and condemned because it appears to involve a high degree of sexual promiscuity which, on the surface, appears to fulfil no publicly recognised societal goal (Davis 1965:264). As such:

Every society attempts to control ... the sexual impulse in the interests of social order, procreation and socialisation.

(Davis, 1965:286) 2

The prostitute's major affront has always revolved around the fact that she trades promiscuously, is emotionally indifferent and that her 'selling' commercializes that which should be sacred:

The norms of every society tend to harness and control the sexual appetite ... men dominate women in economic, sexual and familial relationships and consider them to some extent as sexual property, to be prohibited to other males. They therefore find promiscuity on the part of women repugnant.

(Davis, 1965: 264)

Kaplan (1991) suggests that:

One of the most powerful instruments of the social order is its doctrine of normality, especially its conventions of gender normality. If need be, society which cares only to preserve its own structures, will make use of an infantile fantasy about gender differences to keep the social roles of men and women firmly in place.

(Kaplan, 1991: 167)

Esselstyn (1968) suggests that societies link sexual behaviour to stable relationships (i.e. the family), and when it is not focussed as such, it is interpreted as a threat to its continuity and is thus condemned:

...in promiscuous, commercialized and uncontrolled sexual congress, the group senses the seeds of social collapse, and disapproves of it for this principal reason.

(Esselstyn, 1968: 113)

Stereotypes, Stigma and Scapegoats.

Definitions of deviance largely function as instruments of social control and mechanisms of social stability and maintenance. As a cultural concept, the symbolic function of the depiction is to define the norm and delineate that which is beyond the scope of 'normal' behaviour. However, norms reveal what *should* be, not what is or what might be. If a 'norm' represents '...legitimate socially shared guidelines to the accepted and expected patterns of conduct' (Birenbaum & Sagarin, 1976:11), then the deviant:

...as a trespasser against the group norms; he represents those forces which lie outside the groups boundaries; he informs us, as it were, what evil looks like, what shapes the devil can assume ... he shows us the difference between the inside of the group and the outside.

(Erikson 1964, cited Becker, 1964:15)

In deviance-defining situations, stereotypes play a pervasive role, influencing public perceptions and the way in which stigmatizing classifications are constructed. Stigma and stereotypes crystallise in the interaction between the deviant and the rest of society in the sense that the status of the deviant is 'redefined' and special 'pariah' roles are assigned to them (Lemert 1951:55; Goffman 1963). 3 Stereotypical definitions are

deeply laden with emotions and meanings and can serve to define the deviants expected behaviour in social interaction. Particular individuals are 'contained' - defined and treated in terms of the stigmatized category and contained within it. Stereotypes are a means whereby complex social relationships can be reduced to a simplified shorthand; this involves a tendency to:

...jump from a single cue, to a small number of cues in actual, suspected or alleged behaviour, to a more general picture of the kind of person with whom one is dealing.

(Schur, 1980:38-52)

This 'character assassination' or 'prejudicial publicity' (Cromer, 1978:239) is merely the tip of the iceberg. In many ways, the personal degradation of the individual is compounded by his/her portrayal as an example of a much wider social problem. Clarke (1975) refers to this as the 'signification spiral' with the notion of 'convergence' alerting the community to a whole series of other problems and aberrations (Clarke, 1975:77). Offenders are not solely referred to in terms of particular events or disapproved forms of behaviour, but as 'distinguishable social types' (Cohen, 1972:9-10). Throughout history, the prostitute, heavily weighed down by stigmatizing stereotypes, has assumed the mantle of 'folk devil' - playing the role of both symptom and scapegoat. The scapegoat principle is one of the most clear cut regularities of social behaviour (Szasz, 1977:108). The function of the scapegoat is quite clear; when things begin to disintegrate they serve as images of disorder and evil and thus become the vehicle into which:

...all disturbing experiences are condensed and then symbolically rejected and cast out.

(Hall et al, 1978:157)

The perennial advantage of the scapegoat principle is that scapegoats cannot fight back.

Prostitution: The Problem of Definition.

Prostitution is an immensely complicated and highly emotive subject. Establishing exactly what it is we are trying to explain - trying to formulate a basic framework of understanding about the phenomenon - leads us into a conceptual minefield of bewildering complexity. If we pose the seemingly simple questions: '*what is prostitution?*', '*why does it exist?*' and '*why do women work as prostitutes?*', it soon becomes clear that we are looking at a very wide landscape indeed.

Is prostitution a *service* - motivated by pure altruism and thus the ultimate in female sexual abnegation? Is it a *business* - a form of laissez-faire capitalism, a tax-free, get rich quick and easy scheme? Is it a *crime* - if so, who is the criminal, who is the victim, what exactly is the offence? What is it that is being 'offended' against - nature, morality, society? Who decides what is morally 'acceptable'. How is prostitution to be defined? It maybe a straight 'sex for cash' scenario, but what about a job promotion, a candlelit dinner, a holiday or the so-called 'casting couch'? What is it that is being sold? Just how beyond the norm is the trade-off of sex for money? Some would argue that it is the basis of the marriage contract; prostitutes are merely getting paid for what most women do for free.

There is no simple, concise definition of what actually constitutes prostitution. To the 19th Century social commentator Henry Mayhew (1862) prostitution meant:

...putting a woman's charms to vile uses... the surrendering of a woman's virtue in a manner that excites our moral disgust .
(Mayhew, 1862: 36)

The influential Westminster Review defined prostitution as:

...a public and promiscuous traffic of their own persons carried on by women for the sake of gain .
(Westminster Review, 1869: 183)

Ellis (1906) argued that to be sound, a definition must be applicable to both sexes and must therefore be put in a form irrespective of sex. He suggested that a prostitute is:

... a person who makes it a profession to gratify the lusts of various persons of the opposite sex or the same sex.
(Ellis, 1906: 225-226)

Perhaps the most comprehensive definition comes from Scott (1936):

A prostitute is an individual, male or female, who for some kind of reward, monetary or otherwise, or for some form of personal satisfaction, and as a part or whole time profession, engages in normal or abnormal sexual intercourse with various persons, who may be of the same sex as, or the opposite sex to, the prostitute.
(cited in Benjamin & Masters, 1964: 32)

The stress on promiscuity has been a prevailing theme in most definitions. Lemert (1967) defines prostitution as '...emotionally indifferent promiscuity' (Lemert, 1967: 238). Flexner (1914) suggested that:

...any person is a prostitute who habitually or indiscriminately has sexual relations more or less promiscuously for money or other mercenary consideration.

(cited Benjamin & Masters, 1964:32)

In more contemporary definitions, the purely commercial aspect of the transaction has assumed greater significance:

It is an economic transaction ... which has sexual significance for the purchaser ...(but it) has nothing to do with buying affection.

(McCaghy, 1985: 348)

Similarly, Sandford (1975) suggests it is:

...sex for sale or barter. Not given. There is a transaction and the sale of sex is its primary purpose.

(Sandford, 1975: 2)

Under scrutiny, it soon becomes apparent that no simple, concise definition of prostitution exists, and that those that have been offered do not stand up to the numerous objections that may be raised. For example, a wife is not designated a prostitute even though she may be emotionally indifferent to her husband. Similarly, a mistress or 'kept woman' is not labelled a prostitute even though her motives may be other than sexual and even crassly commercial (Benjamin & Masters, 1964). Perhaps the biggest problem of trying to define prostitution is that the label is too simplistic. The use of the word is relatively indiscriminate. Women who work as prostitutes cannot be categorized; not all prostitutes are alike, not all women enter the profession for the same reason. As a result:

The process of simplification frequently obscures the complexity of the individual career.

(Jackman et al, 1963: 135)

Why does prostitution exist? The popular, and usually unquestioned assumption, is that prostitution is necessary, essential to our culture. The assumption is that 'men need - women provide'. However, this relatively simple scenario conveniently overlooks fundamental questions about basic human sexuality and, in particular, makes simplistic ideological assumptions about male sexuality and male needs. What about female needs?

It has been suggested that:

...the type and extent of prostitution that any country indulges in holds ... an interesting mirror to its general morality and customs.

(Sandford, 1975: 4)

But , is it a 'general' morality that is being reflected? If it is the case that men 'demand' prostitution, then it is specifically men that dictate the trend (type and extent) of prostitution, and thus it is specifically male morality that is being reflected. Yet, it is always the female prostitute who is condemned and castigated as some sort of immoral outcast; always the behaviour of women which is persecuted and always the morality (or immorality) of women towards which efforts are directed to redeem and reform. But do prostitutes deserve their 'folk devil' status, are they victims or villains?

In this examination of female prostitution three *central* questions are addressed: (1) *What kind of woman is a prostitute?* (2) *Why do women turn to prostitution?* and (3) *How has (does) society respond(ed) to prostitution?* To many, these are always *the* central issues. Are prostitutes born, or are they made? Does it take a certain *type* of woman to have cold, clinical sex with a total stranger? Is a certain sort of temperament or personality necessary to become a prostitute? Are such women mercenary, promiscuous, emotionally indifferent, psychologically unbalanced, or, are they merely exercising their right to do exactly as they choose with their own body - including selling it to a complete stranger? Conventional wisdom (amongst sociologists, criminologists, historians and feminists) is that prostitutes have always been unfairly treated because a 'double standard' of sexual morality has conspired to discriminate against women - not only in terms of justice and equality in the eyes of the law - but also by stigmatizing, marginalizing and penalizing prostitutes (but not their customers) simply for providing the service that men demand.

In an attempt to address some of these issues, documentary material (historical and contemporary), and primary (personal) and secondary (public records) data is utilized and combined with direct lengthy observation, contact and interviews with prostitutes, and with the police unit responsible for policing prostitution offences in a 'northern city'.

Chapter One reviews the literature relating to the legislative measures which have been specifically aimed at the social control of prostitutes - that is, their regulation, repression and rehabilitation. 4 This chapter does *not* attempt to provide a comprehensive 'history of' prostitution, rather it aims to discuss prostitution within an historical framework. From this perspective, wider aspects of social life and social

attitudes towards prostitution, including 'accepted' standards of morality within different cultures and at different periods, are examined. This highlights the conflicting attitudes shown towards prostitutes and prostitution and the way this ambiguity was reflected in subsequent legislation. This chapter also attempts to examine the punishment mentality of particular eras and in particular the relationship between the punishment and social control responses developed towards both prostitutes and other forms of 'troublesome' behaviour.

Chapter Two examines some of the main theories and explanations surrounding the subject of prostitution. It begins by addressing the problem of sexual ideology and how a 'double standard' of sexual behaviour has, throughout history, restricted and regulated female sexuality. It would seem that whilst there appears to be well-founded agreement on the nature and extent of prostitution, comprehensive explanations of the phenomenon have proved elusive. Many of the theories and arguments about the functions and dysfunctions of prostitution have been based largely on ideology rather than firm empirical evidence. Sexist assumptions, stereotypical portrayals and an underlying, but deep-seated moral condemnation of prostitution, has hampered rational and objective examination of the subject; the role of stereotypes in relation to prostitution has been particularly influential and extremely damaging - both to prostitutes themselves who have been stigmatized and marginalized as a result of the perceptions and misconceptions surrounding the subject, and also because the picture of prostitution that has emerged - distorted though it is - has dominated and, to a large extent, dictated legislative measures and social policy initiatives addressing the issue of 'what to do about it'.

Chapter Three outlines the *research methodology* - the theories and procedures employed for this study, including a discussion of the methods of observation - the life history approach, the interview formats and the data collection techniques. This chapter also describes the *research process* - the 'reality' of employing such strategies - the problems encountered, including a discussion about the problems of doing research with 'deviant' groups, establishing trust and rapport and the ethical considerations of conducting such research. This section focusses particularly upon the research 'experience' with the police. The *research sample* provides a detailed discussion of the 'facts and figures' of the research - the length of the

fieldwork, the number of women interviewed, the circumstances and the representativeness of the sample. The *research setting* provides a brief introduction to the location of the research - 'the patch'.

Chapter Four examines the personal developmental backgrounds and motivating factors of the prostitutes interviewed. In general, social research 'evidence' to support or disprove a causal connection between crime and anti-social behaviour and family background and circumstances, has been far from impressive. Moreover, the attention has almost exclusively focussed upon attempting to explain *male delinquency* and criminality. The role of women in this particular debate has been almost exclusively viewed from the perspective of their maternal role and function; women have most often been cast in the role of 'guilty transmittor' - responsible (whether through over-possessiveness, over-zealousness or, conversely, neglect) for producing a vast army of delinquent boys. In essence, this chapter seeks to establish whether there is a correlation between the adoption of prostitution as a career and certain family or developmental factors in the backgrounds of the women. As the research progressed it became clear that the role of family members and particularly friends in the introduction process was a significant factor. This chapter looks at the nature of the relationship, the influence other people had in encouraging or motivating entry into the profession, and the 'dynamics' of the transmission process.

Chapter Five examines the sociological and 'business' aspects of prostitution in the city and shows how, having started in the profession, women quickly adapt to the 'rules of the game'. Despite the apparent ease with which some women appeared to drift into, and accept, the world of prostitution, one question remained - are the women who work as prostitutes *immoral or wicked* women? Do women who work as prostitutes deserve such a bad reputation? Is it more than just an apparent immorality that offends? Are they women who *offend* in a more literal sense? Chapter Six looks at the 'criminality' of the prostitutes in the study and examines their association with crime and drug use .

Prostitutes have a public relations problem. Most prostitutes are aware that the image they present to the public does not lend itself to either sympathy or tolerance. The perceptions that prostitutes have of themselves and the work they do is equally harsh. Chapter Seven examines some of the problems of 'being a prostitute' and some of the coping strategies they deploy

to protect themselves against working in a business in which they frequently encounter open hostility from all sectors of society - from those who know very little of the reality of their life (the public) from those who are tasked to control their activities (the police) to the very people who purchase their services (their clients).

The world of prostitution is shrouded in secrecy. If the life and times of the prostitute are difficult to establish, the world of her client is equally, if not more difficult, to chart. And yet, the role of the 'punter' is essential to an understanding of prostitution, for if men did not create a demand for it, prostitution, as a profession, would cease to exist. Research on the motives of clients is limited; most men do not boast about patronizing prostitutes; the implicit assumption that men who visit prostitutes do so because they *have to* - because of some underlying deficiency or inadequacy - has meant that the world of the client, and indeed the public perception and image of the client, is equally prone to stereotypical portrayals and sexist assumptions. Chapter Eight, through a compilation of data (official records, interviews and observations), attempts to contribute to the general 'profile' of the men who pay for sex.

Chapter Nine discusses the role of the police - specifically the aims, priorities, rhetoric and practice - involved in the policing of prostitution and kerbcrawling offences in the city. In an attempt to put the policing of prostitution into context, several broad, though interrelated questions fundamental to the role of the police are addressed. To some, the question would probably be '*is prostitution something that should be policed?*' and '*is it the job of the police to enforce morality?*' It will be shown that (in this 'Northern City') much of the police response was a purely reactive public relations exercise largely prompted by sporadic public and local media concerns about the 'problem' of prostitution. In other words, irrespective of how the police themselves classed prostitutes and prostitution, and irrespective of the level of operational priority the police thought prostitution should assume, the public demand that 'something be done about it' almost inevitably casts prostitution very firmly in the 'social problem' mould that 'someone' (invariably the police) ought to do something about (preferably control). The divergence between the rhetoric (theory and public expectation) and reality (practice and actual performance) was wide because the priorities that the police set themselves seemed far removed

from what the public actually wanted and expected.

By way of a summary, Chapter Ten discusses some of the issues raised in this thesis and examines some of the arguments concerning possible alternative strategies to the current legislation. The ineffectiveness and inadequacy of existing legislation is well documented; however, realistic proposals for alternative policies frequently appear to be based on political and sexist ideologies which give the impression of having made little or no reference to the realities of the sex industry, or indeed, paid little or no attention to the voices of the women who actually work in prostitution. By way of redress, this chapter solicits prostitutes opinions about 'alternative strategies' suggested for the business in which they work, yet which they frequently have no voice.

¹ There are broadly three sociological theories or approaches to social problems: (a) the *Functionalist (social disorganization)* approach best exemplified by Merton (1971) who suggested that social problems represented '...a substantial discrepancy between widely shared social standards and actual conditions in social life' (Merton 1971:799); (b) the *Value-Conflict* approach in which differing values create disagreement as to which conditions should be defined as problems and this encourages moral confusion which leads to personal deviation (Frank 1925; Waller 1936; Fuller & Myers 1941; Becker 1966; Blumer 1971; Schur 1980), and (c) the *Personal Deviation* approach in which social problems are explained either in terms of personality development or behaviour learned as part of a subculture.

² This 'social control' of sex involves confining sexual activity to specific customary relationships (marriage) and discouraging or condemning sexual activity which falls outside the boundaries of accepted, or acceptable, relationships - adultery, incest.

³ Goffman (1963) speaks of 'stigma' rather than deviance and divides stigmatized individuals into (1) *the discredited* - those who have some trait or characteristic that is either visible or has been made public, and (2) *the discreditable* - those who have a trait (or a 'differentness') that would diminish them or make them disvalued if the characteristics were known (Goffman 1963:57). Becker (1963) suggests that stigmatized statuses and identities tend to carry 'master status' quality (Becker 1963:33-34)

⁴ For the purposes of this thesis, 'social control' refers to 'The organised ways in which society responds to behaviour and people it regards as deviant, problematic, worrying, threatening, troublesome or undesirable in some way or another. This response appears under many terms: punishment, deterrence, treatment, prevention, segregation, justice, rehabilitation, reform or social defence' (Cohen 1985:1).

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PART ONE: HISTORY AND THEORY

...the circumstances of men's [sic] lives do much to determine their philosophy, but, conversely, their philosophy does much to determine their circumstances. (Bertrand Russell, 'History of Western Philosophy' 1946: 14)

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CHAPTER ONE: THE SOCIAL CONTROL OF PROSTITUTION

*The Regulation, Repression and Rehabilitation of
Prostitutes - An Historical Perspective*

- A. The Origins of Prostitution*
- B. The Early Middle Ages 1100 - 1700*
- C. Regulation and Rehabilitation 1700 - 1860*
- D. The Contagious Diseases Acts*
- E. The Twentieth Century*

CHAPTER ONE: The Social Control of Prostitution.

A: The Origins of Prostitution

The origin of the systemized profession of prostitution is not easy to establish. The kind of prostitution noted in antiquity is not really comparable to prostitution as we define or understand it today. One of the oldest forms of prostitution was intimately connected with religion and existed as 'temple' or 'sacred' prostitution. Although not exclusively an ancient phenomenon, temple prostitution was popular and common throughout much of the ancient world. It was highly developed and, through its association with religion, was able to gain wide social esteem. Although its exact purpose is obscure, it may have had its origins in fertility rituals; the sex act itself was viewed as a religious ritual and the money given to the prostitute was always used for religious purposes. In Babylonian times, the profession of harlot carried no stigma. Priestesses of the Temple rendered sex services for pay but were always treated with the greatest respect and reverence. In general, the Temples were staffed by priests, servants, artisans, and a large number of highly respectable priestesses and nuns, often from the best families, as well as sacred prostitutes. Sacred prostitutes were classified into groups: the 'Harimtu' (related to 'harem') seem to have been semi-secular prostitutes very often set to the trade by their parents or following an unhappy marriage; the 'Quadishtu' who were sacred prostitutes, and the 'Ishantu' who were specifically servants of the Goddess Ishtar (Tannahill, 1989: 71). Higher ranking prostitutes were accommodated in a special part of the temple, but others lived out and picked up clients by parading in the streets. Soliciting in the streets was not objected to, indeed the Assyrians encouraged, virtually forced, a prostitute to advertise her calling. Common prostitutes were not allowed to veil themselves as other women did. The penalties for covering her head could be harsh:

Anyone who sees a common harlot veiled shall arrest her ... they shall beat her fifty strokes with rods, and they shall pour pitch on her head.

(Tannahill, 1989: 72)

In ancient Greece (apart from Athens) prostitutes were attached to religious temples and used in religious and festive ceremonies.¹ Although the Greeks were greatly concerned with the moral justification of prostitution, for the

most part they were more than content to accept it. According to most writers on the subject, organized prostitution performed a useful service for the state. It was not a means of licentiousness, but constituted a means of satisfying the 'natural' requirements of the male. Men of all classes associated with prostitutes of all types - and there were numerous kinds to choose from - and it was not a subject that was generally condemned or hidden from view; all Greek prostitutes were spoken of and written about openly and candidly.

The first Athenian brothels were established around the sixth Century BC. State brothels were introduced because at this period of Greek history, adultery was an offence punishable by death. The Athenian lawgiver Solon who established them, did so in order that:

...young men could thus work off their lust without disordering families.

(Anderson and Zinsser, 1988: 45)

Brothels operated under the supervision of the city authorities, and brothel keepers paid an annual prostitution tax. Concentrated mainly in the neighbourhoods of the docks and markets, these establishments were open to anyone who could afford the price; admission was generally cheap. The lowest class prostitutes - the girls employed in the brothels, and streetwalkers - were generally termed *Dicteriades*. Although the street walkers enjoyed a status slightly superior to that of the brothel girls, their social standing was not high. Streetwalkers would have to entertain their clients in their own rooms or in alleyways and doorways. The brothels were invariably staffed by slaves and concubines who had no social standing at all. As the lowest of the low on the prostitution hierarchy, their situation was not a happy one. She had no independence, or legal protection, but was merely an object to be used according to the whim of her owner who, if he so desired, could sell her off to a brothel where she would probably remain for the rest of her days. In these early cultures, the distinction between prostitute and slave was blurred; slaves could function as household prostitutes; prostitutes were often slave women.

Like the Greeks, the Romans recognized prostitution as an essential and useful institution inevitably needed to cater for the natural erotic appetites and desires of humans. However, a 'double standard' favoured the freedom of the male; prostitutes, but not the men who used them, were regarded as outcasts and inferiors. On the whole, prostitution was severely

condemned. However, the Roman approach to sexuality in general swung between periods of extreme prudishness to rampant forms and varieties of sexual expression (Kiefer,1934). In the case of prostitution, this ambivalence was reflected in periods of tolerance alternating with periods when prostitutes were vigorously persecuted and stringent attempts were made (usually unsuccessfully) to suppress prostitution. In the early days of the Republic, beginning during the reign of Caligula, a system of registration and licensing was introduced. Distinctive clothing and hair colouring was required of all prostitutes, and all were supposed to be registered and pay taxes. Registered prostitutes were known as '*Meretrices*'; illegal and unregistered prostitutes - of which there were huge numbers - were called '*Prostibulae*'. The Romans did not develop an elite class of skilled courtesans like the Greek hetairae to give them sexual and intellectual companionship. However, both *Meretrices* and *Prostibulae* had many classes and strata of practitioners. 2

Roman brothels contained both heterosexual and homosexual prostitutes and the establishments appear to have ranged from the very luxurious to the extremely wretched. Some were stocked almost exclusively with slaves. People who visited brothels had to cover their faces when entering and leaving the establishments. This was largely because the Romans did distinguish between what they considered a moderate (legitimate) and excessive (illegitimate and therefore reprehensible) patronage of prostitutes. Those who habitually resorted to prostitutes were termed '*Moechus*' and '*Scortator*', and these derogatory terms would be bandied around in political debates by politicians who wished to humiliate their opponents. Because it was impossible to regulate all prostitutes, legislation and law enforcement methods were to prove totally ineffectual. Similarly, early experiments at redeeming and rehabilitating prostitutes failed. The earliest known attempt at the forcible rehabilitation of prostitutes was made by Theodora (c497 - 548) - herself a former whore who married Justinian and became Empress of the Roman Empire in the East. Theodora had enormous sympathy for women in general and prostitutes in particular. She was instrumental in passing legislation which gave women more property rights; she passed edicts which made pimping a criminal offence, and she ordered all brothel keepers to be banished from the City of Rome. Her unique insight into prostitution led her to construct, at enormous expense, a palace on the south

shore of the Bosphorus, where harlots were to be confined and re-educated. Over 500 whores were forcibly rounded up and conveyed to the palace. Although the women were well treated, the stringent rules and regulations (the women were not allowed to leave the building and men were not permitted to enter) meant that the experience of being 'redeemed' was too much for some women. It is recorded that many of the girls perished through sheer boredom and some committed suicide. Eventually the experiment had to be abandoned (Benjamin & Masters, 1964: 108).

B. The Early Middle Ages: 1100 - 1700.

Prostitution, Christianity and the 'Policing of Manners'.

Irrespective of the ambiguous attitude displayed by the Romans towards the subject of prostitution, they had created a highly civilized state, one in which manners and social behaviour were of a high order. In the first century after Christ, there had developed within the Roman Empire a growing tendency towards asceticism. Philosophers attacked sex as being evil in itself, and laid great stress on spiritual values to the exclusion of the 'sins of the flesh'. With the emergence of Christianity, the Church became the universal censor of public manners. Throughout early modern Europe, religious proscriptions on morality permeated the law codes; licentiousness was seen as a sin and was severely denounced by Christian law. The assumption was that extra-marital sex was sinful and therefore a crime. However, prostitution was a different matter; it was already a recognised social phenomenon and the leading fathers of the church were inclined to tolerate - even sanction - prostitution. After all, the revenue derived from commercial sexual activity (the *vectigal*) yielded a handsome return to the Imperial treasury, so the tax on prostitution (the *chrysargyrum*) continued to be levied after the Empire became officially Christian. The objection of the good Christian to the *chrysargyrum* was that it appeared to give licence to sexual immorality (an argument not unlike the one still raised today); yet everywhere Christianity tolerated prostitution. In reality, the Church was not in a position to ban prostitution; moreover, as will become clear, it did not in fact want to.

Leading figures of the age waxed lyrical about immorality, shame and sordidness of prostitution but nevertheless pronounced it to be 'essential'. St. Augustine put forward the view that:

...remove prostitutes from human affairs and you will pollute all things with lust; set them among honest matrons and you will dishonour all things with disgrace and turpitude ... suppress courtesans and you will confuse all society by the caprice of the passions ... suppress prostitution and capricious lusts will overthrow society.

(Benjamin & Masters, 1964: 51)

Similarly, the 13th Century Catholic Theologian St. Thomas Aquinas argued in '*Summa Theologica*' that prostitution was a 'necessary evil' because it prevented seduction and rapes:

Prostitution in the towns is like the cesspool in the palace. Do away with the cesspool and the palace will become an unclean and stinking place.

(Benjamin & Masters, 1964: 51)

The idea that prostitution was a 'necessary evil' because it eliminated adultery or forbidden varieties of sexual behaviour and thus preserved the home, was (and still is) an argument frequently propounded. It was sheer hypocrisy. Whilst incontinence of both sexes was deplored by the church (and State), moral lapses of male customers were generally tolerated (Gibson, 1980:196). Moreover, the moralizing religious leaders and noblemen had enormous connection with whores and courtesans. They were renowned for their flagrant sexual immorality and were frequently found to be foremost among adulterers and rapists:

The association of badness and sexuality in the Middle Ages provided a convenient and seductive explanation for the crumbling edifice of celibacy which was a mainstay of the Medieval church, as well as locating the temptation of sexuality within women. ...The errant clerics of the Middle Ages were able to attribute their fall from celibacy to the lewdness of women, and the latter's provocation of uncontrollable desire.

(Usser, 1991:48)

On a more practical level, the church and other institutions owned many brothels (McCall, 1979:183) and were far too greedy for the revenues derived from the brothels to genuinely contemplate the total suppression of prostitution; they had too many shares in the business to cut themselves off from the 'wages of sin'. With this in mind, it would appear that localized attempts to suppress prostitution and punish prostitutes were extremely hypocritical - the nobles and religious leaders subscribed to a double moral standard which imposed restrictions on the masses which they had no intention of adhering to themselves.

For the populace, the 'bawdy' courts bore the major responsibility for enforcing good morals; dealing with matters such as fornication, adultery, incest, homosexuality and brothel keeping. In early centuries, certain 'moral' offences - drunkenness, brawling, defamation and sexual offences - were 'corrected' in the church courts through the imposition of both moral and church discipline. Church courts imposed on the guilty 'penances' - theoretically expressions of moral repentance, they generally involved some form of public confession and humiliation (Hair,1972:20). This could involve the guilty walking barefooted in a procession round, or within, the Parish church carrying a candle, or the penitent would stand at the church door during the service or be seated in a prominent place - on a high seat or the penitential stool (Hair, 1972:256). Those who failed to carry out a penance were faced with excommunication; this was a punishment both feared and respected by a substantial part of the population because it was felt that excommunication was a spiritual disability (Hair, 1972: 257).

Throughout Europe, the issue of prostitution did, periodically, provoke furious debates within the church. Ecclesiastical concern centred around the issues of whether prostitutes should be allowed to enter church at all; whether they should be permitted to marry Christians, and whether they should be permitted to Communion. Although the attitude of the Church was contradictory, it is fair to conclude that in the main ecclesiastical sanction was given to prostitution. ³ However, at the same time as supporting prostitution, the church was urging all prostitutes to see the error of their ways and give up their evil habits. Most religious leaders assumed that, given the chance, most women would like to leave the life of sin. ⁴ In general, the special religious orders, asylums and other institutions that were established for rehabilitating harlots were not successful. Records suggest that once they were inside the institutions the women perished of boredom (literally), or seduced their keepers; once they were outside, the sweet smell of freedom quickly sent them all back to whoring for a living. On the whole, prostitutes were not easily rehabilitated because society was not willing - or able - to provide them with anything like a viable or attractive alternative.

Early attempts at Regulation and Control.

Prostitution was regarded as universal and inevitable and it received a good deal of official sanction from the state. Throughout the Middle Ages prostitutes

were numerous but their status was not high and they were both taxed and persecuted by the State and the Church. Attitudes fluctuated ambiguously between toleration and condemnation; while prostitutes were persecuted civilly, socially and ecclesiastically, the demand for their services was huge and all classes in society recognised their indispensability and were glad to have recourse to them. At the same time, the cruelty of the age allowed others to openly express hatred and viciousness against them. As Benjamin & Masters (1964) point out:

Even at the height of anti-prostitution zeal there has rarely been a time when prostitution was not commonplace, and when those who legislated against them did not, in large numbers, avail themselves of the sexual services of the women they condemned.

(Benjamin & Masters, 1964: 65)

Throughout Europe, town councils and Kings reasoned that there had to be prostitution, but to ensure 'public order' they also decided that it was the task of the municipal authority to lay down strict guidelines governing the prostitutes, the clients, and the services that could be provided. The Crown supervised brothel thus became the norm and, during periods of official toleration, they flourished in most European countries. During the periods of toleration and popularity, prostitutes enjoyed a high status. They were the guests of monarchs, were welcome at religious and secular festivals and were invited by the best citizens to entertain at the private parties. Royalty, nobility and the clergy were the foremost patrons of prostitutes. 5 The brothel was an important part of the city's hospitality at official receptions, and visitors (including Royalty) would be received free of charge. Generally there was little shame in dealings with the prostitutes at this level in society. In the 14th Century, high placed officials could claim payment of any expenses that were incurred when travelling on public business; some even entered the cost of prostitutes in their tax statements.

Throughout the Middle Ages, the 'problem' of prostitution, and continually changing attitudes towards it, meant that there were frequent attempts at regulation and suppression. Sporadic attempts to completely eradicate prostitution proved futile, and efforts to regulate it also proved impracticable, inefficient and unsuccessful. Despite the belief that semi-official toleration would enable the authorities to exert at least some control over it, whenever regulatory controls were imposed, records suggest that the number of prostitutes did not decrease, and the incidence of prostitute-client

contacts did also not substantially diminish.

The aims of the brothel system seem to have been two-fold: (a) to guard against the 'evil' of prostitution (particularly the scourge of venereal and other diseases) as far as possible by imposing strict working conditions and routine medical inspections and (b) to have 'legitimate' grounds by which to viciously punish, and thus suppress, unlicensed prostitutes working outside the brothel system. Condemnation of prostitutes was, in the main, limited to those who worked outside the supervised brothels. Antagonism against these 'free' women came from two main quarters - firstly, the officially sanctioned prostitutes themselves who did not like any competition or rivalry from unlicensed women, and secondly, the authorities - though their concern was mainly because it was they who profited from the brothels and thus they had a vested interest in eliminating outside competition.⁶

Despite national differences in legislative measures aimed at the control of prostitution, clearly discernible trends emerged in efforts to regulate prostitution. Principally these themes focused around the confinement, restriction and punishment of not only the women who worked as prostitutes but also of others associated with prostitution. Confining prostitutes to separate quarters of towns was a principal feature of the brothel system. However, those edicts which aimed at containment failed miserably in their avowed objective. The problem with the general policy was that when business was good - as it was apt to be when the customer knew exactly where to go for the merchandise - it was simply impossible to restrict it within its allocated area. When measures designed to confine the problem to a specific area failed, the authorities tended to respond with further severe repressive measures meted out to both prostitutes and brothel keepers. Furthermore, edicts confining prostitutes to specific areas gave those neighbourhoods a permanent association with vice - a reputation which in some cases still persists today (Roberts, 1992: 93). As well as the policy of containment, prostitutes were required by law to adopt distinctive modes of dress - or otherwise make their calling evident. The philosophy behind the imposition of restrictions on clothing seem to have been: (a) so that their 'shame' could not be concealed; (b) to ensure that the whore would not be mistaken for a 'respectable' woman and would not be able to pass themselves off as such; (c) to facilitate the easier location of prostitutes and so presumably make life much easier for men, and (d) to ensure that men could

not approach decent women with lewd propositions and then plead ignorance of their mistake. It does not appear that the restrictions were designed to turn the prostitutes into drabs; indeed the actual clothing restrictions varied so much that the effect on prostitutes went from one extreme to the other - in some places they would be forced to be hooded like nuns, and in other places they could look colourful and flamboyant (Henriques, 1963: 44-46; Mayhew, 1862: 184). This variation appears to have coincided with the fluctuating attitudes of the authorities and the public towards sex.

In terms of punishment, when attempts at suppression were made, procurers, panders and brothel keepers were punished as severely - if not more so - than the prostitute herself. The character of the punishment was frequently sadistic; many were executed, pilloried, scourged and mutilated - eyes, tongues and scalps were ripped away (Berg, 1959:54). Female procurers would be exposed naked all day to the multitude and then have their body hair burned off with a flaming torch. Others (presumably the luckier ones) would be chased naked through the streets where bystanders were totally at liberty to pelt them with filth.

The punishments were a much appreciated public spectacle and always provided great excitement and a great emotional outlet for the mob - a pastime which seems to be related to the much documented barbarity and coarseness of the age. The general 'looseness of behaviour' profoundly affected the development and character of prostitution. It was essentially a barbarous age when boorishness and vulgarity - both in speech, behaviour and particularly sexual vulgarity - was the norm. Even monasteries and nunneries were repositories of vice (Henriques, 1963: 34). As Alexander & Selesnick (1966) write:

...underground passageways were known to connect some monasteries and nunneries. Townspeople often had to send prostitutes to the monasteries in order to protect the maidens of the village.
(cited Usser, 1991:48)

It was a time when a feeling of 'uncertainty' pervaded society, when the accent was continuously focused upon war, disease, death and damnation. In the 14th Century the impact and influence of the plague (the Black Death) on prostitution was immeasurable. The effect of the plague was that it essentially destroyed all restraint; people adopted the philosophy that if they had to die it was largely irrelevant what they did in the meantime. As a

consequence, the prostitution business flourished. There are two interrelated reasons for this: firstly, because the mortality rates were so enormous, there was a general shortage of manpower. For those who were available (and able) to work, wages were offered at much higher rates than previously. The fact that so much of this vastly increased disposable income was spent satisfying sexual appetites in the municipal brothels and stews was because of the second, and more relevant reason. It was popularly believed that no-one suffering from venereal disease could also contract the plague. So, to preserve life, men reasoned that recourse to prostitutes was logical, if not essential (Nohl, 1926).

Early European Legislation: 1100 - 1700.

A review of the measures taken to control prostitution provides a good indication of its incidence and attitudes towards it. As a general observation, it would seem that the very existence of such laws indicates that prostitution was rife. European enactments designed to control or eliminate prostitution could be extremely severe. One of the earliest laws designed to tackle the problem was ordained by Charlemagne in the 12th Century. He enacted the most vicious and severe laws against prostitutes with penalties that included capital punishment (usually beheading or being burned at the stake), imprisonment, flogging, exposure in the pillory and, what appears to be the most popular mode of punishment in this early period, mutilation, with whores having their nose and ears cut off. Those who harboured prostitutes or who helped create the trade (brothel keepers/procurers) were compelled to carry them on their backs to the market place where they would receive the punishment to which they had been condemned. Despite the extensive and wide-reaching nature of these punishments, the ordinances were soon abandoned as useless and impracticable.

In 1158, Emperor Frederick Barbarossa promulgated his '*Lex Pacis Castrensis*' which was primarily designed to keep his soldiers free from camp followers. Soldiers caught with such women were severely punished; the women themselves had their noses cut off.⁷ In Naples, part of his Kingdom, this particular punishment was extended to procuresses, mothers who prostituted their daughters, and those who assisted procuresses by preparing aphrodisiacal drugs, though the death penalty would also be enforced if the effects of these drugs were serious. Similar legislation

directed specifically at brothel keepers, procurers and panders, was instigated by Alphonso IX of Castile in the 12th Century, though he also decreed that they be banished from the kingdom, fined or flogged. Women who supported them were publicly whipped and had their clothes and belongings destroyed (Mayhew, 1862: 182-183).

It is in France that some of the most persistent efforts to combat the 'problem' of prostitution have existed. Most early accounts suggest that the business of prostitution was a fairly sordid affair, with buildings of every description being used as brothels, and solicitation in the streets being particularly violent; unsuspecting passers-by would literally be dragged off the streets into the houses of prostitution (Henriques, 1863: 42). It was to combat and reform such conditions that Louis IX inaugurated the first of several decrees. In December 1254, following his return from the Holy Land, he ordained that everyone connected with prostitution - from whore to procurer - were to have all their money and belongings confiscated and were to be exiled from France. In 1256 this ordination was repeated, and additional repressive measures prescribed. Louis was fanatically determined to destroy prostitution and in June 1269, before setting out for the Crusades, he ordered the destruction of all brothels. 8 The decrees were clearly impossible to carry out - indeed they made matters worse. Prostitution developed clandestine traits which made it more difficult to detect. Prostitutes adopted all sorts of evasive techniques; they abandoned their ordinary costumes and assumed those of respectable women. Unfortunately, and much to the consternation of the authorities, the 'respectable' wives and daughters of the bourgeoisie were then exposed to all sorts of lewd propositions from the eager male population who mistook them for prostitutes. Furthermore, because the prostitutes were forced to mingle with the general population, their influence was vastly extended. When it became clear that the decrees were aggravating the very situation he wished to remedy, the King had to concede defeat and allow prostitution a kind of official recognition. He allowed the whores to stay in the city (Paris) and continue their profession, but he confined them to a certain quarter of the city, forbade them to wear fine clothing and jewellery, and ordered that they be supervised by a special '*Le Roi des Ribauds*' (King of Bawds) who had the power to arrest and imprison those whores who broke the regulations. (Unfortunately, this was an office that soon attracted individuals of a less



than honest nature and they abused their powers to obtain sexual favours from the whores).

Successive legislation - which all had similar objectives and ordained similar regulations to try and curtail the problem - was hardly ever enforced. 9 As the centuries progressed, the semi-official 'toleration' of vice - in the form of municipal and crown brothels - became the norm, but in many of these institutions the women lived almost like nuns. They were strictly supervised and were whipped and fined if they serviced men outside the authorized brothels (Henriques, 1963: 43; Anderson & Zinsser, 1988: 364). In 1560 the brothels were abolished altogether by Charles 1X, but the number of prostitutes increased and new kinds of brothels appeared which were infinitely more hideous and dangerous (to all concerned) than the brothels that had been supervised.

In *Italy* prostitution flourished in Rome, Naples, Venice, Bologna and Florence. A unique feature of Italian prostitution was the 'courtesan' (lady following a court) who made her appearance at the end of the 15th Century largely as a result of the Renaissance. She was a superior prostitute who had no connection with the brothel. The courtesan enjoyed protection in high places; they associated with religious and secular leaders of the day on equal terms; many married the wealthiest and most powerful nobles of the period (Benjamin & Masters, 1964: 59). They lived in lavish dwellings, were well paid and had a profound impact on feminine fashion and style - regular bathing and bleaching the hair blonde was a fashion set by the courtesans. More mundane whores proliferated all over the cities of Italy. Statistics suggest that in Rome, out of a city population of 90,000, 6,800 were registered as whores. In 1509, Venice had a city population of 300,000 of which 11,654 were registered as prostitutes. In some localities the brothels were owned and operated by the civic authorities and prostitution was confined to these approved houses. In 1415, the town council of Florence authorized three brothels of which two were built at town expense. Various repressive measures were taken against the prostitutes including the special rules of prostitutes attire; the segregation of the women into special quarters, and punishment (flogging) if they ventured outside these designated areas. Generally this policy of confinement did not work primarily because the penalties were only sporadically enforced. An exception to this - and a unique feature of Neapolitan prostitution - was the 'Court of Prostitutes'.

This court only had a remit to arrest and detain known prostitutes, but in reality the court was so corrupt and abusive that judges regularly confined innocent young girls in prison and demanded money to set them free. Any woman - whether of easy virtue or not - was liable to be seized and treated in the same way. In 1589, in an attempt to curb the blackmail and corruption, reforms were introduced and the court had its powers strictly defined (Henriques, 1963). Corruption (of a sort) did not stop with the judicial system. Popes made attempts to profit from prostitutes. Pope Clement 11 compelled guilty prostitutes to leave half of their property on death (or before) to a religious foundation. Perhaps not surprisingly, this Bull was not easy to enforce and the papacy had little profit from it. In the mid 16th Century Pope Pius V taxed the women's earnings even after he had officially banished them from the towns. The revenue went to build bridges and streets.

Prostitution in the Iberian peninsular followed much the same pattern as the rest of Europe in this early period. In *Portugal* the magistrates of Lisbon built a municipal whore house but only because they were worried that the decent wives and daughters of respectable citizens were in great danger. To offset the cost of housing them, the magistrates levied a tax on prostitutes and imposed heavy fines on any misbehaviour (Mayhew, 1862: 187). In *Spain* prostitution was a national offence, but the problem was circumvented by the establishment of districts in which illicit sexual activities were allowed providing they did not lead into other forms of more serious criminality. The conduct of brothels in Spain was regarded as a very serious matter. The brothels - over 800 in Madrid - were constantly supervised and patrolled. In the major cosmopolitan cities, the brothels represented and housed the 'elite' of the profession. The more normal mode of prostitution - street prostitution - was very different and it was rife. Prostitution in the villages accounted for more than 5% of all criminal indictments and gives some indication of the substantial numbers of women who were forced to eke out a living any way they could (Weisser, 1980: 90). Municipalities tolerated organized prostitution until the middle of the 16th Century when, due to the influence of the Counter Reformation (and the scourge of venereal disease), extra-marital sexual activity of any kind was driven underground. Freelance prostitutes were increasingly subject to legal repression. In 1570 the existing laws governing prostitution were enlarged by Philip II. Severe regulations relating to the brothels kept out the women

he deemed inappropriate, including married women and those in debt. He decreed that the women had to be examined weekly and if they contracted syphilis they had to be sent to religious or secular hospitals. A brothel keeper was forbidden to accommodate a whore who had not been previously examined or to permit a diseased woman to remain on the premises. The brothels had to be closed on holidays, Fast days and throughout Lent. The penalty for failure in any of these matters was a severe flogging, a heavy fine and thirty years in jail.

As well as ordinary brothels - religious and secular - an important variation in the mediaeval pattern of public prostitution was the public bathing place. The idea of the public bathing place was reintroduced into Europe by the Crusaders from the Muslim world, albeit in a slightly modified version. These institutions were known in Europe as '*bath houses*' or '*bagnios*', and in England as '*stews*'. Originally, a '*stew*' was a sweating or steam bath and was a legacy from the Roman Empire. The association between such baths and bawdy houses was common in Rome and was re-enforced by the practice of sweating as a cure for venereal diseases (Salgado, 1977: 51). In France and Germany, it was common for the sexes to bathe together but, as ancillary services developed (the serving of food and drink) the baths degenerated into brothels and it became impossible for 'decent' women to use them. They quickly developed a reputation for illicit sexual activity; whilst many of them did have the official recognition, most baths had to operate clandestinely.

English Legislation 1100 - 1700.

In Mediaeval England licensed brothels ('stews') date back as far as 1161 when Henry II promulgated his '*Ordinances touching upon the Government of the Stews of Southwark*'.¹⁰ The King placed the regulations for the management of the stews at Southwark under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Winchester who had already had a large part of the area under his control for over half a century.¹¹ The Bishop had to see that certain regulations about the living and working conditions of the prostitutes were enforced; as a consequence, the inhabitants of the brothels were popularly known as the '*Winchester Geese*'. The comprehensive regulations must have given the stews a somewhat utilitarian air; no food or drink could be served and the prostitute had to spend the entire night with the man - a somewhat vain

attempt to give the impression that the stews were not places for casual sex; the buildings were not allowed to open on Holy days for fear that too much custom would be attracted when citizens were at a loose end; the episcopal court laid down the rules relating to wages and rents; stewholders were forbidden to charge more than fourteen pence a week for board, and the women were supposed to have weekly health checks. The stews were not allowed to receive any woman of religion or married women, and they were not to prevent the freedom of movement of single women or detain any woman who wished to give up whoring (Sandford, 1975: 124). Subsequent Acts of Parliament in the reigns of Edward 111 (1327-1377), Richard 11 (1377-1399) and Henry V1 (1422-1471) confirmed the existence of the stews. Despite the 'recognition' of brothels, London prostitutes were not held in very high regard. In 1351, the City Fathers passed an ordinance which forbade the whores to wear clothing similar to that of honest and 'respectable' women (prostitutes had to tie a red knot in the shoulder of their garment), and if a woman was still engaged in prostitution when she died she was refused burial in consecrated ground - a spare piece of land known as the 'single woman's churchyard' was set aside for this purpose.

Throughout the 16th century, repeated attempts were made to exert more vigorous control over the stews. In 1506 eighteen wooden brothels in Southwark were ordered to be closed (largely in an attempt to control venereal disease), but twelve of them soon reopened and resumed business. In general, the English stews survived - and in the main flourished - until 1546 when Henry V111 ordered all brothels to be closed completely. 12. Under Edward V1 (1547-1553) the brothels reopened, and they continued under Mary Tudor (1553-1558). However, punishments against those who worked outside the brothel system were vigorous. Whores were put in stocks and cages and paraded in front of a mocking public. (This was more lenient than legislation decreed by Henry V111 who ordered all whores to be branded). Throughout the reign of Elizabeth 1 (1558-1603) prostitution flourished, but the punishment of whores also continued unabated. 13 If found guilty a woman faced a variety of punishments, usually ending up at the House of Correction at Bridewell. A guilty woman would have her head shaved and be carted around the streets with a paper on her forehead announcing her shame. She would be accompanied by the clatter of barbers basins being beaten in mockery and other general musical accompaniment provided by minstrels

(Salgado, 1977: 53). Hardened offenders would be tied to a cart and dragged through the streets. Sometimes the woman would be whipped; this would be a very formal affair conducted in the presence of the Board of Governors at the House of Correction. When those who ran the brothel were caught, their punishment was comparable to that meted out to the whores. However, neither punishment nor prohibition appeared to have any noticeable effect on the activities of the whores or on the scale of the problem.

In essence, the punishments faced by prostitutes and their associates were no worse than those faced by other miscreants - murderers were boiled in vats of water, arsonists were burnt at the stake, most criminals were branded - marked with a permanent stigma of their crime. ¹⁴ In 1530, an act was passed to deal with vagabonds:

...such idle persons shall be had to the next market town tied to the end of a cart, naked and beaten with whips throughout the town until his body be bloody by reason of such whipping.

(Berg, 1959:55)

The picture that emerges of the Elizabethan period is that prostitution was a highly competitive business and one that proliferated through all classes of society - from the Royal courts to the stews and the streets. Moreover, no amount of moralistic denunciation, social reforms, or the dreaded fear of disease seems to have made any real impression on the brothels or the pleasure business generally.¹⁵ As one historian of the Elizabethan period has noted, the brothels flourished because they:

...answered a widely felt social need, and because a lot of people in high places stood to make a lot of money from them.

(Salgado, 1977: 64)

When it came to trying to explain *why* - given its inherent dangers - women were involved in the profession, Elizabethan opinions about women in general revolved around the idea of women being filled with insatiable lust. Any impropriety of man was regarded as thoroughly understandable, indeed entirely forgivable, given the fact that his behaviour was merely created and inflamed by the essentially lustful nature of women. Some of these ideas stemmed from the apparently strong connection of prostitutes with witchcraft. Theologians of the day believed that prostitutes had insatiable erotic appetites and they had to enter into pacts with the devil in order to be provided with demon lovers who could satisfy them - as mere men were unable to do so (Benjamin & Masters, 1964: 60). Any woman who was

openly or actively sexual was in danger of being considered a witch:

Sexuality, womanhood and witchcraft became synonymous. The combined fear, disgust, and suppressed sexual attraction felt for all women is clearly reflected in the fantasies and accusations surrounding the witches. The representation of a woman's sexuality was linked to her alleged weakness, her closeness to animals and to creatures of the lower order.

(Usser, 1991:49)

It would seem that the vast majority of women worked in prostitution because they had to; it was a common option - sometimes the only one - for women unable to find piecework or a days labour; in many cases, prostitution was the one occupation in which women could earn more than men.

In the 16th and 17th centuries the municipal brothels and bath houses went into decline. Their demise was not necessarily synonymous with an improvement in sexual morality, nor should it be assumed that attempts at regulation, repression or rehabilitation had been successful. There were several important factors which contributed to their decline: firstly, economic reality dictated that if a brothel did not make a profit it closed. This became more likely as the number of independent prostitutes increased. As the accent moved towards individual enterprise, nuns, clandestine and 'free' unlicensed prostitutes posed a serious competitive threat to the women working in the official brothels. One of the reasons for the proliferation of unlicensed prostitutes was simply the huge demand for their services, caused, in part, by the general delay in marriage for young men to the age of twenty six or more (Stone, 1977: 616). Although this is a theme more fully developed in the following chapter, it can be seen that by the end of the 16th Century, these changes in marriage patterns were creating an acute socio-sexual problem which was partly relieved by recourse to prostitutes. This, coupled with the double standard - the insistence on female virginity before marriage for respectable girls, but the toleration of pre-marital sexual experimentation for young men - led to a substantial increase in the demand for prostitutes.

Undoubtedly the most dramatic factor in the demise of the mediaeval brothel was the introduction of syphilis at the end of the 15th Century. The appearance of the disease made people more aware of the function of the brothels, and the ramifications on prostitution and on women in particular, were far reaching. In essence, the impact of venereal disease was such that it was this subject, above any other, which heralded the start of the modern,

ensorious approach to prostitution, in which matters of public health combined with matters of morality to become a powerful weapon for the anti-prostitution crusaders. Despite the fact that the cause was not directly known, it was felt that the brothels had something to do with the dissemination. William Clowes, surgeon to St. Bartholemews hospital, was in no doubt as to the main cause:

...the licentious and beastly disorder of a great number of rogues and vagabonds, the filthy lyfe of many lewd and idell persons, both men and women, and the great number of lewd alehouses which are the very nests and harbourers of such filthy dispositions ... by means of which disordered persons, some of better disposition are many times infected.

(cited Hibbert, 1987: 166)

Certainly the primitive condition of medicine and equally primitive notions of personal hygiene and public sanitation, did nothing to diminish the widespread problem of sexually transmitted diseases.¹⁷ As the epidemic swept across Europe, antipathy towards prostitution became widespread and rapidly gained influence. The threat of venereal disease was seen as a visible sign of God's retribution on those who were prostitutes, and those who made use of their services. As the virus spread, women were identified as the sole carriers. Secular and religious authorities, anxious to protect men, tried to forbid all possible means of contact. Throughout most of Europe, brothels were blamed and closed down. Prostitutes were pursued and penalised in large numbers. In short, religious and moral forces intensified their efforts at getting the women to reform, but none of the measures they prescribed (hospitals, refuges, convents) improved the basic situation of women, or altered the circumstances that made them turn to prostitution in the first place.

C. Regulation and Rehabilitation: 1700 -1860.

After 1700, the prostitute was continually subjected to widely fluctuating fortunes. And yet, despite the continued scourge of disease, repeated attempts at suppression, and the widespread moral condemnation of prostitution, women still engaged in the profession in huge numbers and men still availed themselves of their sexual services. Indeed, by the 18th Century, the whore began to enjoy popularity on a large scale. Bloch (1931) refers to this period as the '*golden age*' of prostitution when:

...the prostitute was idolized and idealized. The more vice and pleasure she knew, the higher she stood over the respectable woman.
(Bloch 1931: 76 cited Benjamin & Masters, 1964: 62)

Directories such as Jack Harris' *'The Whoremongers Guide to London'* and his *'List of Covent Garden Ladies'* (1789) described over one hundred tempting prostitutes (Stone, 1977: 279). The diaries of people such as Pepys and Boswell give some indication of the enormous fascination with prostitutes during this period. 18 Throughout the 18th Century the 'problem' of prostitution became more and more intractable. It seemed impervious to repression. Left to its own devices, prostitution flourished, yet arguments for maintaining it under the control of the authorities were regarded as odious. In 1724 Bernard de Mandeville produced a treatise called *'Modest defense of Publick Stews'* in which he argued that:

... the encouraging of public whoring will prevent not only most of the mischevious effects of this vice, but even lessen the quantity of whoring in general, and reduce it to the narrowest bounds which it can possibly be contained in.

(cited Ellis, 1906: 249)

Mandeville's proposals had the aim of discouraging private prostitution by giving special privileges and immunities to brothels by Act of Parliament. His scheme required the erection of 100 brothels in a special quarter of London with facilities for over 2000 prostitutes and 100 matrons, physicians and surgeons. The houses would cater for different social groups and this would be reflected in the charges - between two shillings and sixpence and one guinea (Stone, 1977: 392). However, his ideas were greeted with contempt by his contemporaries and the scheme was never implemented. Instead, between 1700 and 1860, a series of ad hoc policies were adopted to tackle the problem of prostitution, but much of this legislation was ill conceived, contradictory and hopelessly ineffective. Attempts at regulation proved futile because the legislation simply produced a merry-go-round of dispersement and displacement - measures aimed at clearing the streets simply forced the women into brothels and lodging houses; those aimed at curtailing the activities in brothels merely pushed them back on to the streets. The inadequacy of the law, coupled with a heady mixture of apathy and corruption, rendered the authorities largely impotent to deal with the problem. It has to be borne in mind that many of the policies adopted in this period were expected to be enforced by what was a generally unprofessional police force; this somewhat reluctant group of parish

constables guarding the streets of London actually needed a great deal of courage to arrest a prostitute. Given the violent nature of the streets, and the antipathy toward constables, it was much easier for them to collect their 'gin money' (as bribes were known after gin became all the rage after 1690), for permitting nightwalkers to parade in the streets.¹⁹

The Vagrancy Act of 1744 lumped the prostitute with beggars, thieves and '... loose, idle and disorderly persons' who could not give a good account of themselves and their way of living. Moral reformers were soon to discover that this Act could not be applied to streetwalkers. It was not until 1824 that an amendment allowed common prostitutes found 'wandering... and behaving in a riotous or indecent manner' to be brought under the Act (Bristow, 1977: 53). Prior to 1752, private individuals or local parish authorities were free to prosecute bawdy houses if they liked, but trying to get at the brothels was difficult because it was hard to get evidence. The police would call the attention of the responsible authorities to riotous brothels, and would keep watch to collect the required legal evidence on the movements of prostitutes and clients. However, action against brothels could be a long, tiresome and extremely expensive business - well over £100 - so many parishes were reluctant to inflict this burden on their ratepayers. A way of circumventing the problem was to convict the brothels on the lesser charge of being disorderly (Bristow, 1977: 26). The Disorderly Houses Act of 1752 put this tactic on a more formal basis. The legislation was the brainchild of a pioneering police officer, Henry Fielding, and was instigated in the aftermath of some serious brothel riots in 1749. It included clauses to facilitate the suppression of brothels and required the licensing of places offering music and dancing. It resulted in the closure of some of London's most popular 'tea gardens' - the notorious haunts of prostitutes.²⁰ The Vagrancy Act (1744) and the Disorderly Houses Act (1752) were introduced partly because of the general association of alehouses with prostitution, and the presumed deleterious effects of alcohol on those involved in the prostitution business - both whore and client. Huge quantities of alcohol were being consumed. In 1743, over 18 million gallons of Gin were being sold in London annually (Clarke, 1983: 149). The Metropolitan Police Act of 1839 attempted to clear prostitutes from fashionable streets, but these suppressive measures tended to increase the amount of prostitution in brothels, lodging houses, pubs and private apartments above them. The Act provided what was to

remain the basic legal weapon against street prostitutes for the next 120 years. Subsection 11 of the Act stated:

Every common prostitute or nightwalker loitering or being in any thoroughfare or public place for the purpose of prostitution or solicitation to the annoyance of the inhabitants or passengers.

(Subsection 11, Metropolitan Police Act 1839, cited Rolph 1955:15)

Technically, prostitutes were made subject to one month's imprisonment or a heavy fine if they annoyed passers-by, but, 'annoyance' and 'loitering' were subject to varying judicial interpretations. The Metropolitan Police Act (1839) was followed by the Town Police Clauses Act of 1847 which provided that persons keeping houses or rooms for the sale or consumption of refreshment and knowingly suffering 'common prostitutes' or reputed thieves to assemble and continue in the premises, were liable to a penalty not exceeding five pounds. The Common Lodging House Act (1851) gave the police the right to inspect any common lodging house, but it did not give them any jurisdiction over houses where the rooms were let out individually to prostitutes who could thus claim to be private tenants. Whilst this act did not put an end to brothel keeping, it did make life much harder for poorer prostitutes who previously would have clubbed together and rented a room for the night - usually all piling in with their customers.

Whilst reformers and moralists did press for legal reforms to repress the most objectionable aspects of prostitution (street soliciting and disorderly brothels), most of their efforts were aimed at the total eradication of sexual vice and the rehabilitation of prostitutes. Between 1700 and 1860, 'rescue' work was undertaken on a large scale. In 1758, Magdalen Hospitals were founded by Dr. William Doad, a court chaplain, and over the next century over 300 were established. The method and style of the hospitals was patriarchal and largely reflected the class stratification of society. Confinement in Magdalen was up to 3 years; the age limit was set at 30 and women had to petition for entry. Throughout their period in the hospital, the women were carefully controlled. Ultimately, the goal was the conversion of the outcast poor into the respectable and disciplined poor. The basic ingredients of reclamation was a rigid control of time and work, discipline and religious instruction. The grim regime placed the women in a position of extreme alienation; their hair was cropped, they had to wear a dismal uniform and punishments included solitary confinement and forfeiture of meals and wages. The prostitutes were trained for household work and placed

as domestic servants. The idea was that 'public women were to be returned to the private sphere' (Walkowitz, 1980: 11). However, by the end of the century when laundry work was introduced as a 'cleansing' form of penance, the Magdalen Hospitals became nothing more than a 'sanctimonious sweatshop' (Bristow, 1977: 65-66). Records would suggest that the hospitals did not achieve a tremendous breakthrough in reclaiming the women. Between 1758 (when they were established) and 1786, 2471 women were admitted. 300 of them could not put up with the restrictions and left the hospital; 338 were dismissed for disorder; 60 died and 45 were judged insane or incurably diseased. Only 1,608 were deemed reclaimed - meaning that they had either returned to their parents or had secured domestic employment (Henriques, 1963: 183-184). From 1778, the Lock Hospital became the centre of a new moral regime, though yet again the social world of the hospital reflected the patriarchal and class order of society (Walkowitz, 1980: 220-221). Lock wards of hospitals were merely a method of confinement and social control. The treatment was mainly purgative and punitive and did nothing to alter the future of the women in its care. There was no attempt to remove the stigma attached to the hospitals; they were only open to prostitutes - and everybody knew it. 21.

By the turn of the next century, numerous penitentiaries and societies had been established to eradicate sexual vice and redeem prostitutes. The 'Society for the Repression of Vice' (popularly known as 'The Vice Society') was founded in 1802. It laid special emphasis on sexual immorality and vigorously sought to suppress disorderly houses, obscene prints and publications and lewd theatres. In 1812, the 'Guardian Society' was founded with the objective of finding both the best means of driving prostitutes from the streets, and supplying a refuge for those who wished to reform. In a similar attempt to address the problem, the 'London Society for the Protection of Females and Prevention of Juvenile Prostitution' was established in 1835.

In essence, the legislation passed between 1700 and 1860 meant that for the most part, the formal powers of the constable were limited. The actual state of the law required the police to repress flagrant acts of indecency and disorder in the streets and public places, and the prosecution of brothel owners and keepers of disorderly houses was encouraged. 22. Theatres, places of amusement and refreshment required licences - renewable annually and

only continued on good behaviour - and were subject to restrictions regarding opening hours. Technically, the police could control 'common prostitutes' through fines, but they had no real effective power against brothels owners and successful prosecutions were difficult to achieve. In practice, the role of the police was mainly to keep outward order, break up the links between prostitutes and thieves, and to confine prostitutes to within recognized areas. Many of the institutions and societies established with the aim of rehabilitating prostitutes failed in their task largely because the idea that prostitution could easily be abandoned was totally untenable. Realistically, the prostitute had little to gain from entering a refuge shelter. As the statistics suggest, the most they could hope for was domestic service or laundry work - the conditions of which were hardly ideal - indeed indications are that these fields of employment were frequently less enticing and rewarding than prostitution. Perhaps the most important reason why rehabilitation proved difficult was because, as Finnegan (1979) points out '...the women ... were regarded by society (and regarded themselves) as social outcasts' (Finnegan, 1979: 215). As such, many were tempted, or compelled, to return to their former way of life.

D. *The Contagious Diseases Acts.*

In the last quarter of the 19th Century, the subject of prostitution and its attendant evils was rarely out of the public mind. In the eyes of many people, the problem of prostitution was simply the problem of syphilis. Chesney (1970) argues that it is not difficult to sympathize with those who wanted the authorities to take a more positive stance towards prostitution. The author suggests that:

... as matters stood, everything seemed calculated to encourage the diseased prostitute to continue at her business as long as her strength lasted, and as long as she could find customers ignorant of her condition.

(Chesney, 1970: 356)

Opposition to prostitution once again became widespread and vociferous though not just on moral grounds. The subject of prostitution began to enter a phase where allegedly scientific arguments were raised to try and curb what was regarded as the 'great social evil'. With the emergence of Darwin's theory (1858), this was progressively a more 'enlightened' age, when 'scientific' ideas were vigorously pursued in place of moral and religious

dogmas. The prevailing ideology was that women were the essential agents of contagion so, to these new 'men of science', it seemed wholly reasonable to take action to mitigate the risk to men. The ensuing Contagious Diseases Acts were thus based on the premise that women - but not men - were responsible for the spreading of venereal diseases and, as such, must be controlled. In essence, the acts attempted to isolate prostitutes and keep them under surveillance for the protection of men. Advocates defended the regulations for the control of vice as an intelligent precautionary measure and an advance in public hygiene; opponents berated them as immoral abuses of the constitution and an outrageous patronage of vice. Whatever the rhetoric, the acts did seem to rest on the premise that:

...while men would be degraded if subjected to physical examination, the women who satisfied male urges were already so degraded that further indignities scarcely mattered.

(McHugh, 1980: 17)

The Contagious Diseases Acts were examples of class legislation and sex discrimination par excellence. Traditional and contemporary opinion surrounding prostitution was ignored by those who wished to enforce the provisions of the acts in what Finnegan (1979) describes as:

... a complacent and sanctimonious white-washing of reality, in order that the legislation which approved and regulated a system so blatantly discriminating against one sex and class could be more palatably passed.

(Finnegan, 1979: 166)

The Reasoning Behind the Acts.

The reasoning behind the introduction of the Acts was thought to be related to the system that Napoleon had introduced into France in 1802. Under this system, prostitutes were registered and kept in 'maisons tolerees', licensed by the police and subjected to regular examinations by special surgeons. When similar laws were implemented in Italy in the 1850s, it was felt to be only a matter of time before they were introduced into Britain. What was termed the 'licensing system' on the Continent was to be termed the 'voluntary system' in England. One of the chief campaigners for the Acts was William Acton (1814 - 1875). Believing prostitution to be ineradicable and that:

..individual efforts were powerless to effect either the cure of the disease or the reformation of the prostitute.

(Acton, 1857:24)

Acton fiercely campaigned for the '...recognition, prevention, amelioration and regulation of prostitutes' (Acton, 1857: 24-25). Acton firmly believed it was necessary to recognise the existence of prostitution because:

...vice does not hide itself, it throngs our streets, intrudes into our parks and theatres and other places of resort, bringing to the foolish temptation and knowledge of sin to the innocent; it invades the very sanctuary of the home, destroying conjugal happiness and blighting the hopes of parents ... the moral injury inflicted on society is incalculable, the physical injury is at least as great.

(Acton, 1857: 84)

Was prostitution the great 'social evil'? From the empirical and statistical research of social investigators, it is possible to paint a general picture of the prostitution scene in 19th Century England. 23 In his examination of the '...unfettered domestic life and haunts of London prostitutes' Acton (1857) discerned: (1) *Dress Houses* (2) *Houses in which prostitutes lodge* (3) *Brothels* (4) *Introducing houses* and (5) *Accommodation houses*. Other popular prostitution haunts included theatres, opera houses, casinos and pleasure gardens (Acton, 1857: 36). The *Dress houses* and *Low lodging houses* tended to lodge the lower class of prostitute. The women were treated virtually as slaves; they were under constant pressure to work; they had no control over their own bodies and time, and they received little money. Similarly, brothel keepers exercised great control over the girls and their earnings. It must be appreciated that brothels were actually quite rare and accounted for only a small percentage of the whole population of prostitutes. Because most of the legislation was directed against brothels, they had to adopt a low profile and this put them at an immediate disadvantage. Any trouble - robbery or uproar - could lead to a loss of goodwill and bring interference from the police. *Introducing houses* also accounted for only a small percentage of the sexual market. These were unobtrusive establishments and held association with the more elite prostitutes and the more elite clients. The clients met carefully selected girls (usually presented to him in the guise of a widow) who travelled to the house specifically for the assignation. The owner of the house would collect commission from both parties, but everyone involved in the transaction handled the matter with refinement and discretion. Notoriety and scandal was seldom attached to these houses. The attraction of using an introducing house was that men believed it offered them greater protection against venereal disease. (This was not

necessarily the case). According to Acton (1857), the existence of introducing houses depended on:

...the patronage of wealthy, indolent and sensual men of London who would pay any premium for assurance against social discredit and sanitary damage.

(Acton, 1857: 44)

Without doubt, *Accommodation houses* made up the biggest section of the industry (Chesney, 1970: 339). Essentially for casual use or the 'freelance' trade, the women did not live in these premises but merely went there with their pickups and hired the room for several minutes or a few hours - depending on the client's purse and inclinations. Ranging between luxury and squalor, tariffs varied. In the 1850s costs were in the region of 5/-, by the 1870s the usual charge was about 10/-. For this, a customer could expect:

...red curtains, looking glasses, wax lights, clean linen, a huge chair, a large bed and a cheval mirror, large enough for the biggest couple to reflect in.

(Marcus, 1966: 99)

The arrangement had several advantages for the woman. She was able to separate her private life from her working life. The charge of the accommodation house had to be added to the cost of her services, but, what she made she kept. If a woman used the same house on a regular basis, she might be afforded some security (by the house keepers) against violence or ill treatment from clients.

The prostitutes themselves were generally divided into four broad classes. (1) Women kept by men of independent means; (2) Women who lived in private houses and apartments including (a) kept mistresses and (b) 'prima donnas' (Mayhew, 1862: 213-216); (3) Women who lived in brothels and low lodging houses and (4) 'Clandestine' prostitutes - a large and heterogeneous class of female operatives known as 'dollymops', essentially this was amateur prostitution - a sideline to supplement their income - but by the mid 19th Century, dollymops were numerous enough to pose a serious threat to professional prostitutes (Chesney, 1970:324). Other important categories of prostitutes were 'sailors' women (situated at major ports) and 'soldiers' women (Mayhew, 1862: 226; Chesney, 1970: 322). Some seaport prostitutes specialized in quite a narrow field. Chesney (1970) reports that in Liverpool, a clear cut group of prostitutes arose who confined themselves exclusively to negro customers (Chesney, 1970: 322).

The women patronized by soldiers were badly remunerated (because soldiers were badly paid) and thus tended to service several men in one evening. Mayhew (1862) regarded them as simply '...low, cheap and diseased', who, because of the prevalence of syphilis, brought '...infinite harm to the health of the nation' (Mayhew, 1862: 233-236). The women themselves:

...lived in the greatest poverty, covered with rags and filth, and many of them covered with horrid sores and eruptions on their body, arms and legs, presenting in many cases a revolting appearance. many of them have not the delicacy of females and live as pigs in a sty.

(Mayhew, 1862: 363)

Mayhew (1862) also discerned 'thieves' women and 'Park' women. According to him, they were:

...the most degraded, who consent to all and sundry and who are well known to give themselves up to disgusting practices that are alone gratifying to men of morbid and diseased imagination.

(Mayhew, 1862: 243)

Acton had examined the system adopted in France which was aimed at repressing private prostitution and encouraging public prostitution. Although the French had not by any means established control over all prostitution in Paris, Acton argued that:

...in London a man has prostitution thrust upon him; in Paris he has to go out of his way to look for it, so that external decency, so outraged in England, is there maintained... [however] ... to create and maintain a class of harlots for the benefit of the public health is doubtless, repugnant to English feelings, and to preserve public decency by licensing vice, seems to us an intolerable outrage on religion. It has, however ... the merit of being logical, and is ... in accordance with commonsense.

(Acton, 1857: 107 & 111)

The very real opportunity for smuggling a system of regulation into England followed the Crimean War. Not only had the war brought English doctors into contact with their French counterparts already experienced in the licensing system, but reports from the battlefield had suggested that the British Army's most implacable enemy was disease. Even prior to the Crimean war, the average annual death rate in the Army was double that of the Civilian population of military age. In the late 1850s, early 1860s, demands grew for the state regulation of prostitution in order to curtail venereal disease. The argument was simply that the economic losses incurred by the army as a result of VD led to inefficient and weakened fighting units and was a waste of public money. In the Lancet of February 1858, it was argued that '... about

one-fifth of the effective force of this country is yearly in hospital with VD for a period of 22 days', but, it suggested that this situation could be rectified, at least in part, by treating the women as well as the men (Nield 1973). By 1861, Florence Nightingale maintained that:

...the disease of vice is daily increasing in the Army, so that fully one half of all sickness ... is owing to that.

(cited Hibbert, 1987: 639)

However, Nightingale reasoned that if soldiers had better living conditions and recreational activities, they would be less inclined to consort with prostitutes. Barrack conditions were appalling: overcrowding, inadequate ventilation and defective sanitary conditions, coupled with overwhelming boredom, compelled troops to seek alternative attractions in the form of women and drink. Furthermore, these appalling conditions were compounded by the rules of marriage in the British army which decreed that soldiers must have completed seven years service and be in possession of at least one good conduct badge to be eligible to have their name played on the roll of married men. Thus, at any one time, 93 out of every 100 soldiers were, of necessity, unmarried men. Not surprisingly, in all Garrison towns there was always a large demand for prostitutes, and always a supply in proportion to that demand. In 1859, the Inspector General of Hospitals estimated that in 11 garrison towns there were over 7000 prostitutes, more worryingly, over 1000 of these were believed to be diseased. Mayhew (1862) argued that this high rate of disease was because soldiers could not afford to pay 'professional' women, so they were more inclined to resort to a 'low set of women' who were more likely to communicate an infectious disease. Mayhew wrote:

... soldiers women ... they are simply low and cheap, often diseased, and as a class do infinite harm to the health of the service. It is surprising that any soldiers should lie down among such heaps of filthy rags.

(Mayhew, 1862: 236 & 365)

With the annual reports of the Army and Navy Medical departments indicating the scale of the problem, and with advocates of legislation arguing that it was the duty of the State to protect the armed services in the interest of public safety and national defence, the need for regulation was recognised as an urgent necessity. However, despite the deterioration of health in the armed forces, the periodical medical inspection of men in the army was abolished in 1859 - mainly to increase their self esteem, but also because army medical

officers found it distasteful to perform the inspections. (Westminster Review, Vol.37 1870: 507). However, it was argued that the women they slept with should undergo examination. Interestingly, Bristow (1977) points out that originally neither the War Office or Admiralty committees appointed to investigate the problem actually recommended compulsory examination or detention of prostitutes, but the military medical men were determined to have their way (Bristow, 1977: 79). The pre-amble to the first Contagious Diseases Act read:

... that the peculiar conditions of the naval and military services, and the temptations to which men are exposed, justifies special precautions for the protection of their health, and their maintenance in a state of physical efficiency.

(Petrie, 1971: 11)

The medical profession believed that in legislation, they had found the answer to the evil.

The actual passage of the first Contagious Diseases Act (CD Act) drew remarkably little comment. In and out of parliamentary circles, few people were aware of its existence. Very few MPs realised what was happening as the Government took the stages of the Bill last thing at night when few MPs were present, indeed the first CD Act was passed with such stealth that even Gladstone later claimed to have little idea who prepared or piloted it (Bristow, 1977: 78). Similarly, the House of Lords passed the measure without debate. In truth, in 1864, the Secretary of the Admiralty had introduced the first instalment soon after the passage of various regulations under the title of 'The Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act'. If it was the case that the title of the acts was deliberately chosen to confuse people, it certainly duped Queen Victoria who, it was rumoured, had signed the first of the CD acts in the mistaken belief that it was something to do with cattle. 24.

The Legislation.

The first Contagious Diseases Act of 1864 was applied to the Garrison towns of Portsmouth, Plymouth, Woolwich, Chatham, Sheerness, Aldershot, Colchester, Shorncliffe, The Curragh, Cork and Queenstown. Within these areas, a police superintendent or inspector could inform a Justice of the Peace if he believed or suspected a certain woman to be a prostitute. The JP could then order a woman to be medically examined and, if she was found to be suffering from a venereal disease, detained in hospital for treatment for a

period of upto three months. If the woman did not wish to appear in court, she could sign a 'voluntary' submission. Hospitals were supposed to make adequate provision for the religious and moral instruction of the detained women.

The Contagious Diseases Act of 1866 added Windsor to the scheduled areas and increased the maximum period of hospital detention to six months. A JP could order a woman informed against as a common prostitute to undergo periodical medical examination for a period of up to a year:

... for the purpose of ascertaining whether she is affected with a contagious disease ... the order shall be sufficient warrant for the visiting surgeon to conduct such examinations accordingly.

(Acton, 1857: 88)

Any woman who refused to conform with this act was liable to be punished by imprisonment, similarly, anyone permitting a woman to use his house for the purpose of prostitution knowing that she was suffering from a contagious disease, was liable to six months imprisonment with or without hard labour (Acton, 1857: 90).

The Contagious Diseases Act of 1869 increased the maximum detention in hospital to nine months and added Canterbury, Gravesend, Maidstone, Winchester and Southampton to the scheduled areas. In general, the appointment of the necessary surgeons and Inspectors of Hospitals was entrusted to the Admiralty and War Offices; the implementation of the 'minor' details of the acts was left to the police. As will be seen later, this delegation of responsibilities led to confusion and abuses of the acts.

William Acton believed that the Acts formed '... the commencement of a new legislative era' (Acton, 1857:22). Others were not so charitable. William Logan regarded the CD Act of 1864 as:

... Un-British ... a disgrace to the nation, and discreditable to those who passed it ... [further, the acts] ... confer powers so extreme and tyrannical, that while they attempt to shield the vicious from the consequences of their vice, they put the very much larger virtuous female population entirely at the mercy of police spies, malicious enemies or vindictive seducers.

(Logan, 1871: 211 & 220)

Jacob Bright also argued that it was a law:

... passed by Peers and Prelates in one chamber, and by an assembly of rich men in another, the whole burden of which is directed against the poor women of the country. It is the most indefensible piece of class legislation of which I have any knowledge.

(Logan, 1871: 216)

According to Logan (1871), the legislators had regarded the evil only in so far as it:

... injured the health of our soldiers and sailors, who, as they cost the nation a large sum of money ... must be kept in good health.

(Logan, 1871: 212)

Logan emphasized the iniquity of the acts and argued that if the measures were justified against women, then they were equally justified against men. He argued:

... it cannot be denied that man is the great source from whence the misery consequent upon prostitution flows. In fact, there cannot be prostitution except where he consents, and therefore the law should be directly levelled against him. If there was to be inspection, police espionage and police arrestment - if there was to be public medical examination and exposure - if all this was done in the case of women, why not also in the case of men?

(Logan, 1871: 210 - 213)

Josephine Butler had asserted that men should be medically examined but the Royal Commission dismissed the idea on the grounds that:

... it was founded on the principle of putting both parties to the act of fornication on the same footing ... there is no comparison to be made between prostitutes and the men who consort with them. With the one sex, the offences are committed as a matter of gain, with the other it is an irregular indulgence of a natural impulse.

(Royal Commission, 1870: cited Pearson, 1972: 73)

The fact that the acts violated the constitution and robbed women of their civil rights prompted much anger. The authors of the influential Westminster Review, claimed that the acts were:

... more fitted for slaves than for Englishwomen [and they pledged to] ... resist the attempt ... to make them legalised slaves, disciplined and duly qualified by the State to minister safely to men's sensuality.

(Westminster Review, 1870: 491 & 534)

The Repeal Campaign.

Until 1869, opposition to the acts was largely confined to Florence Nightingale and her associates. In the autumn of that year, two groups were formed - the '*National Association for the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts*', and the '*Ladies National Association for the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts*, (the LNA). On the 1st January 1870, the LNA published their manifesto against the acts - a protest drawn up by Harriet Martineau and signed by 124 women, including Florence Nightingale, the penal reformer Mary Carpenter, the suffragist Lydia Becker and the woman who came to spearhead the campaign, Josephine Butler. In taking up the cause of

prostitution, the campaigners were going counter to what was considered as normal 'feminine' behaviour, but it is important to recognise that the whole campaign was not simply a social but also a religious crusade. Despite Butler's extraordinary sympathy and understanding with prostitutes, she was a deeply religious woman who was prepared to assist her 'fallen sister' but not condone her sin. Butler was against vice *not* the disease. The religious motivation behind the crusade is clear from the nature of its support. Wesleyan Methodists, the Quakers and the Congregationalists all declared themselves to be against the acts. Given the nature of the subject, this religious support was crucial. According to McHugh:

Since they regarded religion as supremely important, repealers strove to demonstrate the full support of religious feeling - failure to have done so would have undermined the claim that theirs was a moral crusade.

(McHugh, 1980:187)

The campaign for the repeal of the CD acts has been described as one of the century's '... most notable protest movements, at what was undoubtedly the high point of the 'double standard' of sexual morality' (Bristow, 1977: 5; Thomas 1959).

Between 1870 and 1885, those who wished to repeal the CD acts published at least 520 books and pamphlets on the subject; 17,367 petitions against the acts bearing 2,606,429 signatures were presented to the House of Commons; and over 900 public meetings were held by supporters of the repeal campaign (Sigsworth & Wyke, 1972: 77). Constitutional, legal, moral, religious, medical, sexual and class objections all arose over this legislation. On moral grounds, campaigners argued that the acts implied the state recognition and sanction of vice, and that by accepting the state regulation of prostitution:

... the path of evil is made more easy to our sons and to the whole of the youth of England, inasmuch as a moral restraint is withdrawn from the moment the state recognises and provides convenience for the practice of a vice which it thereby declares to be necessary and venial.

(Butler, 1911: 10)

Similarly, Harriet Martineau argued that:

... if the soldier is more immoral than his contemporaries of the working class, it must be because the standard of morality is lower in the army than out of it ... this admission of the necessity of vice is the point on which the whole argument turns.

(Petrie, 1971: 88)

In a speech in Carlisle, Butler argued that the acts had changed prostitutes:

... from a rabble into a well drilled army, fenced in by regulations, and so completely in the hands of official persons as to make efforts of God's voluntary and free hearted evangelists hopeless in that direction.
(Petrie, 1971: 92)

Opponents of the acts emphasized the sexual discrimination explicit in punishing women, but not men involved in illicit sex. Butler found it intolerable that women should be debauched for mens satisfaction and then treated as offenders. She argued that laws made by men alone dealt penally with women, and that in this respect the acts were not only immoral but also unfair because:

... it is unjust to punish the sex who are the victims of a vice and leave unpunished the sex who are the main cause, both of the vice and its dreaded consequences.
(Butler, 1911: 9)

Butler believed that the acts were a statutory enshrinement of the iniquitous 'double standard':

... many men have convinced themselves that recourse to prostitution for men is a regrettable necessity, and it is on the basis of this belief ... that the CD acts have been established ... but, if the offence which is venial and excusable in men is held to be damnable in women, it argues that regulations which virtually provide women for the enjoyment of men are reducing such women to the level of slaves.
(Butler, cited Petrie 1971:95-96)

It was her belief that the acts were liable to turn a woman into '... a vessel periodically cleansed for public use' (Rover, 1970: 78).

The Administration of the Acts: Abuses and Objections.

Administration of the Acts was complex. Nationally, the legislation was overseen by the Admiralty, War Office and the Metropolitan Police (under the auspices of the Home Office); locally, magistrates, doctors and hospital authorities were expected to enforce the sanitary and penal requirements. Not surprisingly, bureaucratic and jurisdictional conflicts were great. Walkowitz (1980) indicated that:

...the moral and social preoccupations of local authorities resulted in a more coercive policy than the procedures officially sanctioned by the Home Office and the Admiralty.
(Walkowitz, 1980: 159)

The principle difficulty in implementing the Acts was determining who was a prostitute and who was not. The system led to some monstrous abuses and

mistakes. A zealous policeman could name any number of women - prostitute or not - and a considerable number of innocent women were detained on the grounds that they had been loitering in a public place, strolling with a boyfriend, or observed simply talking to a soldier (Bristow, 1977: 82). No evidence other than that of the police that a woman was thought to be a prostitute was required. No appeal was allowed. The alleged woman had no rights. The requirement to sign a 'voluntary' submission meant, in reality, that women were intimidated by the police into signing their names (or putting their cross onto papers), often with little or no understanding of the implications of what they were signing. According to Logan (1871):

...every kind of cajolery and fraud was resorted to to obtain the signatures of ignorant and defenceless women.

(Logan, 1871: 216)

Once the women had 'voluntarily' committed themselves, they were subjected to forced examinations and were either traumatized or stigmatized so deeply by the whole experience that to return to 'decent' life was almost impossible (Finnegan, 1979; Walkowitz, 1980).

The powers of the police were unprecedented. Under the Metropolitan Police Act, the police had the power over a radius of 15 miles around any Garrison. However, the police were authorized to arrest women in places 10 miles beyond the limits of each area, so the circumference of each region virtually under control was, in fact 150 miles (Westminster Review, Vol: 37, 1870: 487). Moreover, the Acts were biased and discriminatory against the working class. Only lower class prostitutes and streetwalkers - easily distinguishable by their dress - were likely to be subjected to police harassment on the streets of the scheduled towns and detained. Although it was widely accepted that middle class women were not endangered by the Acts, Butler was eager to make middle class women more aware of the sexist nature of the Acts, and she quoted powerfully from women who had been the victim of the Acts:

It is men, men and only men, from the first to the last that we have to deal with! To please a man I did wrong ... then I was flung about from man to man. Men police lay hands on us. By men we are examined, doctored and messed on with. In the hospital it is a man again who makes prayers and reads the Bible for us. We are had up before magistrates who are men, and we never get out of the hands of men until we die.

(cited McHugh, 1980:167-168) 25.

The issue of physical violation was crucial. Although the Admiralty and Medical officials vehemently denied that the subjected women found the internal examination conducted by a male doctor offensive, to a Victorian audience, the affront to personal modesty struck a powerful emotional chord. Many saw the compulsory examination as the central iniquity of the Act - a symbolic representation of male domination over women. The speculum examination was perceived by patients as voyeuristic, and one that inflicted physical and mental pain on the sufferer. As such, it was discussed in terms of being 'instrumental rape'. The examinations themselves were not as private as they were intended. Crowds of men would watch the women going into the medical centres for the inspection sessions which were held at regular intervals. In essence, the clinics became places of free public entertainment; children played games of doctors and prostitutes in the streets (Petrie, 1971: 19; Pearson, 1972: 65). 26.

As well as the issue of physical violation, specific medical objections to the acts arose over the diagnosis and treatment of venereal disease. The prevailing ideology was to treat the disease systematically and symptomatically; in practice this meant that if it couldn't be seen, it didn't exist. (Walkowitz, 1980). The etiology of syphilis and gonorrhoea was little understood. The precise classification of syphilis was derived from the empirical research of Philippe Ricord whose *Traite pratique sure les maladies veneriennes* was published in 1838. Ricord was able to distinguish gonorrhoea from syphilis and trace the latter through its three stages. He identified gonorrhoea as a purulent inflammation of the mucous membranes. However, as most women were asymptomatic in the early acute stage, doctors greatly underestimated the extent of gonorrhoea in women. In short, doctors made mistakes in diagnosis between primary and secondary syphilis, and between syphilis and gonorrhoea. They also had difficulty distinguishing VD from other afflictions. 27. Much of the confusion can be attributed to the use of the speculum, which was clearly woefully inadequate and dangerous - standards of hygiene were poor, and the need for the maximum number of examinations to be performed in the minimum amount of time, meant that there was an increased danger of contamination from infected instruments. Treatment for VD was also protracted and doubtful; the treatment in hospital was clumsy, punitive and dangerous. Mercurial compounds and cauterization was the most common treatment - administered externally and internally -

but this could lead to mercury poisoning (eventual kidney failure), the effects of which were comparable to the horrors of VD itself. Walkowitz (1980) reports that there were cruel medical experiments with people being inoculated with syphilitic and gonorrhoeal pus so that the progress of the two diseases could be observed (Walkowitz, 1980: 55).

Most hospitals made no special provisions for treating VD; those women that were sent to hospital usually ended up in the pariah section of the general hospital called the 'Foul' ward. In 1868, an association headed by Dr. Berkley Hill made great play of the fact that the existing facilities for dealing with VD were inadequate but if the acts were extended to the entire population, state provision of hospital and other medical care would greatly increase (Neild, 1973). Although a radical distinction was made between the case of the army and navy and that of the civilian population, eminent medical and religious opinion did argue that there was a case for extending the acts. Initially, the only substantial opposition to the principle of extension centred around doubts about the practicality of attempting such a scheme. Eventually, it was realised that economically, the extension of the acts to the whole population was totally unrealistic.

Effects and Effectiveness of the CD Acts.

The effectiveness of the CD acts is difficult to evaluate, though the most generous appraisal would suggest that, at best, the effects of the acts were marginal. Even before the CD acts were introduced, the incidence of VD in the armed forces was steadily decreasing. *If* the rate did fall in the subjected districts, other factors must be considered. McHugh (1980) points out that in Aldershot, different regiments displayed vastly different ratios of the disease - whether this was because of the differing moral standards or variations in prophylactic advice - the differences could not be entirely attributed to the effect of the CD acts (McHugh, 1980: 260). Nevertheless, the Committees appointed by the Secretary of State for War and the Board of Admiralty, reported that the 1866 CD act had:

...been attended with the happiest results both as regards to the health of our Army and Navy, and the sanitary and moral improvement wrought in the unhappy women who have come within the scope of its provisions. Prostitution appears to have been diminished, its worst features to have been softened, its physical evils abated.

(Report of the Select Committee on the CD Act 1866, cited Acton:21)

Subsequent Royal Commissions all reported that the CD Acts had firmly

contained and reduced the incidence of VD. Many of the medical statistics were problematical because they were based on flawed diagnoses, and were made further 'unsafe' by the numerous changes in the classification of the diseases over the 19th Century. Campaigners against the acts spent much of their energy fighting a statistical battle trying to show that the acts were not working. According to Bristow (1977) the war on the reliability of the statistics was ultimately so effective that:

...the long technical dispute (about the efficacy of the acts) cast enough doubt on the working of the system to enable moral and political arguments to decide the issue.

(Bristow, 1977: 81)

Butler vehemently opposed the '...superstitious reliance on medical opinion', and was severely critical of the medical establishments integrity. The repealers believed that military medical departments were not above being 'economical with the truth' about the statistics in order to boost their case. The LNA kept a detailed record of the number of examinations in which no venereal disease was discovered. While the acts were in force, 49,389 women were found to be free of the disease; only 14,260 examinations produced a different result. By 1886, the number of examinations in which no VD was discovered had come to nearly half a million (Logan, 1871: 218; Bristow, 1977:82).

It would seem that the acts did not bring about the improvements claimed by their advocates. There was no real grounds for believing that the total number of prostitutes had lessened. On the contrary, evidence tended to suggest that the operation of the acts consolidated, if not actually increased, the practice of prostitution in the protected areas (Petrie, 1971: 109). This can possibly be attributed to the fact that men, seeking sex, began making special trips to the garrison towns on the theory '...that they could indulge their tastes with less fear of picking up a dose' (Pearson 1972: 66).

It is plausible that fear of the 'morals police' and fear of the possibility of a prison sentence, did have the effect of clearing up the streets. Formally notorious areas did become more respectable and there was a lessening of general disorderly conduct in the streets. Increased police vigilance undoubtedly contributed to this, but, it also had the effect of driving the prostitutes underground. The CD Acts drove prostitutes to evade its regulations and this increased the amount of clandestine prostitution. More seriously, the clandestine prostitutes no longer sought any form of medical treatment even on

a truly voluntary basis. The conclusion could be drawn that far from diminishing the disease, the CD Acts actually promoted it; those areas not subsumed by the acts offered a safe haven for prostitutes, and it is more than feasible that their movement to other areas 'transported' the disease to places where it had not previously been a problem. The acts were totally inadequate to prevent the spread of disease, it was obviously futile to attempt to control VD by legislating only against streetwalkers but not the clients who remained free to spread the infection. Walkowitz (1980) argues that the practical medical goals of the acts were '...undermined by a set of moral and ideological assumptions', moreover, by absolving men from periodic medical inspection:

...the architects of the acts obliterated from the start whatever effectiveness as sanitary measures the acts might have had.

(Walkowitz, 1980: 3)

Not all commentators would concur this view. McHugh (1980) acknowledges that the acts were 'hygienically absurd, but goes on to argue that '...examining women periodically while leaving men alone was, logically defensible' (McHugh, 1980: 216). The author bases this statement on the fact that the women were selling their services, all the state was doing was regulating the transaction without actually troubling the purchaser.

Perhaps the most damaging effect of the CD acts was the degradation and isolation inflicted on the prostitute. Public shaming was one of the principal functions of police registration and surveillance. One of the effects of the CD acts was to define more sharply the categories of acceptable social and sexual behaviour. Walkowitz (1980) argues that the legacy of the acts and the repeal campaign itself, was to dramatically alter the structure of prostitution and the prostitutes relationship with the larger working class community. Far from rehabilitating the prostitute, the increased social isolation forced them to acknowledge their outcast status.

'Social Purity' 1880 - 1950.

In the 1880s, the efforts of Josephine Butler and the LNA were rewarded. The constant pressure of the repeal campaigners, coupled with the victory of the Liberal Party, led to the suspension, and eventual abolition of the CD Acts (20th April 1886) and the raising of the age of consent from 13 to 16. Legislation concerning the latter was contained in the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885. The sections concerning the age of consent and

child abuse arose from a moral panic about the sale of children into prostitution. Repeal campaigners and the Vigilance associations had been highlighting the problem for years. In 1869, Josephine Butler claimed that of 9,000 prostitutes in one of England's seaports, 1500 of them were under the age of 15, and of these over one third were under 13 years of age. The major expose into the problem came from a journalist, W.T. Stead, who ran a series of articles about the white slave trade in the *'Pall Mall Gazette'* under the title of *'The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon'*.²⁸ The article was actually created by the author who bought a girl - a virgin - from her mother, and carried her off to Paris. Virginité had acquired an enormous market premium in London in 1885; the going price for a virgin was about £20 - £25 (Pearson, 1972: 31). Although Stead handed the girl over rather rapidly to the Salvation Army, he was imprisoned for three months. Despite the fact that Stead had cheated in his 'expose' - he had at least proved that the practice could be done, and that it was frequently being done to girls too young to understand what was happening to them.

The Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885 was a piece of legislation which has been variously described as 'a great step forward in the cause of public morality' (Rover, 1970:89) and a 'symbolic and substantial triumph for feminists and puritans' (Bristow, 1977:114). Chesney (1970) also marks 1885 as the end of a period in the history of prostitution in England because:

...in the Victorian underworld, no other important field of activity [prostitution] underwent so clear cut a change.

(Chesney, 1970: 366)

The Criminal Law Amendment Act completely dismantled the old legislation and effectively outlawed procuring and brothel keeping; heavy fines were introduced to make it easier to bring those involved to justice. Brothel proprietors faced a £20 fine and 3 months hard labour for the first offence and a £40 fine and 4 months hard labour for each subsequent conviction. For procuring, coercing or inducing prostitutes, much heavier penalties were introduced. As far as prostitutes were concerned, The Criminal Law Amendment Act and the repeal of the CD acts, simply gave the police increased powers. The suppression of brothels succeeded only in pushing prostitutes into flats (and eventually massage parlours), and ultimately into the control of pimps. In other words, 'social purity' legislation, although designed to protect women and wipe out vice, was ultimately repressive in its

implications. It gave the police more power, made prostitutes more liable to harassment, and merely changed the 'character' of prostitution. By focussing exclusively on the moral implications of prostitution, the purity reformers had ignored the social and political questions - this is demonstrated by the Vigilance Association whose sole concern was with the suppression of brothels, the control of immoral literature and 'rescue' work of all kinds. According to Banks:

...most purity reformers were insensitive to the economic and social reality of working class girls, and their activities were as much concerned with controlling these girls as with protecting them.
(Banks, 1981: 68)

Ellis (1906) suggests that the changeover to repression was a gradual affair with:

...the English love of freedom, and the English love of God, combining to protect the prostitute.
(Ellis, 1906: 271)

Nevertheless, between 1875 and 1885 only 86 brothels had been prosecuted in England and Wales; from 1885 to 1914 a hard line was adopted, and the annual average jumped to over 1,200 (Bristow, 1977: 154).

E. The Twentieth Century.

At the onset of the First World War, Britain was (once again) rife with rumours about diseased prostitutes undermining the war effort. Consequently, emergency regulations were passed allowing for the expulsion of prostitutes from near military camps, and the detention of any woman known to be suffering from a venereal disease. (Most combatant countries regulated prostitution during the war). The army later admitted that only 28% of its diseased personnel had been infected by prostitutes - 'amateurs' were responsible for most of the infection (Bristow, 1977:149). *Voluntary Womens' Patrols*, established at the beginning of the war by the National Council of Women, had, by 1918, become a section of the Metropolitan Police; by 1923 they had full powers of arrest. Also established, and employed upto the 1950s, was the *Public Morality Council*, whose patrolling officers would observe public behaviour, especially prostitution and homosexual importuning.

Throughout Europe in the post Second World War period, brothels were closed down. League of Nations reports in 1927 and 1943 had roundly condemned the concept of legalized brothels and the registration and

compulsory examination of women. The brothels were closed not because they were regarded as a failure but because of pressure brought to bear by the United Nations - the doctrine of which, Benjamin and Masters (1964) argue, was derived mainly from feminists (Benjamin & Masters, 1964: 266). 29.

British Legislation in the 1950s.

In England and Wales, the Sexual Offences Act of 1956 was the first major piece of legislation on sexual activities since the Criminal Law Amendment Act (1885) and the Vagrancy Act (1898). Until this time, the law only required the prosecution to prove 'annoyance'; the fine was only £2 - for any number of offences - and the law only applied in towns. The 1956 Act imposed relatively severe penalties for men living on the earnings of prostitutes and women exercising control over prostitutes. The Act also consolidated legislation on a wide variety of other sexual offences including rape, indecent assault, incest, buggery, indecency between men, soliciting by men (homosexual), abduction and procuring and brothel keeping.

Smart (1981) argues that there would probably not have been any changes in legislation but for a successfully orchestrated moral panic over prostitution centred around firstly, the reputation that London was acquiring as the 'vice centre' of the Western world (brought on because of the number of tourists in London due to the Coronation), and secondly, because of the 'problem of immigration' which rapidly assumed a link with the 'problem of prostitution' (Smart, 1981:49-50). In fact, the ensuing Wolfenden Committee Report could find no factual 'evidence' to support the assertion that prostitution (and homosexuality) was increasing (Hall, 1980:8). Hall (1980) refers to the era of the Street Offences Act as the 'legislation of consent' (Hall, 1980:1) an era which represents two active periods of legislation affecting the spheres of sexual and social conduct. Smart (1981) further argues that the new legislation needs to be understood in terms of:

...firstly, the efforts to restabilize the family, and secondly, a new sexual morality particularly salient to women.

(Smart, 1981: 53)

The Wolfenden Committee of 1957 was established to enquire into, and make recommendations about, the circumstances under which prostitutes should be permitted to operate. The guiding principle of the Wolfenden Report, was the distinction between law and morality, and the individuals right to make moral

choices without legal interference as long as harm was not inflicted on another. The Report maintained that it was not the function of the law to :

...interfere in the private lives of citizens, or to seek to enforce any particular pattern of morality.

(Wolfenden Report, 1957: para 14)

Nevertheless, the Wolfenden Report argued that the licensing and toleration of brothels by the state would:

...degenerate attempts to raise the social and moral outlook of society as a whole because it would recognise prostitution as a social necessity (Wolfenden Report 1957: para 292).

This review has indicated that authorities and official opinion, have, at various times, acknowledged it to be a social necessity or *at least* an inevitability. Furthermore, the argument in the Wolfenden Report that the existence of brothels would 'encourage promiscuity' on the part of males and provide encouragement for women to become prostitutes was, and has not been, borne out by any evidence. The committee rejected the idea of special detention centres for the rehabilitation of prostitutes, and also felt unable to make any positive recommendations about Kerb crawling, mainly because it was too conscious of the possibility of a damaging charge being levelled at an innocent motorist (Wolfenden Report, 1957: para 267).

The Wolfenden Report has been described as radical and pathbreaking, indeed Hall-Williams (1958) believes that the report represents a landmark in the development of English Criminal Law:

If (on the subject of Prostitution), it appears that the light fails, or burns less brightly, we should reflect that this is one of the most intractable of all human problems and it would take a committee of geniuses or saints to provide a satisfactory solution to all the complex issues.

(Hall-Williams, 1958: 143)

The 'solution' it did offer materialized in the subsequent Street Offences Act of 1959. This made it an offence for a common prostitute to loiter or solicit in the street or public place for the purpose of prostitution (SOA 1959 para 1). A policeman was empowered to arrest, without warrant, a prostitute whom he reasonably suspected of committing this offence (SOA 1959 para 3). Penalties ranged from £10 for the first offence; £25 for the second, and £25 for the third and subsequent convictions plus upto three months in prison. The 1959 Act also aimed at legislating against those who helped or profited from prostitution. Those encouraging prostitution were liable to a 2 year

prison sentence; those managing brothels and prostitutes were liable to a 7 year prison sentence. This offence was primarily directed against the 'madame'. Under the 1959 Act, it became an offence for a woman to live on the earnings of prostitution but only if she controls, directs or influences the prostitute, and only if it can be shown that she is aiding, abetting or compelling her prostitution. In short, either sex can be found guilty of keeping or managing a brothel but only a woman can be guilty of controlling a prostitute for gain, and only a man can be found guilty of living on her earnings (Honore, 1978: 124).

The Effects of the 1959 Street Offences Act.

Despite the declared objective of the 1959 Act being not to abolish prostitution, but to suppress streetwalking and thus protect the public from annoyance, in practice, the legislation had the effect of driving prostitutes off the streets and attempted to eradicate even the most discreet forms of prostitution. It became extremely difficult for prostitutes to work independently, because if they did attempt to solicit, they became subject to increased control from the police. As a consequence, the fees charged by the women who did continue to solicit increased substantially to compensate them for the risk of fines; in some cases streetwalkers ended up earning as much, if not more, than call girls. It was also apparent that the Act encouraged the women to find other modes of operating, and there was a substantial increase in the number of prostitutes working in bars, clubs and massage parlours (HMSO, 1974: para 230). However, for those women who had been involved in prostitution for some time and who were used to working on the streets, the new methods of operating proved very difficult to adapt to; unable to learn any new occupation, they either continued working and suffered the penalties, or gave up the life and became a burden on the state. As Greenwood & Young (1980) point out:

Overall we have the ghettoisation of the majority of prostitutes, and, given the remarkable decline in convictions, a situation of virtual decriminalisation occurred. For the remaining minority, however, a rapid escalation of criminalisation occurred. Moreover, it was by the continual coercion of this minority that the invisible majority were socially controlled, that is, prevented from returning to the streets.

(Greenwood & Young, 1980:161)

Perhaps the most serious effect of the Act was that prostitution became increasingly organized and linked to racketeering. Prostitutes were forced

further into the control of the pimps and exploitative organizations there had been so much concern about. Furthermore, because the effect of the Act was to drive prostitutes underground, it became more and more difficult for the women to be reached if they should want to be rehabilitated. In a study of the effects of the 1959 Act, Gosling and Warner (1961) suggested that when it came to the problem of prostitution:

...the remedy (The Street Offences Act) ... may well prove worse than the disease ... the independent prostitute is being flung back into the clutches of whom she was fighting to get free ... [further] ...those theorists who imagine that the oldest profession in the world can be put out of business by Act of Parliament are perpetuating a doctrine that is far removed from reality.

(Gosling & Warner *'The Shame of a City: An Inquiry into the Vice of London'* (1961) cited Benjamin & Masters, 1964:429)

The Law.

Despite the obvious deficiencies and general 'messiness' of the law, and despite numerous attempts to amend the legislation, much of the content of the Sexual Offences Act (1956) and the Street Offences Act (1959) is still in operation. The law, as it stands at present (in England and Wales), states that a 'common prostitute' must be a woman, and must offer her body for 'common lewdness', that is, for sexual acts with an indefinite number of clients in return for money or other reward. Technically, a virgin can be a prostitute (Honore, 1978: 117). Even if a prostitute does not actively solicit customers, Loitering for the purpose of prostitution is an offence. If she loiters, it is enough that she intends a customer to approach her. Soliciting is actively inviting prospective customers to have sex - this may be by words, smiles, or gestures. The offence must be committed in a street or public place. Street includes lanes, alleys, subways open to the public, doorways and entrances to premises. Public places includes places like dance halls and public houses. If a prostitute appears in a window in such a way as to invite men in the street to have sex with her, she is guilty of soliciting in the street (Honore, 1978: 120-121). In common law, a brothel is a place to which both sexes resort for sexual acts outside marriage. There can, therefore, be a brothel without prostitutes. If a man and woman (prostitute or not) resort to a place for sex outside marriage, it is irrelevant whether the man pays for the sex. To make a brothel requires two prostitutes. However, if one tenant of a premise (flat, bed-sit) is a prostitute and the other is not, this is classed as a brothel. If

premises, flats or rooms are let separately to different prostitutes, they constitute separate premises and do not therefore come under the classification of a brothel. However, if the activities of the separate prostitutes are co-ordinated, this does constitute a brothel. The key element is that of common management.

Under criminal law, a woman may ply her trade in her own home without incurring the wrath of the law. A landlord may let his premises to a woman knowing that she is going to practice prostitution in them; he can let his premises separately to prostitutes and not contravene the criminal law. If neighbours complain about all the comings and goings of clients, they can, under civil law, sue the landlord for damages, in which case the prostitutes would be jointly liable (Honore, 1978:127). The most serious offence is to live wholly or in part on the earnings of prostitution. The law states that if the prostitute is a woman only a man can be charged with this offence (note the obvious anomaly - under the law a prostitute must be a woman). If a man receives money earned by the prostitute he is classed as a pimp. Whether the prostitute pays him or the client pays him, she is effectively supporting him. If a man provides any 'goods or services' for the business, this is an offence. When a person makes extra money from a person because she is a prostitute, then he is also classed as living on the earnings of prostitution. This applies to anyone who charges a higher rate than normal for any goods or services (this can be a grocer or a landlord) knowing that she can only pay from the proceeds of her trade. The man is thus classed as living on immoral earnings (Honore, 1978: 129).

Since 1959, a cautioning system has been in operation which provides that a woman will not be charged with an offence unless she has been cautioned by the police on at least two occasions and the cautions have been registered. The ultimate aim was to put the woman under the care of a welfare officer. The 1974 Working Party on Vagrancy and Street Offences did concede that the cautioning system was not effective in its avowed objective of reforming and rehabilitating prostitutes (1974: para 246). Nevertheless, the report maintained that the 1959 Act was meeting the objectives of the Wolfenden Committee and thus concluded that it had '...no amendments to suggest to the substance of law' (1974: para 78). The subsequent 1976 Home Office Report recommended retaining the cautioning system (1976: para 95).

The *Imprisonment of Prostitutes (Abolition Bill)* was introduced in 1981 (Private Members Bill) and became effective in 1983. However, evidence would suggest that the abolition of imprisonment for prostitutes convicted of soliciting has been countered by increasingly large fines meted out by Magistrates courts - sometimes £150 -£200 per offence with only 7 days to pay (English Collective of Prostitutes, 1984:1). In essence, women who cannot pay on time end up being sent to prison for non payment of fines thus rendering the new law both illogical and ineffective. The number of prostitutes convicted of soliciting rose from under 2,000 in 1982, to approx 10,000 in 1983. Further, the number of women in prison for non payment of fines in 1984 was double the number of women in prison for the offence of soliciting. In an effort to make the law more equitable, The Criminal Law Revision Committee Report *'Prostitution in the Street'* (1984) proposed the introduction of three new offences to deal with kerb crawlers, clients and the harassment of women on the street. The CLRC argued that the law needed to be tightened by penalizing the men who 'persistently' solicit the services of prostitutes (CLRC,1984: para 6). Legislation making it an offence to 'persistently kerb crawl for women' was introduced in the *Sexual Offences Act 1985*. Attempts to tighten the kerb crawling legislation further in the *Sexual Offences Bill 1990* (Private Members Bill) were opposed. 30

Summary.

The practical problem surrounding prostitution has always been *how* to regulate it - how to control both the institution of prostitution and the women who work in the profession. From this historical review of the measures taken to repress, regulate and rehabilitate prostitutes, four broad approaches have been discerned: *The Prohibitionist Approach* (the official position of the USA) largely acknowledges the fact that prostitution exists, but reasons that the only action that the state may take is to repress or prohibit it completely. As a consequence, under this system, all prostitution is prohibited; all prostitutes are branded criminals. One of the major problems with this approach is that refusing to acknowledge certain 'facts' does not mean that the condition will go away. Any attempt to eradicate prostitution almost inevitably encroaches on the rights of the individual; the outright prohibition of prostitution requires the existence of a 'morals police' or 'vice squad' to enforce the law and some have argued (Haft, 1974) that this is

unwarranted interference in the private lives of citizens by the state. On a more general level, with this approach there is a real possibility that prostitution is driven underground thus making the prostitute more vulnerable to exploitation from pimps, the police and other criminal elements:

...from her place in the innocuous demi-monde (half world) the prostitute is evicted to re-emerge as a denizen of the criminal underworld.

(Benjamin & Masters, 1962:372)

As a consequence, this reinforcement of her status as social 'pariah' - and the possible development of an anti-social or criminal psychology - makes rehabilitation difficult if not impossible.

With the Abolitionist approach, streetwalking, overt solicitation and houses of prostitution (brothels) are prohibited. The aim is to make it as difficult as possible for prostitute and client to get together. This system has been favoured by most countries and, as has been illustrated, has been largely ineffective in keeping order or preventing disease. Moreover, this system is unjust in that it imposes disadvantages on the prostitute but not generally on the customer. A further argument put forward by many is that this approach is immoral because it involves the state in the tacit recognition and tolerance of prostitution.

Regulationism endeavours to restrict the practice of prostitution to brothels, or limits the area in which prostitutes are permitted to operate. The aim is to keep prostitutes out of other 'respectable' parts of the city, and to facilitate the control of venereal disease. Regulationism took legal expression in the form of the Contagious Diseases acts. This approach takes as its basis the inevitability of prostitution - largely arguing that it is better to recognise that which cannot be eradicated and to regulate it rather than leave it to itself. In a sense, this approach legalises prostitution by permitting it under certain circumstances. Acton (1957) argued that this system worked by '...diminishing sensibly both in men and women the sense of shame (Acton, 1857:141). However, Acton also suggested that it was degrading for a woman to publicly admit that she was a prostitute. This is a rather curious argument - on the one hand he suggests that it takes away the shame, on the other hand he suggests that it increases her sense of degradation and takes away any self respect. Can both propositions be true at once? The regulationist system has tended to encourage the trade of the brothel keeper.

Moreover, in countries where prostitution has been controlled by the police (France, Belgium), a woman in a licensed brothel could be found living in something resembling complete captivity. Once a woman had made a statutory declaration of her status, had her papers endorsed and been entered in police records, she became '...scarcely more than chattel' (Chesney, 1970:343).

The Neo-Regulationist approach generally encompasses both the abolitionist and regulationist approach. The idea is that prostitutes carry some kind of cards or licences and must submit to periodical medical examinations and to treatment if infected. The problem with this system is that licences stigmatize those who hold them and can have far reaching moral and ethical ramifications - for example, a history of being a 'licensed woman' may prevent those who wish to obtain other employment from doing so; if a woman wishes to stop being a prostitute how does she prove that she is no longer on the game? Must she appear before some sort of 'morality court' to prove that she has relinquished her involvement in prostitution ? 31

Does Repression work?

This is difficult to assess. On the whole, it appears that repression hastened the decline of the brothel but tended to scatter prostitutes into other modes of operating - massage parlours, saunas and private flats. All that regulation and repression really altered was the venue of the prostitute. The experience of the Contagious Diseases Acts and various European endeavours to control the problem of prostitution, suggests that trying to check and regulate women is unrealistic and undesirable on both practical, moral and ethical grounds.

Can Prostitutes be Rehabilitated?

Perhaps the more salient question should be do prostitutes *want* to be rehabilitated?. Imprisonment of prostitutes does not appear to have rehabilitated any in large numbers. It has almost always resulted in further alienation from society:

...the laws ... help to sever any normal relationships that prostitutes have with the legitimate world and drive them into the underworld for protection and friendship where they may become involved in further crime.

(Haft, 1974:214 cited Crites, 1976)

On the whole it would appear that laws against prostitution have tended to be counterproductive. Those measures aimed at repressing and regulating

prostitution have not diminished or eradicated the problem or even obviated the worst aspects of prostitution. On the contrary, evidence would suggest that in those countries where attempts have been made to repress prostitution (e.g. France), the number of prostitutes has increased dramatically as has the number of pimps and the incidence of venereal disease. In those supposedly more enlightened countries where a more liberal-realistic approach has been adopted (e.g. West Germany), prostitute 'hostels' have become nothing more than 'hooker supermarkets' with the state assuming the role of pimp and the 'laws' (compulsory medical examinations and treatment) existing purely for the protection of men.

The question of how to regulate prostitution in the *public interest* and in the interests of *prostitutes* and their *customers*, is returned to in Chapter Ten.

¹ Aphrodite's famous temple on the citadel at Corinth was thronged with over one thousand of her courtesans (the *hetairae*) - these courtesans had a religious as well as an amorous role to play; when Greece was threatened by invading forces, it was the temple hetairae of Corinth who flocked to the temple of Aphrodite to offer up the prayers and sacrifices of the nation for the deliverance of their land.

² Classes and strata of practitioners in Roman times: (i) *Delicatae* (the kept woman); (ii) *Famosae* (belonged to respectable families); (iii) The *Doris* (renowned for their beauty); (iv) The *Lupae* ('she-wolves'); (v) *Aeliciae* (bakers girls); (vi) The *Copae* (servant girls at inns and taverns); (vii) *Blitidae* (a low class of women who derived their name from a cheap beverage called Blitum); (viii) *Diobalares* (the most wretched outcasts); (ix) The *Gallinae* (prostitute thieves); (x) *Ambulatrices* (streetwalkers) (Benjamin and Masters, 1964: 48). A popular place for business for the streetwalkers were around the games arenas where they would make themselves available to people leaving the bloody spectacles in the amphitheatres.

³ In effect, they instigated a variation of 'temple' prostitution. In 1309, the Bishop of Strasbourg built a house specifically for prostitutes mainly so he could obtain a profit from it. In 1390, Duke Albrecht IV of Austria owned the chief brothel in Vienna, and in 1457 the Archbishop of Mainz granted the rights to run a brothel to the family of the Counts of Henneberg (Henriques. 1963: 50). The most outstanding example was a church brothel in Avignon where the girls spent part of their time in prayer and religious duties and the rest of their time servicing customers. The statutes of this Christians only foundation were laid down by Queen Joanna of Naples in August 1347. This brothel was remarkably well organized: the girls were clothed, fed and paid a wage and all profits went to the council.

⁴ They used Mary Magdalene as an example of a whore who had repented and followed Jesus for a life of penitence and retirement. In 1227 Pope Gregory IX authorised 'The Order of St. Mary Magdalene', and over a number of centuries, these 'Magdalene Homes' for fallen women were founded in Paris, Vienna and Naples. In the 15th Century, Florence had its Convent of the Penitents. In Rome in 1520, Pope Leo X authorized the Augustine rule of the Convertite - a rehabilitation

project supported partly by an inheritance tax imposed on courtesans. Some institutions aimed at rehabilitation were regarded as a deserving cause by local citizens who contributed to its upkeep. The 'Soul House' in Vienna (1384) received enough endowments to make it the richest institution in the city. However, a major scandal developed in 1480 when one of the women superiors and a large number of the inmates suffered a multiple relapse.

⁵ One of the most important sections of the population that they served was the army. The specifically sexual function of the 'camp follower' has been recognised since the inception of fighting forces. The numbers involved could be very high. As European armies of the 14th - 17th Centuries went into battle, half were comprised of soldiers, the other half were women who looked after their needs. As armies grew in size, so did the number of camp followers. At the siege of Neuss (1474 - 1475), the Duke of Burgundy's army had one woman for every four men. The Duke of Alva's army (which invaded the Netherlands) was followed by over 1200 whores. Charles the Bold's army (1476) was followed by 2000 prostitutes. (Henriques 1963: 55). The army needed women, not merely to satisfy their sexual needs, but also to fulfil other duties. The women set up the campsite, collected the fuel, cooked, washed and cared for the men. They dug the trenches before battle, nursed the wounded and prepared the dead afterwards. The commonly assumed notion that *all* camp followers were automatically all prostitutes is possibly rather an unwarranted assumption. Undoubtedly many were, but a close reading of the literature suggests that for many women prostitution was merely a way of earning additional money to supplement their wages from the other services and duties they performed.

⁶ Women who did work independently did not actually fare that much better than those in the official brothels. Even outside the official system, the women always had to share her earnings with others - to the people who rented her the rooms or other facilities for her trade.

⁷ This legislation was designed to control a specific situation rather than eliminate prostitution per se. Nevertheless it was not really plausible that these measures could be effectively enforced against an army constantly on the move.

⁸ More frustratingly for the King, the women who he ordered to be banished from his kingdom simply followed his army - a number of travelling brothels accompanied the King on his exploits (Ellis 1913: 240).

⁹ For example, in the 15th Century, the town of Strasbourg confined the prostitutes to a special section of the town, but as the trade increased the whores spilled over into other districts. Six streets alone accounted for fifty seven brothels. By the 16th Century conditions had deteriorated dramatically; the recognised meeting places for the women became the Churches and the Cathedral where women swarmed in the aisles and even infested the Bell Tower (Henriques 1963: 48).

¹⁰ Southwark's association with various kinds of 'pleasure' activities dates back to AD54 when the first Roman legions camped there.

¹¹ Salgado remarks that the fact that an area which consisted mainly of brothels should also be episcopal property is hardly a surprise given the equivocal attitude of the church towards the sin of lust and lechery (Salgado 1977: 49).

¹² This decision was largely based on the violent outbreaks of syphilis occurring at this time - Henry V 111 was himself a sufferer.

¹³ Elizabethan moralists often blurred the distinction between adultery and prostitution; 'whoredom' was often used in a blanket sense to cover both meanings (Greaves 1981).

¹⁴ The Greeks originated the term 'stigma' to refer to bodily signs designed to expose something unusual and bad about the moral status of the bearer; these signs - a cut or burn - advertised that the bearer was a slave or criminal - a blemished person to be avoided. It was bodily evidence of disgrace (Goffman 1963:11).

¹⁵ In Elizabethan society, the problem of clerical immorality was considerable; indeed it has been claimed that the battle against prostitution was 'retarded' by the number of Church of England ministers who frequented prostitutes (Greaves 1981:93). Theatres were very much akin to brothels. Most theatre owners were brothel owners too. The audience were distributed around the theatre according to their class; so were the prostitutes. In many cases, the performance of the plays was almost incidental to the main business (Hibbert 1987; Salgado 1977).

¹⁶ Venereal diseases had been known - but not diagnosed as such - as far back as records went. The disease was not always thought to be sexually transmitted. Henry V111 was alleged to have been infected by the 'perilous and infected breath' of Wolsey - according to the articles of Arraignment which charged the Cardinal with all sorts of offences (Hibbert 1987: 165).

Despite some dispute about the origins of venereal disease and particularly *how* it was introduced into Europe, most medical historians believe that Syphilis was an unpleasant by-product of Columbus' voyage to the New World. This theory is popular because Europe suddenly became infected on his return in about 1493. It is entirely feasible that syphilis had reached England at the beginning of the 14th Century well before Columbus' voyage. It may well have already been present in Europe but as a benign organism which suddenly mutated and became pathogenic (Tannahill 1989:274-275). It is also possible that many of the references to 'lepra' in mediaeval literature did not describe leprosy at all, but actually syphilis. Exactly *who* was responsible for the epidemic which swept Europe is further borne out in the different names it assumed: the French called it the '*Neopolitan malady*'; The Spanish called it the '*French disease*', and the Germans called it the '*Spanish scabies*'.

¹⁷ The only regular prophylactic against venereal diseases was the washing of the genitals in vinegar or white wine, and what was referred to as 'hard pissing'. In the superior brothels, it was usual to have two chamber pots - one for the whore and one for the client - for this 'treatment'. It was thought that this technique could prevent the French pox, gonorrhoea and pregnancy.

¹⁸ Boswell's diaries indicate that he had sex with well over sixty prostitutes in over thirteen cities in England and Europe. As a result he suffered from at least ten outbreaks of gonorrhoea before his marriage and seven outbreaks after. These attacks could put him out of action for months (Stone 1977: 575).

¹⁹ Similarly, corruption in the judicial system was notorious. Some magistrates were virtually on bawdy house payrolls and frequently extorted money from the bawds. Bristow, (1977) cites the case of one early 18th Century magistrate in Wapping who actually rented space in his own home to prostitutes. (1977:13). Prostitution and police corruption is a familiar theme in most studies of prostitution. Finnegan's study of prostitution in York in the mid 19th Century, found that a high percentage of police constables were to be found patronizing brothels and consorting with prostitutes. As the police possess the powers, opportunity and knowledge of the trade generally denied to other men, this high percentage is not

surprising.

²⁰ This clause ended up remaining basic to law for 133 years.

²¹ The term 'lock' is derived from the French word 'loques' and signifies rags, bandages and lints (Acton, 1857: 134).

²² The three classes of houses termed by the police as brothels were (i) houses in which prostitutes are kept (ii) houses in which prostitutes lodge and (iii) houses to which prostitutes resort.

²³ One of the most important documents is the 11 volumed sexual memoirs of a Victorian called 'Walter' and his experiences with over 1200 prostitutes in the brothels of London and Europe ('My Secret Life' circa 1890). Marcus (1966) suggests that the 'embarrassment of riches' provided by this book makes it one of the most important documents of the Victorian period (Marcus 1966).

Appendix A provides a local history review of prostitution in Hull.

²⁴ An attempt to pass similar legislation during the Melbourne ministry had been abandoned because it was felt inappropriate to ask the young Queen Victoria to put her signature to such an act, instead, promoters of the CD acts passed them when she was in early widowhood and overcome with private grief. (Butler 1954: 69).

²⁵ Ironically, Butler made most impact with her speeches at religious meetings for women, who were not at that time able to vote (Chesney 1970: 362).

²⁶ It has to be acknowledged that not all women in the subjected towns objected to the new system. Some welcomed it and treated the certificate they received as a measure of cleanliness and thus a licence to trade. These women proudly framed their certificates and called themselves the '*Queens women*'.

²⁷ The specific cause of gonorrhoea - the gonococcus - was not discovered until 1879 by Neisser; the causal organism of syphilis was not discovered until 1905; the Wasserman blood test for syphilis was not introduced until 1906, and Salverson treatment was not available until 1909.

²⁸ Babylon was the name for the area of London in which the prostitution industry was centred.

²⁹ The Scandanavian countries had already abolished regulations and licensed houses: *Norway* 1890; *Denmark* 1906; *Finland* 1907. *French* brothels were closed in 1946 and the registration and supervision of prostitutes was also ended; in *Italy* laws proscribing prostitution were introduced in 1958 thus ending almost a century of legal prostitution; in *Belgium*, regulated brothels were closed in 1948; in *Spain* brothels were abolished in 1956 and prostitutes had their licences withdrawn. In *Germany* the state registration of brothels was abolished in 1927 but official brothels were provided for the army in the Second World War. Since the 1950s, Germany along with *Holland* has adopted a more liberalistic pragmatic approach to the the subject of prostitution formulating regulations which allow for prostitution to be carried on in strictly controlled and regulated brothels or in 'toleration zones'. The impact and effectiveness of this legislation is addressed in Chapter Ten.

³⁰ This would have removed the word 'persistently' from the existing legislation and would have made it possible for a man to be convicted if he approached one woman on a single occasion. A penalty of £1000 would have been

enforced. It was also suggested in the debate surrounding the Bill that electronic tagging should be used for persistent offenders - both client and prostitute. However, the Bill, and the attendant increase in police powers that such legislation would have condoned, aroused a furious debate; although it had a lot of supporters (many of them women) it was opposed by, among others, the National Council for Civil Liberties, NAPO, Lord Scarman, and most of the prostitutes organizations. The Bill was eventually 'talked out' by Ken Livingstone MP on 11th May 1990 largely on the grounds that as it would permit a single police officer to arrest someone on suspicion of kerbcrawling, it was too much like the old 'sus' law and innocent people could be convicted.

³¹ In this age of AIDS, medical examinations are impracticable if not futile - given that it can take up to six months for blood tests to reveal the presence of the AIDS virus and that the virus itself can remain 'dormant' for up to ten years. No provision is made for the examination of clients.

Red Light, Blue Light

Prostitutes, Punters and The Police in a Northern City

CHAPTER TWO: THEORIES AND EXPLANATIONS
OF PROSTITUTION

- A. *Theorizing About Prostitution: Images and Perspectives in the 19th Century*
- B. *Theorizing About Prostitution: The Men of 'Science'*
- C. *Contemporary Perspectives*

CHAPTER TWO: Theories and Explanations of Prostitution.

The aim of this chapter is to examine some of the theories and explanations surrounding the subject of prostitution; it is not a definitive review of the literature - merely a broad overview providing a background for the empirical research. Pervading the literature are the central questions - *'why does prostitution exist?'* and *'why do women work as prostitutes?'* In both historical and contemporary analyses of the phenomenon, many of the theories and explanations that have emerged regarding the functions and dysfunctions of prostitution appear to have been based on ideology rather than firm empirical evidence and have been clouded by sexist assumptions and value judgements which largely reflect the deep seated moral condemnation of the females who provide sex in exchange for money, but not the men who purchase sex from them.

Taken at its simplest, prostitution exists because there is a demand for it. Prostitution is basically a question of market - a market controlled by supply and demand. Supply is regulated by the demand for the article: a heavy demand for prostitutes will tend to call forth a supply; conversely, when there is a supply, men will tend to take advantage of it. Acton (1857) maintained that demand was simply the practical expression of a 'want' which was, in turn, simply the perversion of the natural desire of every male for female companionship. Davis (1965) claims that prostitution exists because of the 'organic' nature of men and women. He argues that because the human female has no season of sexual dormancy:

...the uninterrupted capacity of the human female for sexual activity and sexual attraction ... introduces sex as a permanent element in social life and insures constant association of the two sexes.

(Davis, 1965:272)

The ancient justification for the existence of prostitution was that it 'protected' the family and kept the wives and daughters of the respectable citizenry pure. Durkheim (1904) was of the opinion that it was the rise of the middle class and their anxiety to protect their wives and daughters, that led to a regulated attempt to direct debauchery into a separate channel. As for the women who are on the streets, Davis (1971) maintains that this is an autonomous, individual choice. He sees the difference between wives and prostitutes in terms of legal and illegal roles. Those who choose prostitution

are sexual transgressors - neurotic, maladjusted, promiscuous and emotionally indifferent - merely adjusting to their feminine role in an illegitimate fashion (Davis, 1971:245). In his opinion, prostitution is universal (in time and place) and necessary; he maintains that there will always be a class of women - 'bad' women - who will be prostitutes.

These structural functionalist perspectives are highly problematic. The approach is too superficial; it ignores the social, economic and political factors which influence prostitution, and the changing demographic and individual personality characteristics of prostitutes. The assertion that prostitution is universal (Davis 1965) ignores the possibility of historical changes and also the critical differences in the quantity and quality of prostitution in different societies at different times. Moreover, his belief in the universal necessity of prostitution implies that there will always be a perpetually neurotically ill and maladjusted class of women. Davis (1965) employs a 'market place' notion of sex, and thus ends up with a neat little system in which everyone benefits. He maintains that prostitution:

...enables a small number of women to take care of the needs of a large number of men. It is the most convenient sexual outlet for armies and for legions of strangers, perverts and physically repulsive in our midst.

(Davis, 1965: 288)

In other words, prostitution functions as a sort of social service for those unable to achieve sexual satisfaction in any other way. 1

A. *Theorizing About Prostitution: Images and Perspective in the 19th Century.*

Images of Women: Madonnas and Whores.

Central to the understanding of the institution of female prostitution is the premise of female subordination and the innate inferiority of women which was enshrined in most pre-Christian cultures. When Aristotle, writing in the fourth century BC proclaimed that '...the male is by nature superior and the female inferior, and the one rules the other and the other is ruled', he was expressing an already well established idea, and one that was to be continually repeated and elaborated through the centuries (Aristotle, '*Politics*' 4th Century BC). The premise of female subordination limited a woman's role and function; it defined their essential nature and the 'proper' use of their

bodies. Whilst women's experiences in pre-Christian cultures - Greek, Roman, Hebrew, Germanic and Celtic - did vary greatly, women were largely seen as a separate category of being - valued less than men, subordinate to men and defined only by their relationships with men. Moreover, women were defined and categorized primarily by their *sexual* activity and connections with men. Accordingly, women were divided into two separate and distinct categories; the wife - good, proper and respectable, and the whore - bad, improper and inferior. Women were supposed to function only in the approved roles of daughter, wife, mother and (eventually) widow. The 'good' woman remained a virgin until she became a good sexually active, but chaste wife; the 'bad' woman was a licentious sexually active woman - a prostitute who had sex with more than one man and, so it was reasoned, was thus likely to threaten the social balance.

• The important question is *how* or *why* did this delineation of 'approved' roles lead to the emergence of the prostitute class. Davis (1965) suggests that:

...whenever the role of the wife is sharply separated from that of the man so that her sphere is limited to the household and the children, and respectable women are kept secluded, uneducated and jealously guarded against outside contacts, a distinct class of women will emerge who furnish sexual diversion, skilled entertainments and intellectual companionship for men.

(Davis, 1965:281)

According to Davis, these two classes of women - one boring (the wife) and the other interesting (the whore) - represents two sides of the male character which apparently needs one woman for himself:

...under his dominance and protection from other men...(and alternate feminine companionship that)...understands and appreciates, and to some extent participates in, his world of affairs and with other men.

Furthermore:

...this second class of women ... must be economically supported, and since they cannot at the same time be legitimate wives, they must have some less secure position as paid companions, concubines, mistresses or high class prostitutes.

(Davis, 1965: 281)

The result was the institution of female prostitution, in which women provided sex to men in exchange for money but were simultaneously despised and stigmatized for doing so.

The restriction and regulation of female sexuality highlights the 'double standard' of sexual behaviour which condoned men's sexual activity

with women other than their wives (indeed it was excused as necessary because of men's 'natural' requirements), but condemned independent female sexuality as dishonourable and despicable.

The experience of women - both wives and whores - in ancient Greece illustrates the point. The aristocrats of Greek prostitution were the *'Hetairae'* (trans: 'partner/friend'). Renowned for their conversation, beauty, wit and extensive knowledge of the arts, culture and politics, they enjoyed an exalted status and were available only to wealthy, powerful and distinguished men for whom they provided entertainment and intellectual companionship as well as sexual gratification. Their education was probably acquired through their association with Greek scholars and philosophers. Influential in public affairs, they were a focus of Greek cultural and literary interests; they became the heroines of plays and poems, and their portrait statues appeared in public buildings alongside those of the great men. The hetairae were successful women in a male dominated world; they used their minds and bodies to admirable effect. Some of them rose to great heights. 2 Tannahill (1989) claims that the hetairae were pioneers '... the first group of women in recorded history to achieve detente with men' (Tannahill, 1989: 95). However, the strong position of the hetairae was largely due to the circumscribed life of 'respectable' Greek women. To the Greeks, women were chattel or simply *'gyne'* (bearer of children). In Athens, women had no more political or legal rights than slaves; throughout their lives they were subject to the absolute authority of men. Wives received no formal education, were subjected to arranged marriages, were not permitted to entertain or join their husbands at the dinner table (thus denying them the chance to join in intelligent conversation about culture and public affairs), they were not allowed to enter the labour market, and they were mostly confined to the womens' quarters of their home - if they did go out they had to be strictly chaperoned. In short, they were probably an uninteresting lot who lived equally uninteresting lives. They could not hope to compete with the hetairae whose undoubted prowess in the social, intellectual and sexual arts, made them appear almost essential to a man's life. The 'respectable' woman's lot is exemplified in the statement :

We [men] have the hetairae for our pleasure, concubines for our daily needs, and wives to give us legitimate children and look after the housekeeping.

(Demonsthenes, cited Tannahill, 1989: 91)

Ironically, the popularity and attraction of the hetairae can probably be attributed to the fact that they excelled at all those things that wives did not. The fact that it was the same men who actively prevented their wives from fully participating and contributing to social and political life, and the fact that the courtesan could be seen to be having a far better time than the wife, meant that the hetairae, as a class of women, were envied and despised by other women. They were also subject to criticism from their clients mainly because of their reputation for being inconsistent and faithless, avaricious, vain, and, worst of all, far too shrewd and calculating. Certainly it would seem that the hetairae were prudent businesswomen who, working on the premise that their attractions would not last forever, endeavoured to make maximum profit out of their assets and get the money in the bank whilst they had the chance. Despite their influential and, some would argue, enviable position, the hetairae class were not by any means considered totally respectable; its members were somehow felt to be morally suspect, and they were never allowed to forget that they were prostitutes - a female class set apart.

In short, in these early cultures men restricted the wife and regulated the prostitute. However, while the prostitutes were outcasts - marginalized and deplored - little stigma was attached to the men who bought sex from these women. It would seem that in relation to prostitution, the Greek and Judaic Christian traditions - in which much contemporary western culture is rooted - has much to answer for.

Historically, a far stricter morality has been imposed upon women than men (Banks, 1964:107); a deeply rooted 'double standard' has generally decreed that sexual promiscuity - fornication and adultery - is essentially a natural male prerogative, moreover it is *exclusively* a male prerogative. In women, such behaviour represents a perversion of 'nature'. However, it is erroneous to assume that the double standard of sexual morality is a purely sexist distinction; a double standard was imposed not only by men but by *other women* who held standards of expected sexual behaviour and made similar 'good - bad' distinctions of sexual morality. Moreover, through the stratification system, prostitute women are classified and categorized, with certain 'standards' expected from each 'type' of prostitute.

In the 19th Century, there was a tendency to build a picture of the ideal woman or the '*Angel in the House*' (Patmore, 1854-1856). The

patriarchal structure of Victorian middle class society was overbearing. Women were, in all respects, inferior. The woman's role demanded that she fulfil herself through her husband or the males in her family. The emphasis was firmly on the sanctity of the family and the home. Traditional religious teaching combined with the contemporary theory of woman's biological nature, reinforced the concept of the wife's essentially domestic role (Banks 1964:59). It was an ideal most fully developed in the upper and middle classes and, backed by a censorious morality and evangelical doctrine espousing the anti-pleasure principle, it assumed monumental importance. This predominant ideology insisted that although the desire for motherhood was innate, women should have no sexual feeling or knowledge at all. The popular belief was that in women sexual desire was dormant, if not non-existent.

The influential social investigator William Acton (1857) typified the popular Victorian image of women:

...I should say that the majority of women (happily for them) are not very much troubled with sexual feeling of any kind. What men are habitually, women are only exceptionally ... there can be no doubt that sexual feeling in the female is, in the majority of cases, in abeyance ... and even if raised (which in many cases it never can be) is very moderate compared with that of a male. As a general rule, a modest woman seldom desires any sexual gratification for herself. She submits to her husband, but only to pleasure him, and, but for the desire of maternity, would far rather be relieved of his attentions. No nervous or feeble young man need, therefore, be deterred from marriage by the exaggerated notions of the duties required from him.
(Acton, 1857: 12)

Similarly, Greg (1883) suggested that:

...women whose position and education have protected them from exciting causes constantly pass through life without ever being cognizant of the prompting of the senses, and happy for them that it is so!

(Greg, 1883: 456-457)

In 19th Century Britain, the old adage that 'ignorance is bliss' meant, in reality, that in the upper and middle classes, many Victorian women were brought up as virtual sexual innocents - ignorant, insulated and isolated from sexual matters.

Sexual reticence and ignorance was the uncompromising order of late Victorian England. No subject was so carefully shrouded under a veil of secrecy and tabooed from disinterested enquiry.

(Cominos, 1963:34)

The result was the:

...idealization and sexual anaesthetization of middle class women, and the projection of the erotic onto working class prostitutes.

(Bristow, 1982: 28)

Victorian sexual attitudes were bedevilled by paradox and contradiction; the familial ideology was accompanied by, and indeed relied on, a vast underbelly of prostitution:

Victorian sexuality fostered prurience and hypocrisy. It encouraged wives to become sexual ninnies while their husbands contracted venereal disease.

(Henriques, 1963: 231)

It was considered that a satisfactory relationship could be better attained if the woman came to marriage totally inexperienced and the man had some practice in sex relations ... if a woman showed an active interest in sex, it was thought she had become depraved.

(Rover, 1970: 45) 3

At the same time:

...the man who would have been shocked and disgusted by any display of enthusiasm on the part of his wife, resented his inability to arouse her to that enthusiasm. He was compelled to have recourse to prostitutes in order to enjoy sex without inhibition.

(Petrie, 1971: 84)

Some commentators saw the prostitute as the 'safety valve' of society - protecting the virtuous and preserving the home and family ideal. The historian W. E. H. Lecky (1892) believed that the prostitute was:

...ultimately the most efficient guardian of virtue. She remains ... the eternal priestess of humanity, blasted for the sins of the people. But for her, the unchallenged purity of countless happy homes would be polluted, and not a few who, in the pride of their untempted chastity think of her with an indignant shudder, would have known the agony of remorse and despair.

(cited Benjamin & Masters, 1964:114)

In a sense, the prostitute was both the enemy and the product of sexual purity. Trudgill (1976) suggests that:

...Victorian sexual fears and sexual idealism were often counter-productive ... creating both a supply of potential customers for the prostitute and also a situation in which she was paradoxically not only the enemy, but the ally, of the purity ideal.

(Trudgill, 1976: 119)

The prostitute was regarded as some kind of immoral outcast. Why did she attract such venom? Why did prostitution attract such widespread condemnation? The ideological division of women into two classes - the virtuous and the fallen, or the 'madonna-whore' syndrome of acceptable female sexuality was, in the 19th Century, a well established principle. It had far reaching consequences for prostitutes. In his examination of the thought and conduct of the middle class in the 19th Century, Trudgill (1976) suggests that for the evangelical mind, Biblical denunciations of the 'harlot' were sufficient to make her the object of terror and revulsion.

Moreover:

...pent up fears of sex, of its insidious fascinations and incalculable dangers, could be discharged upon a clear and convenient scapegoat ... their revulsion at 'fallen' women was in proportion to the adoration of female purity.

(Trudgill, 1976: 104-105)

The prostitute:

...stood as a figure of contagion, spreading disease through physical contacts with clients and on to the 'rest' of society. ...Prostitution also constituted an 'invisible' danger, one which moved between classes and conditions and which transgressed social boundaries even as they were established.

(Nead, 1988:121)

Prostitution was regarded as:

'...unnatural ... a sin against nature ... the introduction of filth into the pure sanctuary of the affections.

(Westminster Review, 1850: 450) 4.

Societal concern over prostitution largely stemmed from its categorization as a vice. In the 19th Century, it was particularly believed that:

...when vice ... allies itself with poverty in the same individual, it is a proper object of fear to society, it is dangerous.

(Fregier, 1840 cited Tombs, 1980: 217)

The accumulation of the labouring classes in the cities had heightened awareness of the undisciplined 'mob'. Crime and criminality, which was largely attributed to the working class, was seen as a direct result of the degenerate social conditions in which they lived. The city was regarded as a place of disease, neglect, ignorance and dangerous influences; it corrupted, misled and tarnished youth. Vagrants, beggars, prostitutes and criminals were all considered a danger - a threat - not only to others but to the social and economic structure of society. 5

Mary Carpenter (1851), the penal reformer eloquently portrayed the scene:

...look at them in the streets, where, to the eye of the worldly man they all appear the slum of the populace, fit only to be swept as vermin from the face of the earth; see them in their homes, if such they have, squalid, filthy, vicious, or pining and wretched with none to help, destined only it would seem to be carried off by some beneficent pestilence - and you have no hesitation in acknowledging that these are indeed the perishing and dangerous classes.

(Carpenter, 1851 cited in Rose, 1967: 3)

At this time, it was argued that the criminal was a natural object out of control and therefore dangerous, requiring special precautions and extraordinary strategies of intervention.

The Particular 'Problem' of Prostitution in the 19th Century.

In the early 19th Century, the number of prostitutes was thought to be immense but estimates varied widely. In 1793, a London magistrate Colquhoun, estimated there to be some 50,000 prostitutes in London alone; by 1834 the figure had risen to 70,000. The Select Committee on Police (London 1816-1818) noted that there were:

...crowds of women, some in a state of intoxication infesting the streets ... amongst the great capitals of the continent, Paris in particular, no such evil as exists in the streets of London is to be found.

(Tobias, 1967: 137)

The problem in London was particularly acute; certain areas of the city were openly dedicated to prostitution and prostitutes blatantly carried on their trade. According to Chesney:

...The porticos of the main theatres and the neighbouring pavements were the most celebrated whore parades in the whole country; heavily painted women thronged the streets and waited at the alley corners.

(Chesney, 1970: 307)

The problem was so acute that 'respectable' families could not go to the theatre or music halls; 'respectable' women would hardly dare venture into certain areas of the city for fear of being scandalized by the streetwalkers or mistaken as such themselves. The Lancet (1857) estimated that one house in every sixty in London was a brothel and that one woman in every sixteen was a whore. This led to the estimate of some 6,000 brothels and 80,000 prostitutes in London alone. Similar estimates of between 60,000 and

80,000 prostitutes working in the city were made by Acton (1857), Mayhew (1862) and W. T. Stead (1885).

In other areas of the country, prostitution appeared to flourish. Talbot (1850) calculated there to be 800 prostitutes working in Edinburgh, 1,800 in Glasgow [by 1871, this figure had risen to 3,600, (Logan, 1871: 72)], 2,900 in Liverpool; 1300 in Bristol; 700 in Manchester; 700 in Leeds and between 500 -700 in Norwich (Westminster Review, 1850: 475). In York, between 1857 - 1847, 14,000 prostitutes and brothel keepers were recorded as operating (Finnegan, 1979: 15). 6

Prostitution was undoubtedly extensive, but some caution has to be attached to the reliability of the figures. Statistics were notoriously difficult to establish but some of the claims are very difficult to substantiate. Several factors need to be taken into consideration. Firstly, seasonal factors are important; prostitution fluctuated with the state of general trade and employment conditions. Secondly, it was statistically impossible to calculate the numbers of 'clandestine' or 'amateur' prostitutes - by all accounts it was these women who undoubtedly constituted the most widespread (numerically) aspect of prostitution. Thirdly, the highly moralistic and judgemental attitudes prevailing in the 19th Century have to be taken into consideration, particularly regarding the classification of some women as prostitutes; given that prostitute status could be assigned to a woman with just a single 'fall from virtue', the categorization of certain women as prostitutes - and thus their inclusion in the statistics - has to be viewed with a certain amount of suspicion. Finally, specific social factors in the 19th Century fundamentally affected both the demand for, and the supply of, prostitutes. These factors were crucial in determining the nature and extent of prostitution in the period.

Supply and Demand.

In the 19th Century, there was a surplus of females able and willing to supply. The excess of women over men (in all age groups) can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, males were subjected to a higher death rate than females. This was because (a) males were involved in more 'dangerous' trades and this led to more accidental deaths, (b) Victorian improvements in the public health favoured females '...with their somewhat greater capacity for survival than males' (Rover, 1970: 63). Secondly, emigration and service

overseas was far commoner for men than women (Rover, 1970: 63). Thirdly, working class women suffered acute poverty and thus turned to prostitution to survive. Finally, there was an enormous supply of unmarried women that industry and domestic service simply could not absorb. In 1851 there were 2,765,000 unmarried adult females (over the age of 21), by 1861 this had increased to 2,959,000 and by 1871 this figure had reached 3,228,000 (Petrie, 1971: 78). Part of this can be attributed to the general trend of men to defer marriage to a later age. Between 1840 to 1870, the average age at marriage for clergymen, doctors, lawyers, members of the aristocracy, bankers, merchants, manufacturers and 'gentlemen' was 29.93 years (Banks, 1964: 30). This was one of the most important reasons why the demand for prostitutes increased dramatically. The unwillingness of men in the upper and middle classes to contract marriage was largely due to economic factors. The Victorian period was extremely materialistic. The bridegroom needed to be in a position to maintain himself, a wife, children and an adequate household staff, so marriage would be delayed until his income was sufficient. Banks (1964) suggests that this was partly because of the rising cost of children, but mainly was a consequence of the spread of 'gentility' into the middle classes (Banks, 1964: 81). However, until such time as he was able to keep a wife in a manner befitting an *'Angel in the House'*, the normal, healthy young man would have recourse to prostitution.

The young men of the upper and middle classes were expected to have had some pre-marital sexual experience and so resorted to prostitutes for practical initiation (Stone, 1977:544). More importantly, given the prevailing moral code of the time (that the modesty of middle class ladies should be protected and preserved), and given that the working class supplied most of the needs of the upper and middle classes, it seemed only natural that male lust should be serviced by the poor working class women. Neild (1973) maintains that this middle class demand for prostitution, and the predominantly working class supply, continuously produced relationships which crossed profound barriers. This is a highly contentious point. It is generally assumed that the problem of prostitution in the 19th Century was essentially the exploitation of one class by another. This is not borne out by the evidence. As Finnegan (1979) points out, most clients were drawn from the labouring classes rather than the middle class. Generally, prostitutes catered for their own class:

The thousands of sordid houses of ill-fame, staffed by less desirable women, as well as the vast number of even lower class prostitutes who walked the streets, could hardly have been the exclusive prey of men who could afford, and would have been wise to pay for something better.

(Finnegan, 1979: 116)

In her study Finnegan suggests that 73% of all men associating with prostitutes belonged to the working class or poor:

In view of the diseased and degraded state of many prostitutes, it is not surprising that prostitutes were patronized by their own class more than any other ... working class men could not afford to frequent the more superior establishments; wealthier men could afford to pay for comfort, decency and safety.

(Finnegan, 1979: 134)

Once marriage was contracted, prostitution still prospered. Marriage in the propertied class tended to be economically and dynastically arranged. A wife was 'obtained' for reasons of property, prestige and the production of children, not for sexual compatibility. As a consequence:

...for sexual enjoyment, the husband looked outside of marriage. The brothel was as necessary to him as the marriage bed.

(Henriques, 1963: 185)

Some commentators have argued that the 19th Century prostitute not only prolonged the marriage relationship, but also created the conditions which favoured the smooth transfer of property through unbroken inheritance and the stable family (Neild, 1973). It could be argued that it was the middle class involvement in prostitution which rendered legal intervention against the problem highly problematic. It would have meant not only dramatic changes in the social and economic conditions of the working class, but also in the pattern of respectable middle class life - that is changes in the pattern of middle class marriage.

The central question is *why* so many women turned to prostitution - what were the specific factors that caused prostitution to proliferate in the 19th Century?

The 19th Century was a time of enormous social and economic changes. England was dominated by the growth of urban industrial economy; industrialization and urbanization caused profound alterations to the structure of society (Black, 1973; Gurr, 1980; Nead, 1988). The towns grew rapidly, the population increased and became more mobile, and this led to the steady, though pervasive, decline in traditional family life. More

saliently, the Victorian era (in particular) presented an enormous contrast between the extreme religiosity and prudery of the dominant middle class, and the coarse and brutal reality of life for the working class, especially in the towns. Despite the fact that attitudes to poverty, health and the quality of housing all underwent transformation in this period - and prostitution was directly linked to all of them - at the beginning of the 19th Century, over one third of the population lived in poverty; 4% of all the population were classed as paupers, and death rates were at their highest in the poor neighbourhoods (Wohl, 1983: 43-46).

It was as a response to these formidable social and economic problems - urbanization, industrialization, mass migration, pauperization, unemployment, low wages - that prostitution appeared to emerge. Overworked, underpaid and living on the borders of economic marginality, for many working class women, the steady drift into prostitution seemed inevitable and inescapable. As Josephine Butler saw it, industrialization - the rapid advances in discovery, invention and the actual machinery of production - had, by taking work out of the home and into the factories and shops, forced women to become the rivals of men on the labour market. As women were squeezed out, and shut out, of employment opportunities, they were forced onto the streets because in the actual and immediate presence of destitution there was nothing else for them to do. The result was '...armies of prostitutes' in many of the towns (Butler, 1954: 59). Those industries that were open to women were characterized by long hours, low wages and lack of opportunity for advancement (brought about by a general lack of education and training). In some trades, the working conditions were so bad that the workers health literally broke down -the so-called practice of 'sweating'- so their only recourse was to the streets. 7

It was also widely believed that industrialization was responsible for sexual and moral decay. Engels (1844) maintained that the crowding together of both sexes in the factories was a prolific source of moral delinquency and the early development of sexual appetites:

...the collecting of persons of both sexes and all ages into a single workroom, the inevitable contact, the crowding into a small space of people to whom neither mental nor moral education has been given, is not calculated for the favourable development of the female character.

(Engels, *'The Condition of the Working Class in England'*, cited in Bonger, 1916: 338-339)

Furthermore, the chronic misery, hunger, cold and exhaustion brought about by the long hours worked and the starvation wages paid in factories meant that women, removed from community and kinship networks would be more inclined to resort to drunkenness and prostitution merely to survive. Working class women and girls were less socially protected than they had been in pre-industrial communities, therefore they were more exposed to the temptations of the street. A number of commentators suggest that women drifted into prostitution because of the '...state of irreligion' (Heyl, 1979:26) and because of the '...urban anonymity and the weakening of traditional religious and moral values' (Jackman, 1963: 145). Those women who had migrated to urban areas to seek employment were regarded as particularly vulnerable:

Whereas inducements to prostitution were not so obvious in rural country parishes, life in the city was a lot freer and more opportunistic ... many of the people who had moved to the industrial and seaport towns had become emancipated from traditional restraints.

(Chesney, 1970: 315)

Away from these restraints and social controls, they were without the:

...experience, values and advice required to avoid the pitfalls and novel attractions of the urban environment.

(Bristow, 1982: 25) 8.

Girls from rural areas soon discovered that the city life left them lonely, demoralized and financially bereft. It is reported that even before they had attempted to settle into city life, country girls would find procuresses waiting at railway stations and ports keen to recruit them into the profession. Bristow (1982) records that recruiters/procuresses would also wait outside the VD wards of hospitals and outside prison gates ready to recruit released prisoners (Bristow, 1982:29).

Recruitment Factors.

Prostitutes were mainly recruited from the ranks of domestic servants, factory girls, shop girls and waitresses. Domestic service dominated the female labour force. The 1841 census of York revealed that of the total occupied female population of 3,322, 2,216 (68.5%) were domestic servants, 11.9% were dressmakers, and 2.5% were employed as schoolmistresses and/or governesses (Finnegan, 1979: 24). For the country as a whole, 7-8% of the entire population were servants: for women and

girls, the figure was over 13% (Chesney, 1970: 163). The census of 1851 revealed that 905,000 women/girls were employed as domestic servants; 340,000 women/girls were employed in dress trades - seamstresses; 520,000 women/girls were employed in textile manufacturing; 128,000 women/girls were employed as farm servant girls. In London alone, of 115,000 females aged between 15-20, over 40,000 were paid domestic servants (E. Royston Pike, 1967: 156-157).

The prevalence of prostitution amongst domestic servants can be attributed to a number of factors. Bonger (1916) argued that the occupation of domestic servant had a demoralizing influence because of the:

...isolation that deprives them of contact with their fellows, all of which lowers their moral plans.

(Bonger, 1916: 341)

The rigid hierarchies which existed in servants halls negated any chance to make real friendships. Mayhew (1862) maintained that servants seldom had a chance to marry, but frequently 'gave themselves' to policemen on the beat, soldiers in the park, or the sons of the house (Mayhew, 1862: 257). By all accounts the problem of seduction by the gentlemen of the house was immense especially as they very often expected to gain sexual experience from domestic servants. Given that the young servants' bargaining position was not very strong, any complaints from her were not usually very successful and she could find herself out on the streets. Once dismissed from service, the drift towards prostitution was more inevitable (Chesney, 1970:164). In general, women in service were poor, badly educated, badly paid, overworked and housed in wretched accommodation. It was widely believed that because domestic servants (and others engaged in trades such as dressmaking and millinery) daily observed the reality of middle class prosperity and luxury, this direct contact aroused their appetite for such finery for themselves, and hence they would turn to prostitution (Mayhew, 1862: 257).⁹

In the 19th Century, prostitution was a tremendously crowded profession and also immensely competitive. The whole pattern of prostitution was much in favour of the independent, mobile prostitute going out and finding her own customers; she could advertise herself, decide her own prices and keep what she made. In general however, poverty, disease and alcohol were all prominent elements in the prostitutes life. The areas and properties they lived in tended to be squalid, dilapidated and overcrowded.

Prostitutes lived in conditions of '...great personal filthiness' and most were either 'habitual drunkards or periodically under the influence of drink' (Finnegan, 1979: 67 & 144).

Another salient feature of prostitution in the 19th Century was its close association with crime. According to Tobias (1967) this association was 'peculiar to this country' (Tobias, 1867: 95), and probably resulted because prostitutes:

...were associated by indissoluble bonds with the habitual criminals of the male sex.

(Pike, 1876: 527)

The areas most associated with prostitution contained the heaviest concentration of beershops and public houses. Prostitutes regularly earned commission on drinks which their clients bought in these establishments. The aim was to gain as much profit as possible from the client. In this respect, there was:

...a submerged class of petty criminals ... an underworld of disreputable beer and lodging house keepers, fence, thieves and thugs, who assisted the prostitute in her work.

(Finnegan, 1979: 124)

In return, prostitutes would sometimes start a riot in a public house in order to draw the police away from an intended burglary (Tobias, 1967: 92). Men visiting prostitutes exposed themselves to the danger of murder, blackmail, violence and theft. Prostitution afforded many opportunities for robbery, especially to the lowest class of prostitutes. The most popular trap was known as 'cross biting', in which the prostitute enticed a gentleman to her room, whereupon her 'bully' - in the guise of outraged husband - would suddenly appear catching the prostitute and her client *'in flagrante delicto'* and would demand that his marital honour be exorbitantly compensated - usually by relieving the terrified victim of all his possessions (Salgado, 1977: 61; Hibbert, 1987: 185). Statistics would suggest that only a small amount of arrests and convictions resulted.¹⁰ This was partly due to the difficulty of actually proving a charge, and partly because of the unwillingness of men to prosecute. It would appear that most crimes committed against clients were intraclass. Instances of middle class men being robbed were relatively rare. The publicity, loss of face and resulting domestic unpleasantness, meant that middle class clients were most reluctant to press charges. More importantly, common street prostitutes (the ones most likely to resort to robbery) were

more likely to attract poor clients rather than well-to-do gentlemen (Finnegan, 1979: 118-119).

The general picture which emerges of the 19th Century is of a highly moralistic, censorious, but ultimately hypocritical society, in which women faced some formidable social and economic problems, and in which the connection between sex, class and money was a normative one - an assumed value. Prostitution was a highly competitive and overcrowded profession; for those who could get to the top, it could be seen as an attractive and relatively lucrative option, however, for those not so attractive and tough - or just plain unlucky - prostitution could be hideous. For these women prostitution was largely a strategy for survival.

B. *Theorizing about Prostitution: The Men of 'Science'*

Systematic efforts to examine what was widely regarded as the 'great social evil' were undertaken as early as the 1840s. The subject of prostitution attracted religious and medical men and moral reformers who, influenced by evangelical doctrine, regarded prostitutes as a source of pollution (both moral and physical), a constant temptation to middle class sons, and a severe threat to the family ideal. Social investigators - Acton, Mayhew, Tait, Logan - comprehensively examined 'causes, results, extent and remedies' of prostitution. All laid special emphasis on statistical research and their findings reached a large audience. In general, the social investigators of the period divided prostitutes into two classes - those who had no choice in the matter (the victims of circumstance), and those who voluntarily sold themselves. As the century developed, the popular belief that women entered the life mainly because of the want/desire for luxuries was largely supplanted by the theory that most prostitutes were forced into the life by poverty (the want of essentials). In the main, the two theories co-existed. The 'causes' of prostitution tended to be divided into '*natural*' and '*accidental*' categories. In general, 'natural' causes encompassed moral insanity, licentiousness, indolence, irritability of temper, pride, love of dress and finery, love of property, and dishonesty. 'Accidental' causes included low wages, poverty, seduction, desertion, environmental/situational factors, bad parents, poor marriages, obscene publications, intemperance, the birth of illegitimate children and the need to support dependent children (Tait,

1840-42; Acton, 1857; Sanger, 1858; Logan, 1871; Merrick, 1890; Bonger, 1916; Finnegan, 1979). Of more significance were the contrasting views of the 'fate' of prostitutes which developed. The first and more orthodox view suggested that prostitutes were poor, unhappy creatures doomed to a life of despair (Tait, Mayhew, Logan). The second view to emerge was that prostitutes were able to retain their dignity and eventually return to a life of respectability (Acton, Parent-Duchatelet).

Orthodox Views of Prostitution

Sir William Tait, surgeon to the Edinburgh police establishment, offered one of the first accounts of the culture, economy and internal organization of prostitution. In *'Magdalenism: An Inquiry into the Extent, Causes and Consequences of Prostitution in Edinburgh'* (1840 & 1842), Tait used Lock hospital statistics on age and place of origin, and a survey of the streets to (a) measure the earnings of prostitution against the wages and living standards of respectable working women and (b) to establish the relationship between seasonal employment and occasional prostitution. He concluded that (in Edinburgh) there was not enough work for more than two thirds of the available female workforce, and that the seasonal nature of the work aggravated the situation. He maintained that 'factory girls' resorted to prostitution only during some 'great and sudden depression of trade', and then only as a temporary measure. Whilst he acknowledged that low wages and irregularity of employment provided sufficient motivation to encourage prostitution. Tait firmly believed that the most potent cause of prostitution was alcohol. He believed that women:

...first formed the habit of intemperance, and subsequently resorted to a life of prostitution in order to procure the means of satiating their desire for stimulating liquors.

(Tait 1840:260)

The view that alcohol and prostitution were connected was a popular theme borne out by other commentators (Parent-Duchatelet; Logan; Finnegan). Morrison (1854) maintained that:

...for the miserable daughters of immodesty ... the use of strong liquors is an indispensable preparation for their deeds of darkness and obscenity.

(Dr. James Morrison, 1854 cited in Logan, 1871: 61)

The authors of the Westminster Review also cited a connection between prostitution and the perils of alcohol. They suggest that:

..gin alone enables them to live or act; without its constant stimulus and stupefaction, they would long since have died from mere physical exhaustion or gone mad from mental horrors ... for, be it remembered, desire has long since ceased ... repetition has changed pleasure into absolute repugnance, and these miserable women ply their wretched trade with a loathing and abhorrence which only perpetual semi intoxication can deaden or endure.

(Westminster Review, 1850: 452)

Other studies all presented a similar picture. 11. Sanger (1858) suggested that the average duration of a prostitute's career was 4 years. The women in his study were all deemed to be educationally of a low standard; over 85% of the women drank to excess and most had turned to prostitution because of seduction, destitution, ill-treatment by the parents or husband, or because they kept 'bad company'. Logan (1871) suggested that prostitutes took up prostitution between the ages of 14-22, lasted on average 6 years in the profession, and eventually 8 out of 10 of them ended up in a diseased condition (Logan, 1871: 96). He maintained that women were recruited from four main areas: 25% worked in factories, warehouses and public works, 25% were servants, 25% were recruited by procuresses and 25% were induced by seduction or destitution (Logan, 1871: 53). Of the 16,022 prostitutes passing through the Millbank prison, Merrick (1890) found that 5061 voluntarily left home for a life of pleasure, 3363 assigned poverty as the cause, 3154 were seduced and thus drifted onto the streets, 1636 were betrayed by promises of marriage and abandoned, and 4790 owed the adoption of their career to men (Merrick, *'Work Among the Fallen'*, 1890).

William Acton

An altogether different view of prostitution was presented by William Acton. Acton (1857) challenged the conventional view that prostitutes died miserable deaths in workhouses or hospitals. He insisted that such a fate was exceptional - most prostitutes were 'transients' who re-entered respectable society and increasingly did so by getting married. Although he acknowledged that prostitution was inevitable in a closely packed society, he questioned how realistic orthodox notions of prostitution were. In particular, he attempted to dispel three common errors about prostitution: (1) 'Once a harlot, always a harlot', (2) 'That there is no possible advance - moral or physical - in the

condition of the actual prostitute', and (3) 'That the harlots progress is short and rapid' (Acton, 1857: 59). Acton believed that women were particularly exposed to temptation. He maintained that in women, natural desire and natural sinfulness, indolence, love of drink, dress and amusement, early neglect, evil training and an indecent mode of life, was compounded by extreme poverty. The inability to obtain a living by honest means led to a 'fall from virtue' (Acton, 1857: 118). Acton argued that thousands of the female population were consigned to a life of degradation and that their presence:

...makes the streets unfit for the modest ... its evil influence ... depraving the minds and lowering the moral tone.

(Acton, 1857: 85)

According to Acton, the object of the 'wary old prostitute' (many of these old women were under 32) was to exercise her calling with the least expenditure of self and to gain as much money as possible. To Acton's astonishment, these women did not appear to be humiliated by their livelihood, but rather regarded themselves as a class useful to the state (Acton, 1857: 108). Acton himself was rather more of the opinion that a prostitute was a woman who:

...gives for money that which she ought to give for love ... she is a woman with half the woman gone ... a mere instrument of impunity ... a social pest carrying contamination and foulness to every quarter to which she has access... [further]...the prostitute is a sad burlesque of a woman ... to men she becomes a toy, a plaything, an animated doll, a thing to wear like a glove and fling away; to use like a horse and send to the knackers when worn out, the mere object of his fancy and servant of his appetite.

(Acton, 1857: 118-120)

Acton's treatise is riddled with contradictions. He fiercely argues that the conventional image of the prostitute as '...the dirty, intoxicated slattern in tawdry finery and an inch thick in paint', was not a correct image in 19th Century Britain. On the contrary, he maintained that prostitutes - whether sound or diseased - were generally elegant and pretty (Acton, 1857: 60). He further challenged the idea that prostitutes led miserable lives. In a clear attempt to dispel the conventional opinion regarding the fate of prostitutes, he suggested that they '...return sooner or later to a more or less regular course of life'. He estimated that 4 years was the average length of a womans career before they escaped their situation. Moreover:

...incumbrances rarely attend the prostitute who flies from the horrors of her position. We must recollect that she has a healthy frame, an excellent constitution and is in the vigour of life. Thus, to a most surprising and year by year increasing extent, the better inclined class of prostitutes become the wedded wives of men in every grade of society, from the peerage to the stable.

(Acton, 1857: 72-73)

Acton suggested that others laid aside sums of money and became successful milliners, shopkeepers and lodging house keepers. His claim that prostitution was a 'transitory stage' and that most prostitutes subsequently returned to a 'regular course of life' is difficult to verify - given that on the one hand he describes prostitutes as possessing '...a healthy frame , an excellent constitution and being in the vigour of life' and yet, paradoxically as being '...stupid from beer or fractious from gin, they swear and chatter brainless stuff all day' (Acton, 1857: 72-73). More confusingly, he states that far from being healthy, one in four prostitutes in London were diseased and '...spreading a loathsome poison' (Acton, 1857: 118-119).¹² Given his own belief that so many of them were diseased, it is difficult to see how a return to a regular course of life was ever possible. Furthermore, given that 'respectable' women would hardly be likely to admit that they had ever been on the streets, it is impossible to speculate how Acton arrived at this particular conclusion, and consequently how 'true' or reliable this data actually was. In her study of prostitution in York, Finnegan (1979) found that most prostitutes had disturbed, neglected childhoods, were poorly educated and had been brought up in poverty and squalor. The effect of prostitution was that it '...brutalized, humiliated and degraded women and made them social outcasts' (Finnegan, 1979:116). Moreover, the prostitute's:

...irregular and dissipated life exposed her to general poor health, and the nature of her occupation to disease and unwanted pregnancy which, in the absence of husband, friends or family to support her, often resulted in destitution and committment to the workhouse.

(Finnegan, 1979: 213)

Acton was regarded as a great authority on the subject of prostitution and many of his comments were uncritically accepted. Marcus (1966) argues that all of Acton's recommendations were in the direction of 'humanizing and rehabilitating' prostitutes (Marcus, 1966: 6). Yet, Acton was always careful to remain well within the framework of the prevailing morality line of the time, and his 'sympathy' for the plight of prostitutes was combined

with a repressive authoritarian programme for their supervision. He was primarily concerned with protecting men - he saw women as seducers and men as victims; Acton accepted uncritically the need for male heterosexual outlets and thus appeared to rationalize the sexual exploitation of prostitutes.

Later studies produced evidence which directly contradicted Acton. Logan (1871), a leading temperance leader, maintained that the reality of prostitution was far removed from the picture painted by Acton.

...the tendency is always downwards ... she is turned mercilessly adrift ... there comes the last sad scene of all, when drink, disease and starvation have laid her on her death bed.

(Logan, 1871: 104)

The idea that prostitutes escaped their plight by getting married is also firmly dismissed by Logan. He states that:

...men estimate chastity in women highly; it is because a fallen woman has ruined her prospects; it is because even an unchaste man will marry none but a chaste woman.

(Logan, 1871:104)

The social investigators of the 19th Century all documented the inadequate earnings of women, the seasonal character of prostitution, the social background of prostitutes and the structure and organization of the profession. However, many of their notions about prostitution were rooted in fantasy and ignorance. Much of their work was a barely disguised attack on lower class culture. Their work was restricted by severe ideological limitations - indeed, many of the 19th Century studies of prostitution tell us more about the general moral, sexual and ideological conditions prevailing in the period and the social and psychological needs of the investigators and reformers, than they do about the actual reality of the social life of prostitutes. So, what was the reality?

It would seem that vast numbers of women took to, and remained in, prostitution out of sheer necessity. Prostitution was a strategy of survival. Most women's entry into the profession was not pathological or pre-meditated, but rather a product of circumstance:

...a voluntary and gradual response to local conditions of the urban job market.

(Walkowitz, 1980:13-14)

Prostitution provided the chance to escape pauperization and gain access to better money, greater independence and a less menial station in life than was available in the normal range of women's work. Prostitutes were not rootless

social outcasts, but working women trying to survive, moreover:

...their sexually deviant behaviour must be measured against the standards of their own social class whose norms were often distinct, if not fully autonomous, from the values of the dominant culture.

(Walkowitz, 1980: 9)

The women involved in the profession lived, worked and were often born into the subculture of chronic urban poverty and criminality. Economic conditions and social circumstances made it impossible for working class women to attain the ideal of the *'Angel in the House'*. Given their general conditions - poverty, poor and overcrowded housing and unemployment - they could never possibly hope to be as 'protected' or innocent as middle class women. As Petrie (1971) suggests, it is wholly inaccurate to describe the majority of 19th Century prostitutes as 'drop-outs' from society since they had never been fortunate enough to have actually *dropped in* to society (Petrie 1971: 70).

The picture which emerges of 19th Century prostitution is a very powerful one. However, several 'myths' have developed which, under closer examination, can be shown to be highly questionable. The assumption (Rover, 1970: 65) that there would have been far more destitution amongst women than was actually the case if they had not been able to resort to prostitution is too simplistic. Poverty and deprivation alone were not sufficient reasons to drive women onto the streets - had this been the case, then far more women would have been prostitutes. The popular idea that prostitution was an area in which women were sold purely as commodities may not be entirely realistic. Certainly in the mid 19th Century prostitution was a trade largely organized by women rather than by men. Women controlled the trade and tended to live together as part of a strong and distinctive subculture. They adopted an outward appearance that distinguished them from other working class women. Their 'badge of membership' was their costume and use of make-up which, at this period, was regarded as a sign of immorality and general looseness of character.

It does not appear that prostitutes were entirely unwilling participants, or indeed victims, of male sexual abuse or class exploitation. They negotiated their own prices and, in many cases, prostitutes were the exploiters. Their philosophy revolved around the idea that men prepared to hire their bodies were 'fair game'. As such, the prostitute:

...was determined to wring as much as possible from the class and sex that made her what she was.

(Finnegan, 1979: 117)

By the turn of the Century, the gradual extension of women's employment and educational opportunities, and a general relaxation in pre-marital standards of sexual behaviour, had lead to a general decline in prostitution. 13. However, did this mean that prostitution, as a social phenomenon, had fundamentally altered? Do the contemporary theories - sophisticated though they may appear - actually further our understanding of the profession and the women who work in it?

C. Contemporary Perspectives.

The distinction between 'voluntary' and 'compulsive' prostitutes established in 19th Century investigations has generally prevailed into contemporary analyses of the subject. In more recent studies, attempts to explain and understand some of the causal motivating factors involved in the adoption/development of prostitution have led to two broad groupings - predisposing and/or precipitating factors - being developed (Benjamin & Masters, 1964; James, 1976).

For the purposes of this review, these two main categories - (1) Predisposing and (2) Precipitating will be highlighted. These groupings will encompass several different themes: personal, developmental and enviromental (predisposing) factors and situational and attracting (precipitating) factors; many of these will be developed further in the empirical section. It should be emphasized that categorizing explanations into predisposing (influencing) or precipitating factors (attracting) does not necessarily suggest a definite predetermining link with prostitution.

(1) Predisposing Factors

Biology, Pathology, Psychology and Cultural Explanations .

Lombroso (1895) asserted that female criminals were hermaphrodites and that prostitution was only the female side of criminality. The prostitute was '...psychologically a criminal' (Lombroso, 1895: 571). Lombroso believed that the basis of prostitution must be found in 'moral idiocy' - thus making the rather dubious assertion that there was a link between prostitution and insanity. He did not believe that poverty was a plausible motive for

prostitution because women were marginal to society and were deemed to be the financial responsibilities of their husbands and families. Any crimes committed beyond the boundary of the home did, however, represent 'true' deviance - not only from morality but also from women's 'true' role. It has to be borne in mind that Lombroso and other researchers who suggested abnormality and degeneracy (physical or moral), only observed special groups of prostitutes - more specifically those found in prison. Their choice of criminal criterion was unproblematic: they simply went into prisons and took measurements from the inmates. Although Italy was a strongly religious country and a stern view was taken of prostitution, not all women ended up in prison, therefore the sample was restricted and perhaps untypical.

In relation to prostitution, biological theories have not been lightly dismissed. After reviewing all the anthropometrical literature, Ellis (1906) concluded that there was a tendency to anomaly among prostitutes. They are '...not quite normal representatives of the ranks into which they were born' (Ellis, 1906: 279).

Gibbens (1971) claimed that female prostitutes show a high proportion of both autosomal and sex chromosomal abnormalities (cited Morris, 1987: 58). Millet (1976) argues that although prostitution is probably not inherently pathological, many prostitutes do exhibit psychopathology. Gibbens (1971) concurs with this view; he maintains that prostitutes tend to show a high concentration of personality or other mental disorders - 'multiple social deviance' and physical abnormalities (cited Prins, 1980: 317). Mental abnormalities, abnormal lack of emotion, instability, excitability, pronounced nervousness, feeble-mindedness, retardation and disability have all figured prominently as possible causes of prostitution (League of Nations, 1943: 46-53). 14. The assumption that there must be something 'abnormal' about a woman who turns to prostitution was reflected in the Wolfenden report (1957). Dismissing economic factors as 'not important to any large extent', the committee members concluded that:

...there must be some additional psychological element in the personality of the individual woman who becomes a prostitute.

(Wolfenden Report, 1957: 79 para 223)

The suggestion that prostitutes have a 'craving for sex' (Al Issa, 1980: 218), or are generally 'highly sexed' or 'over sexed' (Benjamin & Masters, 1964; Sandford, 1975), is a pervasive (but unsubstantiated) theme in prostitution

studies. There is no conclusive evidence linking prostitution and promiscuity and likewise there is no proof that prostitutes have a strong(er) or increased sexual drive. Undoubtedly perhaps a small percentage of prostitutes are 'highly sexed', enjoy their sexual activities and thus find the life of prostitution attractive; however, to suggest that most prostitutes are 'over sexed' and participate in prostitution for pure sexual gratification is very wide of the reality for most prostitutes. 15. Empirical research, and particularly the autobiographical accounts of prostitutes themselves, emphasize that for the vast majority of prostitutes, the actual sexual activity is purely a business transaction which provides them with little or no pleasure at all. Indeed, indifference to emotional relationships, or the frigidity of women is a frequently posited predisposing cause in the adoption of prostitution. Abraham (1920) suggested that 'Frigidity is practically a sine qua non of prostitution' (cited Kaplan, 1991:175). Glover (1957) deemed that the cause of prostitution was psychological. He asserted categorically that all prostitutes have neurotic personalities and are completely frigid. A prostitute was not a 'true' woman, but sexually polluted and abnormal:

...prostitution exhibits regressive characteristics; it represents a primitive phase in sexual development. It is a kind of sexual backwardness.

(Glover, 1957 cited Rover, 1970:65)

It has been suggested that a high percentage of prostitutes are lesbian or bisexual. (Esselstyn, 1968; Gibbens, 1971; James, 1976). Gibbens (1971) put the figure as high as 16% (cited Prins, 1980: 317). Of the respondents in James' study (1976), 35.3% had experienced a lesbian relationship, 7.4% reported frequent homosexual activity, and 6.7% were exclusively lesbian (James 1976: 189). From this, James (1976) deduced that:

...since their working hours are spent in the unilateral fulfilment of male sexual needs, some prostitutes may find that their own needs are better filled by the more diffuse sensuality and mutuality characteristic of lesbian sexuality.

(James, 1976: 190)

Psychoanalytical explanations of prostitution refer to the Oedipal syndrome and the repression of early sexual love for the parent. Freud (1925 & 1933)

suggested that in the Oedipal fixation, women are subconsciously seeking sex with a father figure, and because this attachment is frustrated by the incest taboo, sexual partners become mere surrogates. He maintained that in the absence of the fear of castration, the chief motive is lacking which leads boys to surmount the Oedipal complex:

...girls remain in it for an indeterminate length of time ... they demolish it late and, even so, incompletely. In these circumstances, the formation of the superego must suffer; it cannot attain the strength and independence which gives it its cultural significance.

(Freud, 1973: 163)

In sum, because females lack 'conscience', because sexual partners are mere surrogates, complete satisfaction is unattainable, so the woman, desperate to secure love, continually searches for new partners - hence prostitution.

Deutch (1946) claims that in the 'masculine aggressive' woman, it is the fear of men, or the desire to take revenge for their own disappointments which can lead to prostitution (Deutch, 1946:249). She argues that:

...the sexual emotional experience of the prostitute - who is usually frigid - is changed into money values ... the economic motive is often the primary one, but sometimes ... it is a rationalization of emotional motives.

(Deutch, 1946: 250)

Biological and cultural variables were stressed by Pollak (1961). He believed that female crime generally involved the 'cunning abuse' of the female role; by virtue of her sexual desirability, access could be gained to prostitution. Again, this approach to prostitution is too selective. No proof is offered for his biological 'facts'; he ignores crimes committed against prostitutes by their clients, and he ignores the whole range of activities associated with prostitution which are traditionally male dominated -e.g. pimp, landlord. Thomas (1967) employed a market analogy for female virtue, that is, 'good' women keep their bodies as capital to sell in matrimony; 'bad' women trade their bodies for excitement and money. The primary factor for prostitution is immorality and the woman's need for love which is glorified into an almost altruistic act with her own sexual feelings taking a minor role. The secondary cause is the desire for recognition or ambition. In women, this drive takes a trivial form and expresses itself in the desire for material possessions - particularly clothes - and this motivates women into criminality and specifically prostitution.

More contemporary analyses of prostitution have suggested that it is '*role expressive*' - the illegitimate expression of role expectations (Rosenblum, 1975; Smart, 1976). Utilizing Edwin Lemert's interactionist approach to deviance and the concepts of primary and secondary deviance, Rosenblum (1975) analyses the relationship of the female sex role to prostitution. She asserts that:

...elements of primary deviance are contained within the female sex role in that women are socialized to employ their sexuality for gain in non-sexual interaction.

(Rosenblum, 1975: 106)

The decision to become a prostitute simply requires:

... an exaggeration of one aspect of the situation experienced as a non deviant woman.

(Rosenblum, 1975:122)

Rosenblum suggests that specific incidents in an individuals life provide the initiative:

...to act upon the potential for prostitution inherent in the female sex role ... what is most important is the recognition of that potential.

(Rosenblum, 1975: 124)

She concludes that prostitution is:

...a uniquely female form of deviance because of the attributes built into the female sex role and the proximity of those attributes to the requirements of the occupation of prostitution.

(Rosenblum, 1975: 126)

Theoretically, sex role explanations of prostitution are incomplete and therefore restricted in their usefulness. Advocates of sex role explanations assert that the shift from primary to secondary deviance occurs with '*specific precipitating*' factors, however, no elaboration is offered on this point. *If* prostitution is a consequence and extension of fundamental aspects of the female role, why are not more women involved in the profession? The assertion that prostitution is a '*uniquely female form of deviance*' fails to take account of the males involved in the profession. Morris (1987) makes the observation that the theory is not valid in relation to the streetwalker level of prostitution because of the very nature of the work - the female must find customers, sell the service to them, find a place to transact business, and collect the money - these are traditionally male activities (Morris, 1987: 66). Sex role theory is vague and inconsistent. It fails to analyze the

structural origins of sex role inequality. It fails to examine the status of women from a cultural and historical perspective. It fails to examine the socio-economic factors confronting women (both historical and contemporary) which may motivate entry into the profession.

Personal Developmental and Environmental Factors

The association of prostitution with environmental factors is well established in the literature on prostitution. Bonger (1916) claimed that prostitutes were, in the main, recruited from the less well to do classes where associated environmental influences (parental promiscuity, alcoholism, poverty) led to the neglect of children. He suggested that the children of the poorer classes were either abandoned by the parents or were incited into the profession. Bad housing conditions, and particularly overcrowding, played a prominent part in the lack of morality:

...the fact that a whole family must live and sleep in one or two rooms has the most harmful consequences for the sexual morality of children.

(Bonger, 1916: 334)

Moreover, the practice of taking night lodgers increased the dangerous and demoralizing influence:

...how can decency and good morals be learned by children whose parents are obliged to take prostitutes as lodgers.

(Bonger, 1916:335)

More recent studies indicate a high incidence of unsatisfactory parental relationships in the background of prostitutes. This manifests as alienation from the parents and particularly hostility to the father. (Jackman, 1963: 138; Glover, 1957; Choisy, 1961; Esselstyn, 1968; Greenwald, 1970). The League of Nations report (1943) suggested a high correlation between the absence of at least one parent and prostitution, and that the lack of strong emotional bonds to parents resulted in a woman turning to prostitution in order to punish a parent for inadequate love (League of Nations, 1943: 28).

British research in the 1950s suggested that most prostitutes had experienced unstable home environments. Rolph (1955) reported that out of 150 prostitutes studied, 17% came from 'chronically unsettled background'; 26% came from 'bad homes' and 44% had undergone the 'influence of environment or association'; 24% had a broken marriage, 19% had illegitimate children before soliciting, 11% were constantly changing work,

5% were procured, and 69% had commenced in prostitution at the age of 15 or over. Rolph (1955) describes prostitutes as in a:

...state of not belonging: and that they never escape this isolation because the bonds which might have held them in place failed.

(Rolph, 1955: 107)

A recent Norwegian study of 26 prostitutes revealed that most had either irregular home lives or had been institutionalized. (By institutionalized it is meant orphanages, reform schools, prisons, child/adolescent psychiatric institutions, womens homes and drug/alcohol rehabilitation clinics). The authors suggest that the women had been rejected by 'normal' society *before* they became prostitutes - the institutions had merely served as important training grounds (Hoigard & Finstad,1992: 16).

Social background and educational factors, specifically the lack of intelligence, have been suggested as a predisposing cause of prostitution. The League of Nations (1943) suggested that a third to one-half of all prostitutes were below normal intelligence (League of Nations, 1943: 28). More recent studies have tended to contradict the 'lack of intelligence = prostitution' thesis and suggest that most prostitutes have normal intelligence ratings and average educational backgrounds (Jackman, 1963: 145; Greenwald, 1970; Sandford, 1975; James, 1976: 189).

(2) Precipitating Factors

'An Easy Life' and 'Easy Money'.

Independence, dislike of routine and freedom from supervision is a trait which appears to be highly valued by women who choose prostitution (League of Nations, 1943; Benjamin & Masters, 1964; Jaget, 1980; Hoigard & Finstad, 1992). To many, prostitution seems to be an attractively easy and relatively undisciplined (autonomous) way of life. The decisive factors can be the perceived excitement and glamour of the life and the opportunity for adventure. The notion that the life is glamorous is particularly persuasive to younger girls. In a survey of young people staying at Centrepoint in London, Cambell (1981) discovered that the girls who turned to prostitution did so voluntarily, the motivating factor being that they 'are attracted to the West End scene and what it can offer' (Cambell, 1981: 221).

Pomeroy (1965) reported that of the prostitutes in his study 3-19% were influenced by the perception of prostitution as an 'easy life', 12-24%

were influenced by the 'fun and excitement', and 14-38% believed that prostitution enabled them to meet 'interesting men' (Pomeroy, 1965: 184, cited in James 1976: 184). One prostitute summed up the attraction of prostitution:

...the world of prostitution is a sort of drug. Even a girl who stops always comes back to this world ... when you know it, its extremely lively, its exciting, its a fascinating world. There's a kind of freedom you don't find anywhere else. You pay a high price for it, but it does exist.

(Jaget, 1980: 159)

Economic Factors.

The economic thesis is the most pervasive (though not entirely *persuasive*) theme in the literature. In virtually all studies of prostitution, money is cited as *the* motivating influence. The authors of a recent Norwegian study state categorically that money is the reason for prostitution - without it, prostitution would cease to exist (Hoigard & Finstad, 1992: 55). The traditional argument is that women are forced into prostitution by extreme economic necessity or deprivation. Opposing this is the claim that prostitution is a rational choice - chosen because it affords them the highest possible standard of living. Studies have suggested that given the difficult social and economic pressures and circumstances faced by women, prostitution is a reasonable option (McLeod, 1982); others claim that the much lauded high financial benefit of prostitution is a myth (Sheehy, 1973). The idea that prostitution is 'easy' money is also well established. Davis (1965) maintained that:

...from a purely economic point of view, prostitution comes near the situation of getting something for nothing.

(Davis, 1965: 277)

In the short term, prostitution does indeed appear to be the fastest and easiest way to make a lot of money in a short time. For the unskilled woman, it can be lucrative - the economic rewards can be higher than those of most other unskilled female occupations. The high remuneration is for actual services rendered and for the risk she takes in indulging in an illegal activity. (It is the exchange of money that (legally) distinguishes the prostitute from the woman who is merely promiscuous).

The arguments for and against the economic thesis can be best examined by looking at several critical factors which largely determine the

amount of money a woman can earn 'on the game'. Earning potential depends on: (a) Attractiveness and desirability (b) the number of competitors (c) how and where a woman is working - her position in the stratification system (d) the socio-economic level of clients.

In the prostitution business, attractiveness and desirability is a short term asset. Prostitution is a young woman's game. It is also a highly competitive business. This is one profession where seniority, experience and devotion to duty is not rewarded (Sheehy, 1973). The chief influence on trade is the customer - how much he can spend. The actual service bought - the price of sex - varies (nationally and internationally). Hoigard & Finstad (1992) suggest that the varying price of 'tricks' in different countries is linked firstly to the price of drugs, and secondly to the price of female labour and the size of the female labour market in the country. The price of sex is 'a reflection of women's general economic position in society' (Hoigard & Finstad, 1992: 43).

The arguments for and against the economic thesis are further complicated when examined within the complex nature of the stratification system. In the 1970s, it was estimated that the average annual income of call girls was in the region of \$48,000 (Rosenblum, 1975). This would suggest that prostitution, on this level, is lucrative enough to be entirely plausible. However, studies have suggested that because of their predominantly middle class origin and above average educational background which might afford them legitimate and equally lucrative jobs, financial need cannot be the chief motivating factor (Greenwald, 1970; Rosenblum, 1975). The problem with this claim is that class of origin and educational achievement is not necessarily synonymous with financial security. With regard to streetwalkers, Jackman (1963) suggests that not all come from economically deprived backgrounds (Jackman, 1963: 138).

While the economic factor motivating women to prostitution cannot be totally ruled out, the view that it is purely an economic phenomenon, or that it is financially rewarding, is far from convincing. Jackman (1963) noted an abnormal, even neurotic materialism amongst prostitutes. He concluded that many prostitutes exaggerated their financial success as a way of justifying their involvement in the profession (Jackman, 1963: 138). The average net income is not all that high. Although it is tax free income, the expenditures (overheads) are high - rent, medical bills, possible fines, possible bribes

(to the police) and pimps, all have to be accounted for. Sheehy (1973) claims that if a prostitute has a pimp, she rarely gets more than 5% of her earnings (Sheehy, 1973: 225). Only a small percentage emerge from the profession financially secure. (Sheehy, 1973; Jaget, 1980). Young (1975) maintains that the prostitute is not economically astute enough to save or invest:

...the ability to save goes with a retentive personality, with foresight, caution, affective momentum, narrow affections. The whore is all on the surface, mercurial, shortsighted, chaotic, frigid.

(Young, 1975: 129)

The argument that poverty motivates entry into the world of prostitution is consistently made. Recent Marxist feminist perspectives suggest that women's involvement in prostitution is a result of their socialization under capitalism and their limited opportunities within the political economic structure (Leonard, 1982: 157). How bad must a woman's economic need be before a resort to prostitution is contemplated? Would reducing poverty reduce prostitution? This is a popular feminist argument but there is no clear evidence that improving the economic condition of women would abolish prostitution. On the contrary, it has been argued that raising women's wages would only initially diminish the supply of prostitutes. The resulting scarcity would increase the demand, the price would then rise, and the flow of recruits into the occupation would then increase. The net effect would be as much, if not more, prostitution than before (Davis, 1965: 277-278; Ellis, 1906: 263). As Ellis remarked:

...If good wages is to be regarded as the antagonist of prostitution, we can only say that it more than gives back what it takes with the other.

(Ellis, 1906: 263)

Some studies would suggest that prostitution does not lift women out of their poverty (Sheehy, 1973; Carlen, 1988). The financial benefits of prostitution appear to be transient with the majority of prostitutes spending their money on immediate needs - children, paying debts and other bills, and financing expensive and destructive lifestyles, notably alcohol and drugs (McLeod, 1982; Carlen, 1988). To claim that economic factors are *the* primary motivating factors compelling a woman into prostitution ignores the fact that only a very tiny proportion of poor women become prostitutes. In essence, *money* can be the primary motivating factor without poverty

being the primary cause; in other words, economic factors as motivating factors appear to offer only a partial explanation.

Summary.

Prostitution is a social phenomenon of which the causes are numerous, varied, complex and frequently interrelated. The literature does not provide us with a universal or identical explanation of why women go 'on the game'. It is impossible to generalise how or why women are introduced into the business. The rationalization for prostitution may occur at all occupational and income levels. Many of the 'explanations' - personality factors, environmental influences, socialization factors, and the economic thesis - although sophisticated in their presentation, are largely unqualified and, taken in isolation, insufficient explanations of the recruitment to prostitution. Moreover, given some of the disadvantages of the prostitution world indicated by previous research (and highlighted in the present study) - alcohol and drug addiction, violence, disease, the adoption of anti social values caused by societal reaction and condemnation of them, the marked psychological destruction caused by the rigours of the business and the association of the profession with more dangerous aspects of the 'underworld' - it begs the question *why* would any woman even entertain the idea of entering the profession. Is prostitution something that *any* and *every* woman could resort to if her personal circumstances - financial desperation, social deprivation - demanded it? Or does it take a certain *sort* of woman to have cold, clinical sex with a total stranger? Are there any specific factors in the social or developmental backgrounds of women who work as prostitutes that facilitates their entry into the profession?

The central part of this thesis - based on interviews with prostitutes working on the street, their clients and the police - attempts to address some of these questions.

¹ Davis' belief that prostitution acts as a guard against potential sexual aggression (i.e. it prevents men from raping) is not substantiated by any empirical evidence. Further, his suggestion that prostitutes are necessarily promiscuous is a highly controversial point, also not borne out by any empirical evidence.

² For example: Thias of Athens was the mistress of Alexander the Great and later married Ptolemy 1 and became Queen of Egypt. One of the most famous and celebrated women in the 5th Century BC was Asphasia, for whom Pericles

repudiated his wife and children, and who was believed to have been responsible for Athens declaration of war on Samos. Her house was the centre of the Athenian library and philosophical society, and was frequented by some of the most powerful men of the time (Tannahill, 1989: 92). Women who used their sexuality to influence men and augment their power were stigmatized as prostitutes; the Romans called Cleopatra the 'prostitute queen' because of her sexual liaisons with Julius Caesar and Mark Anthony.

³ Ironically one of the consequences of the campaign for the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts was that it spread amongst the 'respectable' and hitherto ignorant women in the community an awareness of those evils which '...bore with murderous cruelty upon other women' (Banks, 1964:109).

⁴ The 'double standard' of sexual behaviour was recognized by some commentators. The Anti-corn law leaguer Greg (1883) had little doubt that the '...harsh, savage unjust, unchristian public opinion which has resolved to regard a whole life of indulgence on the part of one sex as venial and natural, and a single false step on the part of the other as irretrievable and unpardonable', was in some way responsible for the negative image prostitution attracted and the venomous and punitive attitude the prostitute engendered (Greg, 1883: 471 in Nield, 1973).

⁵ Gatrell (1980) concludes that recorded statistics on crimes in Victorian and Edwardian England are comprehensive enough to enable an assessment of *real* trends in serious crime. These figures suggest that there was a steady *decline* in crime rates, thus challenging the assumption (made by many historians and criminologists) of the relationship between crime and the processes of 'progressive' economic, social and demographic growth (Gatrell, 1980:5).

⁶ See Appendix A for a brief local history review.

⁷ A House of Lords committee (1890) suggested that the evils known by the term 'sweating' included insanitary conditions, excessive hours and low pay. By the turn of the century, 'sweating' was identified with subcontracting and particularly women outworkers who made clothes for manufacturers in their own homes for starvation wages. In reality, it covered a wide range of activities and conditions (Crow, 1978:96).

⁸ Although limited studies have been made of rural prostitution, it would appear that in rural areas the conditions of labour were actually worse. Girls and women were recruited into gangs for fieldwork where sexual promiscuity was part of the life. Sharpe (1984) suggests that prostitution was rare on more than the most casual basis in the countryside. Most prostitutes were part-timers, merely supplementing their income when the situation demanded (Sharpe, 1984: 110). Unlike urban prostitution where a relatively high degree of organization is suggested, rural prostitution was not highly organized or rigidly structured.

⁹ Illegitimate children could also turn a woman to prostitution. The need to feed and clothe a child could force a woman into prostitution but, the child would soon become a serious liability once she was established in the profession. Dependent children were not welcomed by brothel keepers, and the presence of a child made it harder for a woman to get married. The practice of 'baby-farming' (farming out illegitimate children) was widespread. Acton (1857) estimated there to be over 30,000 children in the hands of baby-farmers. The baby farming practice had a deservedly evil reputation: young children could be acquired from women who masqueraded as foster parents, but who were, in fact, nothing more than professional infanticiders or dealers in children. As long as the child was a regular source of income (that is, as long as it was profitable to the foster

parents), it would survive; as soon as it threatened to become a burden, death was common. [The real nature of the services provided by the baby-farmers is possibly responsible for the high mortality rate of illegitimate babies. (Acton, 1857; Hibbert, 1987: 636)].

¹⁰ Of the 41,954 prostitutes taken into custody over a 10 year period (1850 - 1860), milliners were the most heavily represented, followed by laundresses, servants, shoemakers and tailors (Mayhew, 1862: 263-264).

¹¹ Although it is a French study, the work of Parent-Duchatelet '*De la prostitution dans la ville de Paris*' (1839) is important because it formed the stimulus for much of the work of William Acton (1857). Parent provided a demographic study of 12,000 prostitutes who had been inscribed in Paris through the French regulation system, over a 15 year period 1816-1831. He examined the birth, age, social origins, marital status and former occupations of the women, supplementing police and hospital records with interviews and personal observations. His study revealed that most prostitutes were aged between 20-26, they stayed in the profession for between 1-4 years, were predominantly the daughters of labourers and farm workers, and their previous occupation had usually been poorly paid. Parent treated prostitutes as though they had no rational control over their own lives. At best, they were the victims of circumstance and social injustice, forced into the profession out of sheer desperation. He argued that the real problem was poverty, unemployment and poor wages, however, his claim that economic necessity forced women onto the streets is not convincingly borne out by his own statistics. Of 5,000 prostitutes, 1441 were influenced by poverty, but a similar amount quoted other reasons: 1425 were victims of seduction or abandonment; 1255 had been forced into the profession because of the loss of the parents from death or some other cause.

¹² Venereal disease was the occupational hazard of prostitution. However, it should not be overlooked that other groups of women workers also suffered debilitating occupational diseases. For example, the match girls with Bryant & May suffered from 'phossy jaw' - a condition which resulted in necrosis of the jaw and the subsequent dropping out of all the teeth. It was caused by the frequent inhalation of chemical fumes. In other industries, inadequate ventilation, poor lighting and overcrowded workplaces caused consumption, pneumonia and diphtheria.

¹³ Numerically at least prostitution had declined. In 1978, it was estimated that there were 50,000 prostitutes working in England & Wales. (Honore, 1978:144). However, several factors need to be considered here: (a) These figures only include women convicted of prostitution offences. They do not accurately reflect the true number of women working in the profession (b) Given that there has been a general decline, it has to be seen in conjunction with the various legislative measures introduced. This legislation could have had the effect of 'displacing' and 'dispersing' prostitutes, so the decline may not be as dramatic as the figures suggest.

¹⁴ A lot of the studies do not appear particularly sophisticated. Many of the claims have been difficult to substantiate. The belief that there is something abnormal about prostitutes may be largely a subjective, moralistic judgement.

¹⁵ Schwartz (1973) suggests that 'Women are not biologically monogamous, nor is monogamy congruent with woman's capacity for sexual response. Biologically, woman's sex drive is probably equal to, or greater than, the males' (Schwartz 1973 cited Goode & Troiden 1974:10). Furthermore, how the definition of 'over-sexed' is arrived at, or how the 'sex drive' is measured is never specified. Is it possible for such a quality to be quantified?

Red Light, Blue Light

Prostitutes, Punters and The Police in a Northern City

**PART TWO: THE RESEARCH EXPERIENCE
 THEORY AND PRACTICE**

*No matter how carefully one plans
in advance, the research is designed
in the course of its execution.
The finished monograph is the result
of hundreds of decisions, large and
small, made while the research is
underway.
(Howard Becker, 1965:602-603)*

Red Light, Blue Light

Prostitutes, Punters and The Police in a Northern City

CHAPTER THREE: THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
THEORY, PROCESS AND REALITY

- A. *The Research Methodology*
- B. *Methodological Issues*
- C. *The Research Process*
- D. *The Research Sample*
- E. *The Research Setting*

CHAPTER THREE:

The Research Methodology - Theory, Process and Reality.

As outlined in the introduction, the aim of this research is to examine female prostitution in a social, legal, moral, economic and historical framework; the objective being to facilitate an understanding of the particular situation of women involved in the profession. In an attempt to address some of these issues, an empirical investigation of female prostitution and law enforcement policy and practice in a 'Northern City' was undertaken.

The focus of the research centred on prostitutes and police officers; the methodological approach largely involved observation and interviews. This direct overt observation and analysis was combined with formal and (mainly) informal interviews; documentary material in the form of primary (personal) and secondary (public records) data was also utilised to compile a collection of case studies. It was hoped that this strategy would enable a comprehensive, unique and realistic picture of prostitution - and its attendant policing - to be presented and analyzed.

It was envisaged that whilst some of the data would be compiled into quantifiable statistical form, providing general sociological/criminological data, and also acting as a means of testing (confirming or challenging) the findings of previous studies, from the outset it was evident that this format could not be the sole method of analysis or form the core of the empirical research - to depersonalize into statistics the unique histories of such a diverse group of women would not do justice either to them, or to the complex social phenomenon of the research.

A. The Research Methodology.

The central part of this research was based on first-hand and lengthy observation and contact with female prostitutes in their 'natural setting' and with the police unit responsible for policing prostitution offences (soliciting and kerbcrawling) - behaviour and practices which are ostensibly offences against public order. Underpinning the research was the commitment to the idea that social research should be 'respondent sensitive', that is, that adequate knowledge of human social behaviour cannot be fully grasped without observing and at least attempting to understand the symbolic world and key

events in the life of the group.

From the outset, it was decided that the only practical method of penetrating this group whose activities and behaviour were largely perceived to be both covert and deviant, was going to be through observation.¹ Moreover, it was felt that observation would be the only way to obtain data that would be both rich in detail and which could be related to the context in which it occurs. As Jorgensen (1989) points out:

...as an outsider looking in, you can overview a scene, noting major and distinctive features, relationships, patterns, processes and events.

(Jorgensen, 1989:56)

Observation provided a means of studying the whole system with its many interrelationships in great detail:

...the processes, relationships among people and events, the organization of people and events, continuities over time and patterns, as well as the immediate socio-cultural contexts in which human existence unfolds.

(Jorgensen, 1989:12)

Case Studies: Records of the 'Inner Life'

In criminological research, the life history has had a chequered career. Closely associated with the Chicago School of the 1930s, the method was extensively employed by Park & Burgess (1925) in their research into the urban ecology of the city. A collection of life histories was used to complement official statistics and participant observation, thereby providing a means by which deviant subcultures could be illuminated and understood.² By the 1940s and 1950s the growing demand for quantification and rigorous empirical measurement in the social sciences, pushed the life history method onto the sidelines. Becker (1966) believes that the increasing neglect of the life history could be attributed to the concern of sociologists to develop detailed accounts of specific organizations, communities and their group attributes and interconnections (Becker, 1966:v). More importantly, because the life history method was not regarded as conducive to the production of definite results or 'findings', researchers were not persuaded that the effort or time necessary to produce life history documents was a worthwhile experience. The resurgence of the method in the 1960s appears to have coincided with the development and influence of labelling theory and symbolic interactionism. Plummer (1983) suggests that in the 1970s and

1980s, the life history witnessed a significant theoretical and methodological development with data being treated as an 'object of enquiry' in its own right. This has made it a powerful, though not uncontroversial, tool in historical, sociological and criminological research.

The Method Defined and its Central Assumptions.

Shaw (1930) saw life histories as affording a basis for:

...the formulation of hypotheses with reference to the causal factors involved in the development of delinquent behaviour.

(Shaw, 1930:19)

The central assumption of the method is that human conduct is to be studied and understood from the perspective of the person involved. Park (1927) believed that its purpose was to get a record of the 'inner life' (Park, 1927: 167) Denzin (1970) believes that it is a method 'par excellence' because it:

...rests on the assumption that records of man's [sic] subjective experience form the core data of sociology.

(Denzin, 1970: 257)

Moreover, he argues that the life history may be the best available technique for studying:

...important social psychological processes, group and organizational structure, the rise and decline of social relationships and the situational response of the self to daily interactional contingencies.

(Denzin, 1970: 257)

Through the collection of detailed and insightful data, life histories provide a first hand account of social experience from the participants' point of view.

As such, it is not:

...conventional social science 'data' ... [it is] ... a faithful rendering of the subjects experiences and interpretations of the world he lives in.

(Becker, 1966: v-vi)

This purely subjective account :

...reveals the individuals actions as a human agent and a participant in social life.

(Blumer, 1939:29)

or, as Plummer (1983) defines it, it is research which advocates:

...a concern with the phenomenal role of the lived experience, with the ways in which members interpret their own lives and the world around them.

(Plummer, 1983: 67)

In essence, the hallmark of the method is the capturing of events and experiences over time. The criminologist employing the method thus becomes a 'historian of social life' (Denzin, 1970:221). The life history enables us to view and appreciate an individual:

...in relation to the history of his time, and how he/she is influenced by various religious, social, psychological and economic currents present in the world ... it enables us to understand better the choices, contingencies and option open to the individual.

(Bogdan, 1974:4 cited Plummer, 1983: 69)

Furthermore, the life history allows us to put different life experiences - and particularly 'deviance' - into context with the result that:

... the deviant is seen to be much more than a deviant ... deviancy constitutes only a small fragment of any one individuals life.

(Plummer, 1983: 69)

The Ingredients of the Life History.

The materials used to compile a life history include any documents which highlight a persons subjective behaviour, definitions and experiences. They have '...the character of confessions, revealing sentiments and attitudes' (Park, 1952: 204). The emphasis is on the natural history of events over time with the subjects own story of his/her own life as the main source of data, including past experiences and situations and the social and cultural environment. A complete life history will include as many primary and secondary sources of data as possible. Primary sources revolve around personal data acquired through interviews which allow for the expression of opinions, definitions and experiences. It is these emerging definitions that need to be juxtaposed against the secondary data - notably public records and documents.

For the purposes of this study, public documents including actuarial records (ecological and demographic information), judicial records (police records, court records), government records (criminal statistics) and media reports (highlighting public opinion and concern) were used.

Triangulation of Perspectives.

The best method for the life history is the prolonged biographical interview. However, in order to compile a more complete picture, this strategy needs to be complemented and reinforced with other perspectives and methods. This

'triangulation' includes gathering the perspectives of other people - in this case, the police, who were involved in the situation, and collecting and utilizing other materials, documents and sources of information to validate the data. Berk & Adams (1970) argue that:

...the study of any groups behaviour from the perspective of that group could be considered distorted because other perspectives from people associated, however indirectly, with the group would have been ignored.

(Berk & Adams, 1970:115)

Similarly, Denzin (1970) claims that:

...unless the perspectives of others are brought to bear upon the subjects statements, the observer has no way of addressing the idiosyncracies of those interpretations.

(Denzin, 1970: 238)

Moreover, this 'triangulation' permits:

...the analysis of varying definitions as they relate to the same behavioural unit.

(Denzin, 1970:221)

Reasons for adopting the Life History Method.

Views on the value of the life history vary. The method has been heavily criticised for being relatively inflexible and inefficient for addressing certain social-scientific problems. However, with its rich content of insights, the life history is unique in providing a basis for investigating areas not normally covered. As such, it facilitates the production of results impossible to attain by any other method. With its wealth of detail, the life history can provide new variables, raise new questions and reveal new processes. More importantly, the life history can highlight aspects of a phenomenon about which often unverified assumptions are made.

As Becker (1966) suggests, the life history :

...serves the purpose of checking assumptions, illuminating organization and reorientating stagnant field.

(Becker, 1966: x-xviii)

Many commentators argue that as a practical objective, the method is too impressionistic and unscientific. By focussing on individual lives and unique events, it is argued that the life history produces 'distorted' results and is thus substantively and theoretically inadequate in terms of validity and objectivity (Lundberg, 1926:61; Easthope, 1974:197; Plummer,

1983:65). The life history enables the criminologist to examine the subjective experiences of individuals. Those who argue that it is this emphasis on the individual that distorts the data, or 'maligns the sociological enterprise' appear totally dismissive of the crucial role of the individual *in* the sociological enterprise. As Plummer (1983) points out:

...how can one possibly theorise or interpret a phenomenon if one does not have familiarity with what that means to the participants themselves?

(Plummer, 1983: 65)

The main criticism levelled against the life history method is that it 'neglects theory'. The life history:

...produces a whiff of theory, it provokes, suggests, anticipates, but does not formulate.

(Plummer, 1983:124)

Unlike surveys which produce an abundance of statistical statements, the life history does not produce definite 'results' which can easily be translated into quantifiable data. But is the claim that the life history lacks a scientific base warranted? Is it a method capable of formulating theory? Those who argue this case (Easthope, 1974) appear to have a rather restrictive idea of social science. It is a good method for formulating ideas, and, in the generation of hypotheses and methods - and hence the discovery of new ideas - the life history does have a valuable role to play. A collection of life histories can reveal regularities, types and patterns of behaviour. Denzin (1970) argues strongly that the process of analytic induction when employed in conjunction with a triangulated methodology can be useful for generalizing ideas and developing causal theories - the method revealing both contradictions and confirmations in a research hypothesis. 3 Becker (1966) claims that the life history can serve as a 'touchstone' with which phenomena, such as the delinquent career, can be evaluated; it should be seen as part of a mosaic, compatible with, and complementary to, other research findings and strategies. Plummer (1983) categorizes the connections between theory and the method of personal document research arguing that the central concepts of a specific theory can provide an agenda with which to enter the field. This agenda influences, but does not determine, what data is to be collected and how it is to be categorized and analyzed. The ensuing qualitative data can be used to 'illustrate' theory, to examine the 'fit' between theory and empirical data and can lead, ultimately, to the systematic formulation of a theory.

Interviews: 'Soliciting Information'.

At the core of the life history is the interview. The interview is the '... art of sociological sociability' (Benney & Hughes, 1956:138) - a peculiar verbal exchange in which:

...one person, the interviewer, attempts to elicit information or expression of opinion or belief from another person or persons.

(Maccoby & Maccoby, 1954:499)

It is a 'conversation with a purpose' (Cannell & Kahn, 1965:530) - specifically the purpose of information gathering which:

...far from being a kind of snapshot or tape recording - a simple report either of fact or of emotional response ... it is inevitably an interaction situation.

(Kuhn, 1962: 194)

The interview is beset with problems:

...the problems of an encounter that must simultaneously rest on polite rules of etiquette whilst, at the same time, eliciting information and private perspectives.

(Denzin, 1970: 122)

Cannell & Kahn (1954) suggest that the interview must serve two broad purposes. Firstly, it must translate research objectives into specific questions - the answers to which will provide the data necessary for hypothesis testing. (Herein lies a fundamental theoretical problem - do you start from a theory or does the data determine the theory?) Secondly, the questions must motivate the respondent so that the necessary information is given (Cannell & Kahn, 1954:664).

The choice of which interview strategy - formal (structured) or informal (unstructured) to adopt, depends on several broad factors (a) the theoretical problem under investigation and, (b) the 'circumstances' - the practical situation in which the interviews are likely to be conducted.

The basic theme behind the construction of the interview schedule is to formulate questions which encourage:

...maximum opportunity for complete and accurate communication of ideas between the interviewer and the respondent.

(Cannell & Kahn, 1965:533)

In other words, the questions need to convey meaning to the subject, they need to motivate the respondent (to reply) and they need to be comprehensive enough to cover all the areas of the research whilst at the same time eliciting responses that can be validly and reliably qualified (Denzin, 1970:129;

Hyman, 1954: 665-674). The problem of demonstrating the reliability of the research is partly due to the fact that interviews are interaction situations, the outcome largely depending on (a) the way the participants define the situation and (b) their perception of each other.

B. Methodological Issues: Putting Theory into Practice.

Interviews are a complex social process; they cannot be regarded as merely a means of extracting and recording information. Interviewing skills are something that have to be learned through the hard reality of interviewing itself. In essence, the interviewing 'technique' adopted for this research was developed, learned and adapted during the course of the fieldwork.

Police Interviews: Format and Rationale.

In this research, a semi-structured interview schedule was devised for the interviews with the police (See Appendix B). The rationale behind the choice of semi-structured interviews for the police was to present all respondents with the same stimuli so that they were responding to the same research instrument. This comparability meant that when variations did appear they could be attributed to actual differences in response. However, the usual classification of results into statistical aggregates was neither possible - (given the small number of police officers interviewed), nor was it regarded as being either necessary or appropriate given that the object of the interview was to elicit both personal opinions and views about the subject of prostitution and to see if, or how, these personal views coincided with the overriding policy of the police (as the law enforcing institution) towards prostitution.

Prostitute Interviews: A 'Most Peculiar Interaction'.

For the interviews with the prostitutes, because the subject was highly complex and sensitive, it was felt that the greater flexibility of the unstructured (informal) interview would be better suited for getting to the 'heart of the matter'. The questions were not asked in a specific order; I aimed to play a passive and adaptive role, giving only enough direction that the respondent covered the area in depth relatively unrestricted. They were '...informer friendly conversations' (Denzin, 1970:126). However, the questions were relatively 'directive' in that they provided a definite frame of

reference. Although there were particular topics on the schedule, there were few pre-set questions (see Appendix C). This allowed me to vary the sequence of the questions, change the wording, probe unclear and ambiguous responses and, more importantly, to adapt the phrasing of the questions to fit the unique characteristics of each respondent. It was felt important to record the 'history' of their involvement in prostitution. As such, questions were asked about the circumstances surrounding their initial involvement in prostitution and their personal motivations at the time. Having established motivation, it was easier to develop questions aimed at eliciting personal opinions - for example, *how do you feel about the work you do ?*, and their personal attitudes - *what do you most like/dislike about the work?*. In this research, the questions needed to be as simple and straightforward as possible. Ambiguity, vagueness, technical expressions and particularly academic jargon had to be avoided. In essence, the final questionnaire 'schedule' represented a compromise between formulating questions that satisfied the information gathering purpose of the interview, and finding a common vocabulary with which to express the question.

Consideration had to be given to the breadth and limitations of the subjects vocabulary; the language employed had to be chosen with the survey population in mind. Members of different social groups, from different backgrounds, social classes and settings use different vocabularies and have different language usage; one single word can evoke different mental images. Language is ambiguous; idiosyncratic frames of reference can confuse the communication process. The ordering of the questions was, as I was to discover, to be of crucial importance; decisions had to be made about the topics that were to be covered not only because of the necessity of gaining the interest of the respondent but because fundamental problems arise if you are researching a 'delicate' area. This particularly applies if you are researching a delicate topic with a subject group who are generally unwelcoming to an outsiders interest. Advice on how to handle the hostile respondent is sadly lacking in the literature. Experience eventually taught me that highly sensitive or potentially 'threatening' questions were best placed near (or at) the end of the interview. In this way, if the respondent became disgruntled with the questions or hostile to me (the researcher) and decided to terminate the interview, a major portion of the interview was at least completed.

This method provided a more rounded picture than would be attainable by more formal methods. It did however, require more motivation on the part of the respondent since they did not have the 'help' of pre-set questions. The problem is that whilst this data may be more valid, the kind of response elicited may be difficult to classify and quantify. The unstructured approach is relatively slow and complex, but it was invaluable for researching this complex phenomena, providing the opportunity to dig deep and elicit a more affective and value laden response, that is, to discover what the respondent 'really feels' and 'really means'. For this more complex data, the greater flexibility of the unstructured approach actually served to strengthen the data. The difficulties of quantifying the data - replicating and summarizing the results - were not insurmountable and did not negate the possibility of developing an explanatory hypothesis.

One way to check the validity of the answers is to re-interview the respondents. This is a complex procedure, mainly because the researcher has to have excellent recall of the first interview. You have to remember *absolutely everything* otherwise they (the respondents) think that you are not interested or have not been paying attention. Recalling the minute details of an individual's life history is reasonably easy when you only have a couple of them to recall. Once you have twenty, thirty, or forty to remember you can just feel your brain cells beginning to dissolve. It is not always easy to secure the further co-operation of the subjects. In this research, because of the length and the ongoing nature of the study, some of the women did quite happily put up with my incessant questioning - though to be brutally honest, some of the women did express the opinion that I must be 'a bit thick' if I was having to continually ask them questions about things. Denzin (1970) suggests that if questions raise the possibility of lying or fabricating, care should be taken to include questions which 'catch' the respondent out, or reveal that previous answers have been incorrect (Denzin, 1970:129). On the whole, this was not a good strategy to pursue. Respondents are not stupid and any attempt to infer that they are (by trying to catch them out) is both patronizing and foolhardy. The respondents in this study were exceptionally alert to everything that was said; their capacity for remembering detail was staggering; they could remember what you were wearing the previous week, they could remember car licence plates with consummate ease. They have to. The respondents in this study spend a fair percentage of their life attempting

to avoid 'entrapment' questions posed by the police; dodging 'double-barrelled' questions from a university researcher was hardly likely to fool them.

Data Collection and Recording Techniques.

Field notes provided a running commentary of everything that transpired in the field; this included a description of participants, events, setting and behaviour. Important events and quotes would be jotted down; full field notes - a running log of observations - were compiled as soon after the event as possible.

6 police officers in the Divisional Enquiry Team (DET) were interviewed; 4 PCs and 2 WPCs. The interviews with the police lasted between 45 - 60 minutes; they were all tape recorded and conducted in private at the Central Police Station (CPS).

The (40) interviews with the prostitutes were conducted in a variety of circumstances and settings - at the Central Police Station (CPS), police cells, a police interview room, or on the street. There were considerable 'operational' difficulties. In total, 12 interviews were conducted at CPS (usually when the women were being cautioned), 28 interviews were conducted on the street. Of the 12 interviews conducted at CPS, 6 were conducted in private, 6 were conducted with the police present or 'hovering' - doing paperwork, checking warrants etc. Of the 28 conducted on the street, 18 were with a police 'presence' (they usually remained in the car), 10 were conducted in private. Those occasions when the police were present did not seem to hinder the interview or deter the women from talking openly and freely. 14 of the 40 women were interviewed on more than one occasion. During the course of the fieldwork, other prostitutes (mainly 'semi-regulars' and 'occasionals') quite happily talked to me on an informal basis. 8 women were invited but declined to be interviewed. Of the 8 that declined, 2 were 'regulars' (see glossary); both of these women regularly agreed to be interviewed, regularly changed their minds, and thus regularly failed to keep to promised agreements and arrangements. Of the other decliners, 3 were 'semi-regulars' and 3 were 'occasionals'. Their reluctance to being included in the survey was based on the fear (which I was unable to allay) that (a) they would be recognised and that their families would find out about them, and (b) that they would be recognised and reported to 'the social' or fraud

squad officers at the DHSS or Tax Office.

The interviews with the prostitutes presented a more difficult recording task. The possibility of tape recording the interviews proved impractical. The mere presence of a tape recorder threatened to totally destroy the agreement of an interview. Fear of damaging the rapport (which had been so difficult to establish) led to the idea of tape recording interviews being abandoned very early on in the research. Also dismissed as impractical, too formal and obtrusive was the idea of taking notes during the interview. This was too distracting, in that too much effort was put into concentrating on taking the notes rather than concentrating on the conversation. It also has to be stressed that most of the interviews took place on the street, so it was totally impractical to take notes. (Some women were not keen to get into the police car, or have police officers present; they said it might be bad for 'business', or else they were concerned that the other women on the patch might assume that they were passing information to the police). The most viable method was making notes after the interview. This was extremely time consuming but on the whole was found to be the most effective method. Written notes would be jotted down immediately after the interview, these would then be supplemented by verbal notes into a tape recorder. (As I tended to start this process as I was driving home in the early hours of the morning this did attract some rather peculiar glances from passing motorists!!) More detailed notes would then be made either during the night or the following day. In general, I would find that an average six hours fieldwork (on patrol with the police) would take on occasions two to three days to write up, organise and classify.

Summary

For the purposes of this research, two types of interview were employed; a more formal (semi-structured) approach was devised for the police, and an 'unstructured - guided' framework was adopted for the interviews with the prostitutes. Each type of interview addressed particular issues and types of questions and allowed information to be gathered about (a) personal social data - age, sex, marital status, educational history, occupational history, (b) attitudes and opinions and (c) past social and personal experiences - the life history data which formed the basis of this thesis. 4 The key element was flexibility. The less structured approach accommodated different perspectives

and provided 'richer' data. The aim was to cover topics in a systematic way; although there was no set questionnaire, the aim was to give the interview a fairly structured form to ensure that all the relevant issues and topics were covered. Most of the questions were 'open-ended' in the sense that the respondents were encouraged to talk freely around the topic but within the framework imposed by the schedule. The interviews were conducted on a 'conversation friendly' basis - the objective being to encourage the respondents to develop their views at length. In essence, the questions were used as a 'catalyst' for the expression of attitudes, values, feelings and beliefs.

In this research, covert observation was never a practical tenable proposition. The methodology adopted involved being present to hear a lot of 'informal talk' (Douglas, 1972:118). As a 'professional stranger' (Agar, 1980), it was a work routine that involved endless hanging around, engaging in seemingly idle chit chat, note taking, and asking odd (and often dumb) questions. It was what Van Maanen (1991) calls '...a most uncommon adult role' (Van Maanen, 1991:32).

Much is written about what is expected from the respondent in the interview process. According to Cannell & Kahn (1968) it is up to the interviewer to make the interviewing experience and task:

...sufficiently meaningful, sufficiently rewarding and sufficiently enjoyable to attain and maintain the necessary respondent motivation.

(Cannell & Kahn, 1968: 574)

But what about the demands of the process on the researcher? Moser & Kalton (1971) suggest that the interviewer needs to possess, or cultivate, the qualities of intelligence, understanding, tact, honesty, accuracy, adaptability, an obvious interest in what the respondent is saying and a deep understanding of the subject matter (Moser & Kalton, 1971:281). Similarly, Neff Gurney (1991) suggests that the fieldworker needs curiosity, patience, honesty and sincerity (Neff Gurney, 1991: 88-89). I would add that for dealing with prostitutes and police alike, a sense of humour is an essential prerequisite. Talking to prostitutes, trying to talk to prostitutes, observing the police, indeed just being with the police on patrol, provides a wide range of experiences and stimulates different reactions and emotions. This research was not a dull experience.⁵ It ranged between being extremely interesting, hilariously funny and enjoyable to being conversely

tense, frustrating and totally exhausting. Providing you are not of a nervous disposition and do not mind getting freezing cold, soaking wet, mercilessly teased, tried out and 'tested', sworn at, laughed at, generally abused and half frightened to death, it is a research strategy that makes library based research seem a trifle dull in comparison. It is the 'experienced reality' of this 'research process' that forms the basis of the next section of this chapter.

C. *The Research Process: The Experienced 'Reality'.*

The problems encountered in actual practice are often glossed over in the presentation of the findings and researchers are unable to benefit from one another's experiences and, above all, their failures.

(Sjoberg & Miller, 1973: 130)

People tend to respond to you based on their preconceptions of a 'researcher'. People interact with you as an alien, who, under normal circumstances, would not be part of their environment. This may result in displays of suspicion, contempt, hostility, indifference, curiosity or friendliness.

(Jorgensen, 1989: 58)

Gatekeepers - An Unfair Cop ?

Gaining permission to conduct research is by no means straightforward; it is a process which involves continuous negotiation and renegotiation. The final agreement is, in essence, a 'workable bargain' - a compromise which almost inevitably influences the kind of investigation that can be conducted.

In December 1992, it was decided that the only practical and realistic way to conduct the research would be to enlist the co-operation and advice of the police 'vice squad' unit - the Divisional Enquiry Team (DET) responsible for policing prostitution offences in the 'Northern City'. Other agencies, such as the Probation Service and the Social Services had all suggested that they had little or no contact with prostitutes so could provide no help. Accordingly, the Divisional Commander of policing in the city centre division was contacted to try and secure the help of the police in the research. The initial meeting outlined the aims and objectives of the overall research and presented an idea of the kind of co-operation and research 'facilities' that were being sought from the police. The Superintendent suggested that my presence - accompanying and observing the police team responsible for the policing of prostitution on *at least* a weekly basis, would present no

problem (of a practical nature) either to him or to the team. Several days after the initial meeting, an informal visit to the Central Police Station (CPS) was made so that I could (a) introduce myself to the members of the team and outline the research objectives to them (b) accompany a patrol so that I could acquaint myself with the method and manner of policing so that ultimately I would be able to (c) gain some idea of the practical feasibility of the research proposal, that is, gauge exactly what kind of information could be obtained - from both the women working as prostitutes, and from the officers in the team. As I was to discover, completing a successful 'bargain' with one set of gatekeepers was not a cast iron guarantee that full co-operation with other gatekeepers in the command structure or 'on the ground' would automatically follow. It has to be recognised that if there is nothing of obvious value to be offered to the people being asked to co-operate with the study then there are 'few compelling reasons' for people to participate (Van Maanen, 1991:34). In negotiating to allow entry, the pivotal concern for the gatekeeper is reciprocity, determined by what benefits the research can offer the agency as a whole. As Broadhead & Rist (1976) point out:

... there is little for the administrator to gain by allowing 'pure' academic research which might undermine his authority, reputation, operation or competitiveness.

(Broadhead & Rist, 1976:327)

The 'gatekeeper' - who exists to keep out those who do not belong or who are unwanted - may endeavour to exercise influence and control over the research in a number of ways. As Holdaway (1982) points out:

'...those who are being researched control the situation as much as the researcher.

(Holdaway, 1982:66)

The police are defensive about being studied by outsiders:

...some people make an effort to keep the researcher out, they believe that their enclave is one of privacy, or they fear that they may suffer from the results of investigation.

(Sagarin, 1973:52)

Douglas (1972) maintains that to a certain extent every organization (or individual) erects a facade or 'front' which:

...represents to outsiders an idealized version of what he or his organization is trying to accomplish, the way in which goals are met, and the motivations undergirding decisions and actions.

(Douglas, 1972:93)

Managing this 'front' - the 'formalized interpretation of observable reality' (Douglas 1972:96) can be a major obstacle confronting the research.

A particularly complicating feature of my research was that the 'gatekeeper of the department' - henceforth referred to as *GoD* - was not as keen on the idea of research as his senior officer. More crucially, he was not at all keen on the idea of 'researchers'. Given that it later transpired that *GoD* had never had any direct contact with either research or a researcher before, this response did seem slightly irrational. ⁶ *GoD* was largely dismissive of my chances of being able to successfully conduct any research, explaining that some of the women on the street were not easy to talk to - his overriding message being that I should not expect the women to talk to me. When I mentioned a target figure of twenty interviews he suggested that would be 'highly unlikely'; he thought that about half a dozen *might* talk to me (if I was lucky) so that 'would have to do for my little project'.

Following this introductory meeting, I decided that it would obviously take some time (and patience) to gain the confidence and trust - not only of the women before I could hope to make tremendous progress interviewing them - but I also realised that it would take some considerable time and ingenuity to acclimatise myself to the ways and culture of the police. It soon became clear that my central objective would be to gain some degree of acceptance and that to establish, maintain and cement relations would require a continuous effort (Shaffir & Stebbins, 1991:28-9). Having been foisted upon the DET it seemed essential that they did not find my presence too objectionable and intolerable. In essence I needed to (a) convince the individual members of the team that I was 'non-threatening' - that is 'normalise' my presence, and (b) attempt to overcome misconceptions and prejudices about research and researchers. ⁷

It is clear that I was not wholly successful in my attempt to 'convert' the heart and mind of *GoD*. In the initial stages of the research, repeated requests to join the team were refused; excuses were plentiful if not always entirely plausible. When I did finally persuade him to allow me to join a patrol my presence was obviously inconvenient (I know this because he told me so). On several occasions, a patrol was only undertaken because 'I was there' and because he 'felt obliged'. On another occasion when I requested that I be able to start compiling the statistical data, *GoD* was extremely reluctant to provide any assistance; he could not see why it was important

that I should have information 'like that'. After the initial promise of total co-operation I began to feel both let down and extremely concerned that my 'little project' would never actually materialize. I should stress that the other members of the DET more than made up for the lack of charm of their leader. Whereas *GoD* thought it 'highly unlikely' that I would be able to obtain any interviews, the other members of the team thought I stood a good chance - if I could manage to stick it out.

Initiation Tests or Sabotage ?

Each police officer had to assure himself that the researcher could be trusted. ⁸ The researcher can expect this trustworthiness to be tested - with increasing severity - until every police officer is satisfied of it (McCall, 1978:89). In this research, trustworthiness came in the form of practical tests and appeared to be aimed at gauging squeamishness and/or toughness. This 'flinchability factor' was tested in various ways - on a minor level by showing me a sequence of progressively disturbing pictures of dead bodies that had been fished out of the river, to more major tests which seemed to be designed to test my desire to continue with the research at all - actively discouraging or actually preventing the women from talking to me; interrupting and disturbing the interviews and generally endeavouring to prevent me from collecting any data at all.

'Bloody University Types' and 'Proper Policemen'.

It had not gone unnoticed that *GoD* and I were not 'hitting it off'. ⁹ I was advised not to take any notice of him, to plod on regardless; others (police officers) reassured me that he was indeed 'being awkward' but that was 'just his way'. He undoubtedly would have preferred it if I had abandoned my 'little project'. Unfortunately I did not feel that given the time limit confines of a doctoral thesis I could just 'plod on ad infinitum', and with the retirement of the original superintendent with whom the research arrangements had been made, it seemed that my problems could increase.

Concerned at the general lack of invitations to join the team and the positive reception offered by *GoD*, it was decided that confirmation of the promised research facilities had to be sought with the new Divisional Commander. The subsequent reassurance that the agreement of co-operation still held good and that there were 'no specific reasons' why invitations to

join the team were not more forthcoming, did little to allay my concern about the feasibility of actually continuing with the research, or prevent my apprehension about what impact reaffirming the promised research facilities would have on my relationship with *GoD*. In an attempt to offset any possible repercussions (to what was tantamount to 'going over his head' - a strategy I was desperate to avoid) and appease the situation, I volunteered to supply *GoD* with a copy of the preliminary report of 'fieldwork progress' that I had submitted to my supervisor. Several weeks later I was actually invited to join him for a cup of tea in the canteen. This was indeed a rare treat - the 'public' are never allowed into the inner sanctum - was I actually about to experience some real 'canteen culture'? Not quite. *GoD* had taken it upon himself to make some written comments about my report; this amounted to denying most of the comments I had made and he was especially keen for me to alter/delete certain other aspects of it. As this would have left me with zero information, I decided that a 'clearing of the air' was necessary to at least attempt to dispel some of the misunderstandings and misconceptions that had obviously developed. Although I persuaded myself that I could live with his personal antagonism I found it difficult to understand why he continually tried to undermine, practically sabotage, the research. He conceded that he had nothing against me personally (despite the fact that I was, in his opinion, a 'middle class university type') rather it transpired that his antagonism was directed at those 'university types' with a degree who join the police force and then proceeded to go whizzing over his head on some fast track promotion scheme. According to *GoD* these were not 'proper policemen' - these ambitious little upstarts did not have a clue what 'proper policing was all about'. I asked *GoD* what he thought proper policing was all about. *GoD* replied that he had '...been in houses where you wipe your feet when you come *out* of the house' - *that* was 'proper policing'.

Cop Culture: A Female Perspective.

The police service is a highly formalized, tightly organized, secrecy conscious bureaucracy:

...peopled by men who see the world as dangerous, isolating and untrustworthy, and who see themselves as the last barrier between the citizen and total social decay.

(Manning, 1972:255)

They envelop themselves in a conspiratorial 'blue curtain of secrecy' against

outside scrutiny (McCall, 1978:85). Holdaway (1982) argues that the police are accountable to the rule of law:

...a constitutional feature which they neutralise by the maintenance of a protective occupational culture.

(Holdaway, 1982:64)

Reiner (1985) suggests that 'cop culture' is:

...a set of values, norms, perspectives and craft rules ... (that has) ... developed as a patterned set of understandings which help to cope with and adjust to the pressures and tensions which confront the police.

(Reiner, 1985:86-7)

Research has suggested that police officers tend to be '...authoritarian, dogmatic and conservative' (Potter, 1977), and '...extroverted, toughminded and conservative' - that is, steadfastly resistant to change and preferring safe, traditional and conventional behaviour (cited Coleman & Gorman, 1982). Reiner (1985) stresses the:

...pragmatic, concrete, down to earth, anti-theoretical perspective which is typical of the rank and file.

(Reiner, 1985:103)

The police world is undoubtedly one of 'old fashioned machismo' (Reiner, 1985:99). The masculinity of the police culture - the 'beer, sport and women' mentality - poses some considerable difficulties for female researchers. For a start, in my experience, 'cop culture' covered a wide range of sins - there was *van culture* (largely lavatorial humour and behaviour - belching competitions etc), *patrol culture* (critical and judgemental assessments of individuals - usually ordinary members of the public just going about their business), *office culture* (largely based on the fact that no-one in the office could actually stand each other), *custody room culture* (a weary humour presumably based on the fact that the poor custody room officers - isolated from the outside world for prolonged periods and thus deprived of contact with people other than criminals and fellow police officers - have lost all capacity to practice the art of conversation), and finally there was *pub culture* (largely a combination of van, patrol and office culture though interspersed with much talk of latest sexual conquests, sporting triumphs and latest alcoholic consumption levels).

Reiner(1985) notes the marked internal solidarity, coupled with the social isolation of police officers and difficulty in mixing with civilians in ordinary life. Reiner also notes that one hazard of research is '...the taking of

mental notes while sinking under a bar as the consumption of pints mounts' (Reiner, 1985:99). Early on in the research, I was informed that 'VLP' - Visiting Licensed Premises - was a crucial part of vice squad duties. For many months, I was completely taken in by this apparently plausible excuse to make a trip to the pub. Consumption of alcohol was regarded as absolutely imperative; the police officers consumed copious amounts of the stuff and failure to keep up with them was viewed with deep suspicion and much disdain. 'VLPs' did not provide much chance to relax; although police officers were friendly and sociable when off duty, they tended to ask too many questions all the time. This is obviously an occupational hazard - they don't know how or when to stop interrogating people. At times, I was surprised by their candour (it was later suggested by a fellow student-police officer, that they had been 'naive'). The male officers liked to pursue robust and traditionally 'macho' activities; interests tended to revolve around Rugby (in summer this was replaced by cricket and golf), Horse racing, Beer, Cars and women - in that order. This was the case for most of the PCs that I came into contact with - some didn't actually bother to mention women. In the eyes of some of these romeos, women were designed for sex and that was about it. To a policeman, sex was rather like a crime return - the more they could claim for the better it looked to friends and colleagues. The number of 'extra-maritals' going on (or rumoured to be going on) was quite staggering. There was always gossip about some PCs latest conquest. The easiest target for this gossip was the WPC - it seemed to be the general opinion that WPCs were okay for affairs, (a couple of PCs described all police women as 'slags') actually marrying one was not such a good idea. The reasoning behind this was that it would be totally impractical, and would definitely 'cramp the style':

...it would be impossible to get away with things - she could always check up on you. Suppose there was 'time owing' and you booked off early and went to the pub with your mates and meantime the wife called you up and found out that you weren't there - she would get annoyed that you had decided to go out with your mates instead of spending time with her.

(DET, male officer)

The view of one WPC was that policemen were:

...probably the last men on earth that a sensible girl should get involved with, but at least they understood the pressures of the job.

(WPC DET officer)

Police Attitudes: Women, Whores and WPCs

Suspiciousness and stereotyping is endemic to police work. Banton (1983) argues that what is critical is the degree to which stereotyping is reality based and helpful as opposed to categorically discriminating in a prejudiced way (Banton, 1983 cited Reiner, 1985:92). 10 The fact that some police officers are undoubtedly anti certain groups in society, and the fact that this attitude is based largely on fear, ignorance and moral judgements about other people's lifestyles is both galling and ironical, given that police officers cannot claim to occupy the moral high ground.

The attitude of policemen to women seemed particularly complex; though most appeared to be categorized and judged by their sexual proclivity and activity. Throughout the course of this research I was advised by female officers to 'give as good as I got'; women in the police service just have to put up with all the banter - they get it all the time:

The men are just waiting for the women to respond; they like all the banter, they like to see how far the women can be pushed - to see if or how they will react.

(WPC DET)

Some women made official complaints about some of the men's antics but they never got very far. Who could they complain to? (The police force in this 'Northern City' was sadly lacking in senior female officers). The sexism is just part of the culture, it is well established and seemingly intractable - you just have to 'put up with it' otherwise you go under. My protestations that women in the police service shouldn't have to 'put up with it' was, in truth, a shallow argument. In the course of this research I was abused, laughed at, teased, sworn at, bullied and threatened. I was patronized and pilloried. My personal morality and reputation was questioned and scrutinized. I was treated to displays of pure arrogance, ignorance and incivility. However, because I was 'doing research', because I had to endeavour to remain 'objective' and 'neutral', I too had to just 'put up with it'.

Doing 'Deviance' Research.

In fieldwork, numerous moral judgements are continually made - decisions about one's personal involvement in the research, the objectives and methodology of the study, and the effect - or potential impact - that the research may have on both the subjects and the wider community. In recent

years, the ethical dilemmas inherent in social research have become the subject of considerable debate and concern. Shils (1959) suggests that this is because:

...the creation of techniques for the direct observation of living persons and contemporary institutions, the deepening of intellectual curiosity about the motives and the very tissue of social life, the diminution of inhibitions on intrusiveness into other persons affairs, and the concomitant formation of techniques for perceiving these deeper and subtler things, have precipitated problems of ponderable ethical significance.

(Shils, 1959 cited Bulmer, 1982:128)

Ethical Principles and Considerations.

In social research, the researcher has an obligation to obtain the informed consent of the subjects, to respect confidentiality in the research process, and to avoid intruding into other people's lives. In short, the subject (of the research) must be no worse off psychologically as a result of the research, and some guarantee of confidentiality regarding the data that is obtained must be made. The basic ethical questions that need to be addressed are: *When does research violate individual interest ? Could the information be obtained by other means ? Does society have an automatic 'right' to research knowledge ? What are the obligations of the researcher to the respondents ?* As Barnes (1963) points out:

...the groups we study are often far from articulate, powerful or respected, and we should therefore be particularly on our guard to ensure that we do not betray the trust our informants have placed in us.

(Barnes, 1963:132)

Klockars (1979) argues that to make a sound decision about whether to do fieldwork on deviant behaviour, one must confront the moral, emotional, intellectual, behavioural and legal consequences that are (or may be) involved. The author calls this moral dilemma the problem of 'dirty hands', where the researcher must use 'dirty means' to achieve good ends.

One of the most sensitive ethical issues concerns the publication of field research findings. Becker (1969) argues that items should not be published that would cause suffering disproportionate to the scientific gains of making them public. The crucial question then is, *how much do you reveal about the lives and habits of the community studied, its individual members and subgroups ? How can those who have participated in the research be*

'protected'? Fichter & Kolb (1953) maintain that the researcher has a moral duty towards those who have co-operated with the study - an obligation to truthfulness, confidentiality, honest reporting and scientific objectivity (Fichter & Kolb, 1953:545). The authors present a systematic consideration of the ethical issues, arguing that the dilemma is most acute when the ensuing description and analysis could result in: (i) the revealing of secrets (ii) the violation of privacy and (iii) the destruction of an individual's reputation (Fichter & Kolb, 1953:548).

In this research, their informed consent was obtained from all respondents. I worked on the general principle that people have the right NOT to be researched. As such, at no time was pressure placed on an individual to co-operate with the study. No financial inducements or rewards were offered. All respondents were given my guarantee of anonymity. As a way of protecting the individual, all have been given pseudonyms. The precise location of certain events and incidents have been disguised to further preserve anonymity. I was further bound by the restrictions imposed by the Official Secrets Act and the Data Protection Act.

At a very early stage in the fieldwork I began to appreciate the reality, and the enormity, of the research task. It was going to be difficult to secure interviews; the women were, not unnaturally, suspicious of me and my motives. These were not ordinary circumstances, they are not 'ordinary' people. As 'deviants', they experience a 'profound public relations problem' (Douglas, 1972:13); many were well aware of their 'social problem' status and the pejorative label that is sometimes applied to them. Many were not anxious to have somebody study them or plumb their dark secrets.

The immediate problem confronting this research was how to make contact and establish rapport, that is, win the co-operation and trust of the respondents. Contacting prostitutes was extremely problematic. One consolation however, was that they were at least 'settled' in the sense that they had to work in the same area ('the patch') and usually at the same time. However, persuading people to actually talk to you was not quite so simple. Initially I was introduced to the women as 'the observer'. This was not a wise strategy. One of the women approached for an interview got completely the wrong end of the stick and started putting the rumour about that I was a reporter from 'The Observer' (newspaper). By the end of the evening, rumours had swept the patch that I was from the 'News of the World' about to

write some sleazy expose on prostitutes. By anyone's standards this was not good going. It had taken the police years of concerted effort to irritate certain sections of the community - the 'researcher' managed to send the entire red light district into a blind panic in little less than one evening! Eventually, the police started introducing me as 'their student'; they would say 'this is our student Karen'. This was not such a good strategy either - it confused some into thinking that I was a student policewoman. The best sort of introductions were generally those where I introduced myself - where I was able to make my status and purpose absolutely clear.

Establishing an adequate level of trust, credibility and rapport is of paramount importance. It was the most time consuming aspect of the research. Developing rapport is always problematic but when the group involved is classed as 'deviant' it may be unusually difficult because they may be unusually distrustful. The group may be suspicious for a number of reasons (i) they may be involved in other illegal and 'improper' activities (ii) it may be:

...the past experience of the group that certain people were trying to 'score' or take advantage.

(Berk & Adams, 1970:104)

or (iii) the researcher may be considered to be some sort of undercover 'enemy' out to harm or expose them.¹¹ Berk & Adams (1970) suggest that the greater the social distance between observer and respondent, the greater the difficulty in establishing and maintaining rapport:

...when the observer is placed among people very different from himself [sic] and when the groups in question are unusually suspicious, the necessary task of gaining on-going rapport may be an extremely troublesome obstacle.

(Berk & Adams, 1970:103-105)

In general, it did not seem to make much difference whether I knew the women for two minutes or two months - they were either the sort of people who were happy to co-operate and talk or they wouldn't. More importantly, the idea of gaining the confidence and trust of the women was constantly undermined by the initial rather sporadic nature of the research - lack of invitations from the police and the specific problems and obstacles already referred to concerning *GoD*.

The general concern of the women was that people would 'find out' about them. This was surely one of the most bizarre paradoxes of 'being a

prostitute' - many were terrified that their 'secret' would be revealed, and yet, their activities were hardly a well kept secret; they stood quite cheerfully on the street ready and willing to sell themselves to just about anyone who pulled over in the car and asked them - providing the price was right. I could understand their initial reluctance to talk. Apart from the fact that they were being asked to talk to me out of the goodness of their heart (I did not offer them any money), I would not talk to a stranger, especially one who, in the crucial initial stages, sat in the police car looking alternatively bemused and bewildered by it all. Eventually, after a couple of months, I knew all the women on the patch and they knew me. Almost all the regulars had been interviewed, some had been re-interviewed. On the whole, their attitude to me, as a researcher, was extremely friendly. Most were readily agreeing to be interviewed; they wanted to be included in 'the book'. Some women even made a point of coming over to the car when we were 'parked up' to arrange interviews. (They did not always stick to the arrangement). One woman ('Martina') said she thought I was 'f***ing brave to stand and talk to the women like I did'. She had evidently *been observing me* and reasoned that if I 'had the 'f***ing guts to stand there' then the least she could do was to talk to me. She said she was 'complimented' that I should bother to speak to her because most people thought that prostitutes were 'disgusting'.

The field study of 'deviants' is not advisable for everyone. The day to day demands of fieldwork are fraught with anxiety and uncertainty. Commitment to a research strategy of this nature is not only time consuming and demanding, it can also be extremely stressful with physical, mental and emotional fatigue posing a constant threat, both to the direction and outcome of the study and to the researcher herself. It has to be recognised that stress is a constituent part of fieldwork; it goes with the territory - a sort of occupational hazard. The requirement that the researcher 'discovers something'; the time limits imposed on conducting the fieldwork, the need to learn new skills and ways of behaving - the 'language', the culture, and the 'initiation' tests - all increase the anxiety.

Several further 'problems' were evident in this fieldwork, many of them were interrelated:

A Question of Reputation...

One of the major problems associated with doing 'deviance' research is the assumption, or the implication, that there must be something 'peculiar' or 'deviant' about someone who wants to do 'that kind' of research. The researcher is 'guilty by association' - the assumption is that one must have a particular fascination with the subject - a fascination that unwittingly reveals some hitherto unknown aspect of the researcher's personality (Henslin, 1972:55). The very fact that I was researching this rather dubious subject at all brought my reputation into question. Was I totally morally shameless or completely 'beyond the pale' ? Why was I 'wasting' a perfectly good degree on a subject like this ? Eyebrows were raised. It was a question of reputation - I might be branded as one of them... Family and friends can be forgiven for raising questions about my sanity; fellow social scientists who believe that research among or about 'criminals' entails having to become one of them, or at the very least try to pass for one of them, reveal a serious misunderstanding of criminological fieldwork. As McCall (1978) notes:

...attempting to conduct field research by passing for a criminal is not only unnecessary but also foolhardy...aside from the standard risks ... it will destroy his field relations and perhaps incur retribution.

(McCall, 1978:29-30)

Furthermore, in some people's eyes, the fact that I was planning to conduct this research with the police was not a sensible strategy. Researching the police was one thing, doing research *with the help of* the police was a completely different one. To some, a research strategy of this nature was tantamount to 'sleeping with the enemy'. As Manning (1972) succinctly points out:

...radicals have argued with their usual tendency to dichotomise the world, that any involvement with 'the pigs' is prima facie evidence of one's loyalty to the establishment.

(Manning, 1972:258)

As one of the key enquiries of the research was 'the policing of' prostitution, it was inevitable that the police would play a major role (of one sort or another) in the research. Involvement with the police was more a matter of interested inquiry and practical expediency than a demonstration of a particular political or ideological allegiance.

The Problem of Neutrality...

Neutrality, even to the point of total silence is a form of reaction ... but also implies a specific attitude towards the issue - being above it, outside it, more important than it, not interested in it .

(Vidich, 1955:358)

As Neff Gurney (1991) points out, the problem is that a 'professional detachment' must co-exist with a deep involvement with members of a different culture. The researcher faces the dual problem of trying to maintain rapport, which involves adjusting and accommodating to the demands and predilections of the hosts and respondents, whilst at the same time, trying to collect the best possible data for the study (Neff Gurney, 1991 in Shaffir & Stebbins, 1991:53).

It must have been a difficult and quite unique situation for the police - they were used to working in teams, established partnerships, and suddenly they found themselves saddled with a total stranger in the back seat listening to everything they said and watching everything they did. In reality, initially everyone found this situation a little awkward. I found it especially hard to know how to respond to some of their banter. The police officers were a critical bunch; I did not know how to respond to some of their constant carping criticisms and comments about the prostitutes. They would ask for my opinion; if I joined in (which I felt uncomfortable about) I was 'superbitch'; if I remained silent it made the police feel uncomfortable and I was 'stuck up bitch'.¹² Complete and total neutrality in fieldwork is an illusion; in the back of a police car it is a near impossibility. I frequently consoled myself that I was privileged to be witnessing cop culture - or, more accurately, patrol culture - in action.

The Question of Safety

Insofar as the investigator is interested in studying potentially dangerous kinds of behaviour he [sic] should understand the risks ... do not stay too late and avoid Friday nights altogether

(Berk & Adams, 1970:110-111)

In this research the question of (my) safety was a particularly sensitive issue; some police officers were gallant beyond the call of duty; some did not feel that having a researcher attached to them or indeed 'looking after' the researcher was part of their duty. Fair enough. However, a study of policing - or a study in which the police have a pivotal role - entails extra personal

risks for the researcher. It has to be recognised that the police are not the most popular guys in town with certain groups in society - predominantly the section of the community to which the police direct their attention and in which the criminologist is interested. When you are seen with the police you are assumed to be one of them and you will be treated accordingly (in this respect it could be argued that the question of neutrality and the issue of safety are connected - the one impinges on the other); at times the incivility and hostility directed towards the police officers made it easier to appreciate and understand why police officers become so cynical.

Summary

Exactly one year to the day since the first 'introductory' outing was undertaken, the fieldwork was brought to a close. In total, 29 police patrols were accompanied. This resulted in 120 hours of direct observation. This figure relates only to hours actually on patrol - it does not include time spent (or kept) waiting around at the police station, time spent in the pub, or other visits made to CPS for purely data collection purposes. The 120 hours averaged at 4 hours 15 minutes per patrol; however, the first 19 patrols resulted in only 75 hours observation, the last 10 patrols resulted in 45 hours of observation.¹³

Table 3.1: Observing the Police.

<u>Observations</u>	<u>No of Visits</u>	<u>Reasons/Comments</u>
Monday	2	Team usually busy dealing with backlog of matters that had arisen over weekend
Tuesday	8	It was suggested that midweek was usually the busiest time on the patch - for both prostitutes and punters
Wednesday	9	
Thursday	5	
Friday	3	Late turns not popular with team members on Fridays
Saturday	1	Initially there were no vice patrols on a weekend.
Sunday	1	

In the space of the year, within the DET many changes had occurred - new officers had joined the team, others had departed for pastures new; partnerships had been re-arranged; there had been a police 'purge' on the patch. For a brief period, the whole team (of essentially disparate individuals) appeared to be somewhere between chaos and calamity. For

almost the entire period, the researcher hovered somewhere between elation and despair. Jorgensen (1989) suggests that the process of disengaging from the field is as important as the process of gaining entry; leaving the field may be 'a great emotional wrench' or 'a great relief' (Jorgensen, 1989:118). In my case, a sense of triumph - that I had managed to 'stick it out' and obtain important information - was matched with a sense of failure and disappointment that so much time and energy had been diverted by the struggle to break down barriers with the police and actually obtain any data at all. In the preparation for this fieldwork I had envisaged that I would encounter numerous problems establishing rapport and gaining the trust and acceptance of the women working as prostitutes. I had not expected or even anticipated the belligerence of some police officers and the unremitting antipathy displayed towards both the research, and at times, the researcher. Despite the fact that the fieldwork had not quite gone as originally planned (does research ever go exactly as planned?), and I had not enjoyed the research 'facilities' originally promised, I managed to obtain forty interviews with prostitutes (twice the number originally set as the target). Perhaps more saliently, I had learned a great deal more about 'doing research' than I had ever imagined possible.

The extent to which this study was compromised by the relationship with the police is difficult to assess; in many crucial respects this research was completed largely *in spite of* the police, not because of them. In retrospect, it is difficult to gauge which was the hardest world to get into - the world of the prostitutes or the world of the police. Trying to accommodate myself to all their various requirements and expectations was extremely demanding; trying to adjust to all their idiosyncracies was equally difficult. (For the record, the 'initiation' tests did not get any easier - I just became more adept at skirting sensitive areas and gauging the kind of response people *wanted* to hear from me. Ironically, in some respects, I was as much a victim of stereotypes and misunderstanding as the very people I was endeavouring to understand). As my time with the police progressed I began to realise that much police logic appears to be heavily rooted in assumption and stereotype. More importantly, I was left with the impression that 'cop culture' was a myth - merely a convenient facade, erected and maintained by those who can find no excuse, or no alternative, for behaviour that would not be tolerated in any other organization.

D. The Research Sample.

The fieldwork commenced on 15th December 1992 and continued until 14th December 1993. The empirical data covers this period; other statistical data covers the period 1st January to 31st December 1993.

The total number of women known to the police to be working as prostitutes in January 1993 was 100. This total prostitute population (T100) could be classified into the following age groups:

Table 3.2: Age Group Classification of Total Prostitute Population.

<u>Age Groups</u>	<u>No. of Prostitutes</u>
16 - 19	15
20 - 24	29
25 - 29	24
30 - 34	17
35 - 39	6
40 - 44	2
45 - 49	4
50 - 54	1
55 - 59	2
Total	100

The average age of the total prostitute population (T100) was 27.34 years. The youngest woman known to be working on the patch was 16, the oldest was 59 years of age.

Of the T100, 33 (33%) were 'regulars' (working 4 nights per week or more); 24 (24%) were 'semi regulars' (working 1 - 3 nights per week); 43 (43%) were 'occasionals' and 'others'. 14 This last group was the largest group and comprised:

- (a) women who used to work regularly but who had not worked - or been observed by the police to have been working - for several months or years. Their details remained on the police board. (21%)
- (b) women who worked as prostitutes on an occasional basis - maybe only once or twice a year. These could be more precisely or aptly named the 'seasonal girls' because of their tendency to come out to work at Christmas time. (9%)
- (c) women who had worked on one occasion, been duly arrested and cautioned, but had not been observed working on the patch again. (7%)
- (d) women who had come from outside the city - usually from the South

bank or towns in neighbouring counties. These women, duly arrested and cautioned for soliciting, were invariably never seen again working in this 'Northern City'. (5%)

(e) one male transvestite who worked as a prostitute. (1%)

40 prostitutes were contacted and interviewed. These 40 interviews form the basis of the empirical data. The sample prostitute population (S40), comprised 31 'regulars', 8 'semi regulars' and 1 'occasional'. In total, 94% of all 'regulars' and one third of the 'semi-regulars' were interviewed.

Table 3.3: Total and Sample Prostitute Classification.

Category	T100	%	S40	% of S40	% S40 of T100
Regulars	33	33%	31	77.5%	93.9%
Semi regulars	24	24%	8	20%	33.1%
Occasionals + Others	43	43%	1	2.5%	2.3%
Totals	100	100%	40	100	

The average age of the S40 was 26. 6 years. The youngest woman interviewed was 16, the oldest woman was 59 years of age. The age distribution of the interview sample was quite similar to that of the total population, except that it included a higher percentage of those aged under 20 and 50 and over.

Table 3.4: Age Groups Interviewed.

<u>Age groups</u>	<u>T100 by age group</u>	<u>S40 by age group interviewed</u>	<u>% of T100 interviewed</u>
16 - 19	15	11	73.3%
20 - 24	29	11	37.9%
25 - 29	24	7	29.1%
30 - 34	17	6	35.2%
35 - 39	6	2	33.3%
40 - 44	2	-	0%
45 - 49	4	-	0%
50 - 54	1	1	100%
55 - 59	2	2	100%
Totals	100	40	40%

Table 3.5: The Research Sample: Percentages (by age group) of total prostitute population (regulars, semi regulars and occasionals) interviewed.

Age groups	Regulars			Semi regulars			Occasionals		
	T	S	%	T	S	%	T	S	%
	interviewed			interviewed			interviewed		
16-19	8	8	100	6	2	33.3	1	1	100
20-24	11	11	100	5	0	0	13	0	0
25-29	6	6	100	4	1	25.0	14	0	0
30-34	3	2	66.6	6	4	66.6	8	0	0
35-39	3	2	66.6	2	0	0	1	0	0
40-44	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	0	0
45-49	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	0	0
50-54	-	-	-	1	1	100	-	-	-
55-59	2	2	100	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	33	31	93.9	24	8	33.3	43	1	2.3

Tables 3.4 and 3.5 show the number of 'regulars', 'semi-regulars' and 'occasionals' in each age category [both the total (T100) prostitute population and the interview sample (S40)] and the percentage of each age category interviewed.

Average Ages

The average age at which the S40 started working as prostitutes was 21.6 years; just under half the sample (47.5%) embarked on their career as prostitutes when they were teenagers. Only 3 women started working as prostitutes when they were in their thirties or forties.

Table 3.6: Age Factors - age started in prostitution

Age started working	No. of women	%	Age started working	No. of women	%
13	2	5%	20	3	7.5%
14	-	-	21	6	15%
15	1	2.5%	22	-	-
16	6	15%	23	-	-
17	3	7.5%	24	3	7.5%
18	2	5%	25	3	7.5%
19	5	12.5%	26	-	-
			27	-	-
			28	1	2.5%
			29	2	5%
Total	19	47.5%	Total	18	45%

The average length of time that women (S40) had worked in the business at the time of the interview was 3 years and 9 month.

Table 3.7: Age Factors - Length of time working in prostitution (at interview)

Length of Time in business	No. of women	%
Under 12 months	12*	30%
1 year	4	10%
2 years	7	17.5%
3 years	3	7.5%
4 years	2	5%
5 years	2	5%
6 - 9 years	3	7.5%
10-20 years	7	17.5%
<u>Total</u>	40	100%

* included 2 women who had worked as prostitutes 10 - 20 years ago, retired but resumed working in the business in the last 12 months.

Sexuality, Ethnicity, Birthplace and Residence.

Sexuality

Of the S40 women in the study, 34 (85%) were heterosexual, 4 (10%) were lesbians and 2 (5%) were bi-sexual.

Ethnicity

Of the T100, 95 women were white, 3 were Afro Caribbean and 2 were Asian. Of the S40, 38 were white, 1 was Afro-Caribbean and 1 was Asian.

Table 3.8: Ethnicity of Prostitute Population - Total and Sample.

Detail	T100	% of 100	S40	% of 40
White	95	95%	38	95%
Afro-Caribb	3	3%	1	2.5%
Asian	2	2%	1	2.5
Total	100	100%	40	100%

Birthplace.

Of the S40, 33 (82.5%) were born in the 'Northern City' or within 3 miles of the city centre, 3 (7.5%) were born in outlying villages or within 20 miles of the city centre and 4 (10%) were born outside the county.

Residence

Without exception, all 40 women interviewed lived within 4 miles of the red light district. 17 (42.5%) of the sample lived in the three large housing estates situated in the north, north-east and eastern sectors of the city. In general, the 40 women lived in a variety of locations spread around the city. According to the police, all of these locations could be described as 'high crime/poor reputation' areas. Although some of these areas did historically have an association with prostitution (see Appendix A), it is important to note that the current poor reputation of these areas was connected to high burglary rates and drug related activities, and did not specifically or primarily concern prostitution activities.

E. The Research Setting.

The established Red Light district - 'the patch' - is situated in the south central part of the city. This triangular section comprising 'The Lane', 'M Street' and 'R Street' has been designated by the police as 'acceptable' or 'tolerated' places where the prostitutes can solicit for business. Essentially the police endeavour to operate a deliberate policy of containing and controlling prostitution within this patch. A one-way traffic system operates.

This designated area is non residential. A number of derelict boarded up warehouses contribute to the general run-down and 'seedy' appearance of the area. However, there are a number of public houses in the vicinity and a gym-health club - all which attract a busy night time business. Most of these establishments had banned the prostitutes from their premises - with the exception of one public house which acted as a meeting point for many of the women before and after the evenings work on the patch. One local restaurant barred the prostitutes from the premises on the grounds that members of the public had complained - ultimately claiming that the presence of prostitutes deterred 'respectable' customers from patronizing their establishment. Some of the women thought it was unfair to discriminate

against them just because they were prostitutes - they were only eating and drinking - how could that offend anyone ?

In essence, the Red light district in this 'Northern City' is situated in an isolated, non residential area with only a handful of business and commercial concerns situated directly on the patch. To the south-west of the Red Light district is an area once the centre of the traditional fishing community. In the 1960s, the city's rehousing policy largely destroyed these old neighbourhoods and traditional fishing communities by moving many of the residents to the tower blocks and housing estates several miles to the North and North-east of the city - one of which is the largest council housing complex in Europe. Within a one mile radius to the west of the patch is the area which has, in recent years, developed a reputation for being the main drug dealing area in the centre of the city. The number of drug users in the entire city is impossible to estimate; however it was believed (by the police) that there were about 90 dealers in the whole sub-division; possibly about 60 of these (two thirds) living within this one mile radius.

Although the city is rumoured to be linked to the outside world by a motorway network and the largest single span suspension bridge in the world, the city boundaries are so diverse that it is difficult to know when you have actually arrived - or indeed left, the city. Perhaps it is because of its location and isolation that this 'Northern City' does not appear to have developed some, or as many of the social problems blighting other major cities. This is not to suggest that the city has been immune to the recession or that there is no social and economic deprivation or increasing drug menace or rising crime problem. However, this was the view of a serving police officer:

It's a dead end city. You come into it - you can't go through it, and because of that we don't get the other problems that other major cities get - the racial problems, prostitution and drugs. People don't tend to come here unless they have to for some reason. There's not a lot happening here.

(DET officer)

Summary.

This field study combined direct overt observation and analysis with formal, and mainly informal, interviewing. Opportunistic and flexible, its ongoing, lengthy and developmental nature and non-standardization facilitated

reformulation and modification of the research direction (and hypothesis) which, in turn, allowed for continual sampling and analysis. A strategy of this kind does, naturally, raise questions of reliability and validity, that is, the lack of 'proof' and the danger of drawing conclusions from an abundance of generalizations. It is difficult for a researcher to gauge how representative a picture is being formed, or how reliable the information is, indeed, how 'typical' the group is. Moreover, the susceptibility of the research to what Denzin (1970) terms the 'reactive effects' (Denzin, 1970:204) is technically difficult to measure - how does the presence of an observer, ostensibly a foreign object, intrude and affect the natural arrangement and organization of the natural setting? In an attempt to address and counter-balance some of these potential problems, the research employed a triangulation of perspectives - those of the 'subject' (the respondent), those of the police (the informants) and it also utilised documentary material - primary (personal) and secondary (public records) data. The resulting case studies or life histories of 40 women working as prostitutes provided the core data for this thesis.

¹ On the surface, this study fitted neatly into the description of Participant Observation as offered by McCall & Simmons (1969). They suggest it is a strategy which involves '...some genuinely social interaction in the field with the subjects of the study, some direct observation of relevant events, some formal and a great deal of informal interviewing, some systematic counting, some collection of documents and artifacts, and open-endedness in the direction the study takes' (McCall & Simmons, 1969:1). This study was *not quite* participant observation in the traditional sense in that this researcher did not actively participate in the activity (business) of the group being observed !!

² Early biographical and autobiographical accounts of criminal life were to have a tremendous impact on criminological thinking. (Shaw 'The Jack Roller', 1930; Sutherland 'The Professional Thief' 1937). This 'discovery based ethnographic approach was perhaps best illustrated in the work of Sutherland (1937) whose exposition of the professional thief contributed to the formulation and eventual elaboration of the theory of 'differential association'. Subsequent studies, notably Klockars (1974), Pearson (1983), Carlen (1985) have reinforced the important contribution that the life history approach can make to criminology.

³ Znaniecki (1934) believed analytic induction to be the true method of the physical and biological sciences and that it ought to be the method of the social sciences also. He believed that analytic induction led to genuine causal laws.

⁴ These Case Histories can be found in Appendix E.

⁵ Manning (1972) argues that police research is alternatively '...dangerous and boring, frustrating and exciting, sympathy producing and a source of

antagonism, tense and funny, the source of several superior sociological studies and the demise of probably three times that number' (Manning, 1972:235)

⁶ It later transpired that although the Superintendent had agreed to the research (indeed welcomed it) and had not envisaged that my accompanying and observing the team (and thereby contacting the prostitutes) would cause any problems, it would appear that this arrangement was made without any consultation whatsoever with his officers in the team. This did cause a fair amount of friction, and served to highlight the gulf between those who drive patrol cars and those who 'drive a desk full of paperwork'.

⁷ Janes (1961) suggests that the fieldworker undergoes five separate phases (1) newcomer (2) provisional acceptance (3) categorical acceptance (4) personal acceptance and (5) imminent migrant. Similarly, Weinberg & Williams (1972) outline a model of 'phases of relationships' (with respondents) including (i) application (ii) orientation (iii) initiation (iv) assimilation and (v) cessation (Janes, 1961 in Douglas, 1972:167).

⁸ Once word had spread that there was a 'researcher' in the building, police officers, curious to observe this strange phenomenon for themselves, appeared to spring from various sections of the building. I was later informed that once scrutinized, detailed reports were relayed to the canteen, the custody room and the sergeants staff room at the end of the corridor. Once it had been established that I seemed fairly benign, I was pounced upon by every bobby with a tale of woe to tell - this usually involved (a) how his wife didn't understand him (b) how his senior officers didn't understand him and (c) how the public don't understand the problems of policing in general. At the end of the research, it was quite possible that police officers were adding to this list how researchers don't understand them!!

⁹ In the crucial early stages, a combination of over anxiety (to obtain the data) and naivety (unfamiliarity with 'cop culture') caused me to make several mistakes. I cite them here in the hope that others may not repeat them. Perhaps the most obvious problem concerned language. My use (albeit inadvertently) of the word '*empirical*' forever damned me as '*a bloody university type*'. Whilst four letter words and other obscenities seemed perfectly acceptable, indeed on occasions they were expected, academic jargon was not expected or tolerated. On the other hand, it was expected that the researcher would quickly become *au fait* with their language and mode of behaviour.

¹⁰ An individual's sexuality is an area par excellence where the police are particularly critical and judgemental. For example, on one occasion when I was accompanying a patrol, a young man was standing on the patch. He did not appear to be 'working' or otherwise causing any problem of a public order nature or any other. The PC stopped the car and said to the man - 'What's your name? *Are you a homosexual?*'. The young man replied 'What the f*** has that got to do with you? You can't ask me a question like that!' To which the PC replied - 'Don't you swear at me or I will arrest you for Breach of the Peace'. The incident was not pursued but I was left to wonder if the police do indeed have the right to jump out at people and ask questions about an individual's sexuality simply because they don't happen to like 'queers' and 'nonces' or because that person just happens to be standing in a red light area.

¹¹ On one occasion, the DET really did have a reporter accompanying them - for one hour. Much to the irritation of the team, in the subsequent newspaper article, the reporter insisted on referring to the prostitutes as 'Toms' and the DET as the 'Tom Squad'. Neither party is ever referred to in such terms.

¹² Experience eventually taught me that the best strategy was to appear to agree with everything that was said. In the course of the fieldwork the 'Sheehy' report made its appearance. For a while I was constantly quizzed about it - some officers seemed obsessed to the point of paranoia about the possible effects of its implementation. As I did not have a bizarre deathwish, I eventually discovered that whenever the dreaded 'S' word was mentioned in my presence, it was prudent not to comment. The rank and file do not like change or the threat of change - new proposals are seen as a veiled threat or implicit criticism of their methods and efficiency. When I was asked by one enlightened police officer '...well how many 'uniform carriers' have you come into contact with?' - I rapidly changed the subject!!

It was also wise not to pass any comments on the driving ability of the police. Policemen seemed to equate their prowess behind the wheel with their 'manliness' and any derogatory remarks were taken as a personal slight on their sexuality. One officer in the DET was frequently described by the other officers as being '...in aggressive mood tonight'. The officer in question attributed this aggressive driving - particularly when stopping and starting and everything else inbetween - to '...having spent twenty years on the front line'. I was never quite able to make the connection but I used to nod sympathetically nonetheless. In essence, field work with the police should not even be contemplated by those with a tendency to travel sickness or an aversion to being plunged into warp factor eight at regular intervals!!

¹³ 9 pre-arranged visits with the police were cancelled, always by the same officer, always at the last moment and usually for no other specific reason other than 'something' had 'cropped up' or he had 'better things' to do.

¹⁴ Reference to Appendix D - the Glossary of Terms - 'A Guide to Patch Talk' - may be useful.

¹⁵ In the main thesis, street names have been given pseudonyms.

Red Light, Blue Light

Prostitutes, Punters and The Police in a Northern City

PART THREE: 'ON THE PATCH'

*PROSTITUTES, PUNTERS AND THE
POLICE IN A NORTHERN CITY*

I read a book about prostitutes once and it didn't seem real. It made it sound glamorous - well, let me tell you, it isn't like that at all. Sometimes it's really frightening. Even after 18 years I still get scared. Men seem to think that just because we're prostitutes, they have the right to do anything they like with us.

('Belinda' - a prostitute in a 'Northern City')

Red Light, Blue Light

Prostitutes, Punters and The Police in a Northern City

CHAPTER FOUR: THE PROSTITUTES

The Road To Prostitution

A. *Developmental Factors*

B. *Motivating Factors*

CHAPTER FOUR: The Prostitutes - The Road To Prostitution.

A. DEVELOPMENTAL FACTORS

Home and Family Background.

Social background, parental relationships and educational factors have all been suggested as predisposing causes of prostitution. In an attempt to gain an insight into the family background of the women working as prostitutes, all 40 women were asked a range of questions relating to the circumstances of their (past and present) home lives, including the marital status of their parents (whether married or divorced), their relationship with their parents (whether they 'got on' with their parents) and their own current domestic arrangements and relationships.

Questions relating to home and family background were almost inevitably going to be a difficult and sensitive area to pursue. This indeed proved to be the case. Although 34 (85%) of the women did willingly respond to the questions, 6 (15%) preferred not to answer any questions relating to their family or childhood/home background. 1 The methodological difficulties associated with trying to assess the *quality* of relationships within a family are immense. Although the criteria adopted for the analysis had to be relatively straightforward, the distinction between a 'good' home and a 'broken home' is complex. 2 When asked about their family circumstances, many of the women used very descriptive terms about their family and background. *They* would say 'I come from a good home' or 'I come from a broken home'. (Coming from a 'broken home' appeared to have a certain 'street cred' about it, especially with the younger age groups). In short, the criteria that *the women* adopted appeared relatively uncomplicated. However, when asked to qualify their descriptions/definitions it transpired that for most of the women a 'good home' referred to a stable family background with both parents (still) married; a 'broken home' referred to a disturbed family background - specifically one that had been broken by the divorce or separation of their parents. A further complicating feature of the definition was that for some respondents a 'good home' represented a background where there was no incidence of prostitution or other criminality; conversely, a 'broken home' seemed to encapsulate a wider range of circumstances ranging from divorced/separated parents, parents

with a criminal history or parents who had abused them in one form or another. In essence, many of the women appeared to categorise their parents into whether they were 'good' or 'bad' *people* with good or bad morals and standards.

The idea that the family background could play an important role in the genesis of prostitution was very quickly rejected by several of the women:

I come from a 'good' home. My parents aren't divorced and I didn't have a bad or unhappy childhood or anything like that. I know what you people [researchers, sociologists] are like - you blame everything on parents or on a bad home and it's not right. I decided to work as a prostitute, it was my decision and it has nowt' to do with my parents or how I was brought up - I was brought up right. My parents are *good people* - this [prostitution] has nothing to do with them.

(Belinda) 3

Similarly:

I come from a 'good' home - no-one is involved in anything violent or sordid. We aren't a criminal family. Okay, so all of us work as prostitutes, but that's not so bad is it?

(Monica)

Parental Status

Of the 34 women that did respond to the questions, 16 (47%) said that their parents were married; 15 (44.1%) said that their parents were divorced or separated; 3 (8.8%) were orphans who said they had no knowledge of their background.

A 'Good' Home?

Of the 16 women who reported a home background where the parents were married, 3 still resided in the parental home. 14 of the women reported having a good relationship with both of their parents. However, 2 said that they did not get on well with either parent, indeed one of these women was totally alienated from the parental home, the other woman believed that although her parents were not aware that she worked as a prostitute they were aware of her other criminal activities and were so ashamed of her they refused to have anything to do with her. 4 Clearly, although the majority of the women who reported a cohesive family background enjoyed a positive relationship with their parents, cohesive parental status was not necessarily congruent with a harmonious relationship between parent and child.

A 'Broken' Home.

15 (44.1%) of the women came from what they themselves described as a 'broken home' - that is, a home background with a history of parental divorce or separation. 6 of the women said that they did not get on at all with either of their parents; all could be described as having an acrimonious relationship with their parents with frequent arguments, disagreements and misunderstandings seriously disturbing family harmony. 3 of the women had been actively ejected from the parental home (following family rows); one woman was totally alienated from the family home.

My parents divorced ages ago - when I was little. I was living with my mother but we didn't get on - we just can't stand each other. It's all her fault that I'm like this [working as a prostitute] - she threw me out so I had to get the money for 'the gear' [drugs] somehow. She knows I work. Both her and my dad know I work but they don't care. There's nothing they can do to stop me anyway.

(Olivia)

4 women said that following their parents divorce they had remained on better terms with their mother, 2 said that they enjoyed a better relationship ('felt closer') with their father. 3 women said that they had no contact at all with either parent - all of these women had been taken into care before the age of 11 because of parental abuse.

'No Home': A Life in Care

Of the 40 women a total of 8 (20%) had spent periods in residential children's homes in the care of the Local Authority. 3 were orphans and, as such, had never had any contact with, and had absolutely no knowledge of, their biological parents. These women had spent almost their entire childhood and early teenage years in residential children's homes.

5 women had been removed from their parental home and taken into care - most before the age of 11 and for a variety of reasons. 3 were the victims of parental sexual abuse; 1 was the victim of physical violence inflicted by both parents and 1 was taken into the care of the local authority for persistent truancy.

Current Domestic Arrangements: Relationships and Children

Of the 40 women, 1 was married, 39 (97.5%) were single - 31 (77.5%) of these had never been married, 8 (20%) were divorced. 24 (60%) were

not involved in a relationship; 9 (22.65%) lived with their partner; 6 (15%) were involved in a regular relationship but did not co-habit.

25 of the 40 women had a total of 57 children between them; 24 of these were single parents (10 women with no regular partner had 13 children; 8 women with a regular partner had 21 children; 6 of the divorced women had 20 children; 1 married woman had 3 children).

Education and Employment.

Educational Backgrounds

Of the 40 women interviewed, none had remained at school beyond the age of 16; none had gained any formal qualifications in the form of 'A', 'O' levels or GCSE's or CSEs. 3 of the women had gained a certificate in typing although only 2 of them had been able to utilise this qualification in subsequent employment.

For a variety of reasons, 19 (47.5%) of the women had experienced an 'interrupted' education or had otherwise developed unfavourable attitudes towards school. In some instances, this interruption had been intermittent, in other cases the disruption had been continuous and the effect on both school attendance and their overall educational/academic achievement would appear to have been severe.

Table 4.1: Interrupted Schooling.

<u>Interrupted Schooling: Reasons</u>	<u>Number of Women</u>
<i>Got involved with/preferred crime</i>	7
<i>Taken into care</i>	4
<i>Pregnancy</i>	3
<i>Second World War</i>	2
<i>Illness/Accident</i>	2
<i>Dyslexia</i>	1

Those women who had been taken into care suggested that this process had been an extremely unsettling experience which had had an adverse effect on their education, largely because the friendships and associations they developed whilst in care tended to encourage and promote a 'bunking off' mentality. (Perhaps surprisingly, the women cited the process of being

taken into care as the unsettling experience rather than the various traumas or life experiences which had led them to being in care in the first place).

3 women who became pregnant whilst still at school said that this had severely disrupted their education (although all did admit that they had not been keen on school beforehand so were not unduly concerned about the effect on their education); 2 of the older women claimed that the Second World War had disrupted their schooling though they were somewhat vague as to how specifically their education had been harmed; one woman cited serious childhood illness as a disruptive factor and one woman was the victim of a serious accident which had completely halted her education for most of her teenage years.

Several of the women claimed to have been persistent truants and not attended school regularly, or at all, for several years; indeed, one woman had been taken into care as a direct result of persistent truancy assumed to be attributable to lack of parental control. The majority of the women did confess to being 'poor attenders' at school. A variety of reasons for poor attendance/truancy were given including (a) the school was not liked and the teachers were 'rubbish' (b) poor literary skills (poor reading and writing) led them to believe that because they couldn't understand any of the lessons there 'wasn't much point' attending and (c) they preferred hanging around with their friends. 5

Employment.

All 40 women were currently unemployed and in receipt of Income Support and various other state benefits.

10 (25%) of the women had previously had employment. None of these women had obtained jobs immediately on leaving school; 4 had been in their late teens, the other 6 had been in their early twenties when they had first obtained employment. All 10 of these women had had more than one job since leaving school, however, none of them had held any of these positions for long periods. A further 4 women had done short term Youth Training schemes (YTS) when they were in their teens, but none of these had resulted in permanent employment.

Table 4.2: Social Class Categories of Previous Occupations

<u>Previous Employment</u>	<u>Social Class</u>	<u>Number of Women</u>
Barmaid/Waitress/Catering Work	IV	4
Care Assistant	IV	3
Market Gardening	IV	2
General Office/Clerical work	III	2
Cleaning work	V	2
Shop work/shop assistant	III	2
YTS (various schemes)	-	4

Most of the employment categories were in Registrar General's Social Class III, IV and V. This contrasts starkly with the social class groupings of their clients (detailed in Chapter Eight). For the women, the work that was available was often seasonal and short term and provided relatively poor wages, poor conditions, little in the way of security and little opportunity for advancement. The majority of the women (65%) had never had paid employment. Perhaps more saliently, most of the women (90%) said that they did not want a 'proper' job.

To summarize, all of the women had poor educational records. Few had attained any formal qualifications. Many of the women (65%) had regularly played truant from school; the tendency for truancy was most marked amongst the younger age groups. Only a quarter of the women had ever had paid employment; those that had worked had held a variety of jobs but these were mainly in the low paid service sector (waitressing, barmaid, care assistant) and none of the women had kept these jobs for extended periods. Most seemed perfectly content to live on state benefits though these were never considered adequate enough to support themselves or their families and lifestyles.

The following table (4.3) summarizes the personal family background and educational and employment histories of the 40 women.

Table 4.3: Forty Women - Personal History, Family Background, Domestic Arrangements and Educational/Employment History.

<u>Name & Age</u>	<u>Family Background</u>	<u>Domestic Arrangement</u>	<u>Education & Employment</u>
Alexis 25 years 6 months	Parents Divorced	Divorced 3 children Bisexual Lives with girlfriend	Left school 16 No qualifications Poor attender Currently U/E Has never had a job
Amy 18 years 10 months	Stable family background	Single 1 child Lives with parents	Left school 16 No qualifications Poor attender Currently U/E Previous YTS: Bakery worker
Belinda 39 years 8 months	Stable family background	Single 2 children Boyfriend 'violent'	Left school 15 No qualifications Currently U/E Has never had a job
Beryl 54 years 10 months	Stable family background Parents deceased Daughter has worked as prostitute	Divorced 5 children	Left school 14 No qualifications Currently U/E Has never had a job
Carly 24 years 1 month	Stable Family background	Divorced 1 child	Left school 16 No qualifications Currently U/E Previous work: barmaid waitress, care assistant
Charlotte 19 years 9 months	Parents Divorced Taken into care when very young (Sexual abuse)	Single 1 child Lesbian Lives with girlfriend	Left school 16 No qualifications Poor attender Currently U/E Has never had a job
Chloe 18 years 8 months	Family life very unsettled. Taken into care temporarily	Single Pregnant Lives with parents	Left school 16 No qualifications Frequent Truant Currently U/E Has never had a job
Cindy 21 years 4 months	Orphan Raised in care Was never adopted or fostered	Single	Left school 16 No qualifications Poor attender Currently U/E Previous: YTS schemes

<u>Name & Age</u>	<u>Family Background</u>	<u>Domestic Arrangement</u>	<u>Education and Employment</u>
Claudia 24 years 7 months	Stable family background	Single	Left school 16 No qualifications Poor attender Currently U/E Has never had a job
Fiona 33 years 9 months	Parents Divorced Taken into care when aged 11 (Violence)	Divorced 3 children	Left school 16 No qualifications Poor attender Currently U/E Previous: Market garden work
Gwen 55 years	-	Divorced No children	Left school 15 No qualifications Currently U/E Previous: shop work
Harriet 26 years 4 months	Parents Divorced Mother, sister and cousin work as prostitutes	Single 1 child Lesbian	Left school 16 No qualifications Currently U/E Previous: Market garden work
Holly 18 years 4 months	Stable family background	Single	Left school 16 No qualifications Poor attender Currently U/E Has never had a job
Imogen 24 years	Parents Divorced No contact with mother	Single	Left school 16 No qualifications Schooling interrupted by serious accident Currently U/E Previous: Voluntary work
Isobel 21 years 5 months	Stable family background	Single 1 child	Left school 16 No qualifications Currently U/E Previous YTS schemes
Jasmine 21 years 7 months	Parents Divorced Little contact with family Mother and sister both worked as prostitutes	Single 1 child No contact with father of child	Left school 16 No qualifications Currently U/E Previous: Cleaner
Jessica 24 years	Stable family background Sister and cousin both work as prostitutes	Single	Left school 16 No qualifications Currently U/E Has never had a job

<u>Name</u> <u>Age</u>	<u>Family background</u>	<u>Domestic</u> <u>Arrangement</u>	<u>Education and</u> <u>Employment</u>
Kylie 27 years 9 months	Disturbed family background Taken into care temporarily	Single 5 children	Left school 16 No qualifications Frequent truant Currently U/E Has never had a job
Laura 26 years 9 months	Stable family background Cousins work as prostitutes	Single 1 child	Left school 16 No qualifications Currently U/E Previous: Barmaid, waitress, selling jobs
Lynette 32 years 3 months	-	Single 4 children Lives with boyfriend	Left school 16 No qualifications Currently U/E Has never had a job.
Marian 39 years	Stable family background 2 sisters and a sister in law work as prostitutes	Single 3 children	Left school 16 No qualifications Currently U/E Has never had a job
Marilyn 26 years 1 month	Parents Divorced Taken into care (Sexual abuse) Sister works as a prostitute	Single Bi Sexual	Left school 16 No qualifications Frequent truant Currently U/E Previous: waitress barmaid, care assistant
Martina 19 years 9 months	Orphan Raised in care	Single	Left school 16 Typing certificate Currently U/E Previous: Cleaner Typist.
Megan 18 years 6 months	Parents divorced Family life very unsettled - left home age 15 Cousin works as a prostitute.	Single 1 child	Left school 16 No qualifications Currently U/E Has never had a job
Molly 19 years	Parents Divorced Left home aged 16	Single	Left school 16 No qualifications Currently U/E Has never had a job
Monica 33 years 4 months	Stable family background 2 sisters and a sister in law work as prostitutes	Single 3 children Lives with boyfriend	Left school 16 No qualifications Currently U/E Has never had a job

<u>Name & Age</u>	<u>Family Background</u>	<u>Domestic Arrangement</u>	<u>Education and Employment</u>
Natalie 25 years	-	Married 3 children	Left school 16 No qualifications Currently U/E Has never had a job
Olivia 17 years 4 months	Parents divorced Relationship with parents acrimonious	Single Lesbian Lives with mother	Left school 16 No qualifications Currently U/E Previous: YTS schemes
Phoebe 19 years 9 months	-	Engaged 1 child	Left school 16 No qualifications Currently U/E Previous: YTS schemes
Pippa 21 years 10 months	Stable family background	Single 1 child	Left school 16 No qualifications Currently U/E Has never had a job
Polly 24 years 10 months	Stable family background	Divorced 3 children	Left school 16 No qualifications Currently U/E Has never had a job.
Poppy 16 years 10 months	Parents Divorced Taken into care aged 13 (Truancy)	Single Lives with boyfriend	Left school 16 No qualifications Truant Currently U/E Has never had a job
Raquel 30 years	-	Single Lives with boyfriend	Left school 16 No qualifications Currently U/E Has never had a job
Rose 59 years 9 months	Orphan Brought up in care	Divorced 5 children	Left school 13 No qualifications Currently U/E Has never had a job
Sasha 30 years	Stable family background Cousins and aunt work as prostitutes	Divorced x 2 3 children	Left school 16 Typing certificate Currently U/E Has never had a job
Sophie 18 years 7 months	Parents Divorced Relationship with parents poor	Single Lesbian lives with girlfriend	Left school 16 No qualifications Frequent truant Currently U/E Has never had a job

<u>Name & Age</u>	<u>Family Background</u>	<u>Domestic Arrangement</u>	<u>Education and Employment</u>
Tanya 19 years 3 months	Stable family background	Single 1 child	Left school 16 No qualifications Currently U/E Has never had a job
Tessa 25 years	-	Single 2 children Lives with boyfriend	Left school 16 No qualifications (dyslexic) Currently U/E Has never had a job.
Trudie 23 years	Parents Divorced Taken into care (Sexual abuse) Cousin works as a prostitute	Single 2 children	Left school 16 No qualifications Currently U/E Previous: Care assistant.
Vicky 31 years 1 month	Stable family background	Single	Left school 16 Typing certificate Currently U/E Previous: clerical book-keeping, typing

Summary.

The relationship between crime, delinquency and family background and circumstances is both controversial, contradictory and largely inconclusive. A large body of research has postulated a connection, or at least an *association* between delinquency and anti-social behaviour and deprivation, separation or 'broken homes' (Burt, 1925; Healy, 1929; Bowlby, 1946, 1953; McCord & McCord, 1959; Wootton, 1959; Wardle, 1961; Koller, 1971). In contrast, there is an equal wealth of literature suggesting that there is no significant correlation between delinquent behaviour and family circumstances (Naess, 1959; Little, 1965; Rutter, 1971).⁶ Most of the studies undertaken have concentrated on explaining *male delinquency* only; there have been few detailed systematic studies on the role of family background and socio-environmental circumstances in the lives of girls/women who turn to prostitution.

The *possibility* that certain 'developmental' factors could play an important role in the development of a prostitute career led to an examination of the home and family backgrounds and circumstances of the women and their education and employment histories.

Out of 34 respondents, 18 (53%) had experienced an unsettled or traumatic childhood or home environment; 3 (8.8%) were orphaned, 15 (44.1%) came from homes unsettled by parental divorce. 5 (14.7%) of these women had been removed from their home environments as a result of parental physical abuse (battering) and sexual abuse (rape/buggery), or a lack of control (persistent truancy). Recent research has posited a link between early and frequent promiscuous sexual experience and prostitution; these experiences are frequently brutal, involving rape and/or incest. Several of the women in the study had a history of early/brutal sexual experiences, however, establishing an exact correlation between this experience and their subsequent involvement in prostitution was difficult to establish. 7. It was equally clear that many of the women (47%) emanated from stable and cohesive family backgrounds and enjoyed a positive relationship with their parents. This is not to suggest that family background did not play an important role in the development of anti-social attitudes and behaviour *for some women*, however there was no incontrovertable evidence to suggest that a 'broken home' was the decisive factor in the adoption of a prostitute career .

B. MOTIVATING FACTORS

Introduction To The Business.

As this research progressed it became clear that the women were introduced to the profession, or, at the very least, were directly *influenced* or encouraged to turn to prostitution by friends or other members of their family who were either currently involved, or who had previously been involved in, the prostitution business.

From the interviews it transpired that 23 (57.5%) of the women were influenced by their FRIENDS to join the world of prostitution; 10 (25%) were similarly encouraged or influenced by FAMILY MEMBERS and 7 (17.5%) were largely SELF MOTIVATED.

The aim of this section therefore is to examine the role of friends and associates and the family connection to prostitution, seeking to establish:

1. IF there was a correlation between the adoption of prostitution as a career and a family history of prostitution
2. HOW friends or members of the family acted as 'role models' - what

was the nature of the relationship; how did they influence or encourage the individual to join the profession; what were the dynamics of the transmission process.

The Role of Friends and Associates

23 (57.5%) of the women had friends that currently worked, or who had previously worked, as prostitutes. A distinction could be made between *knowing* friends who worked as prostitutes and the *direct influence* that these friends had on the introduction process.

Table 4.4: The Role of Friends and Associates.

No. of Women & Age Groups	Number of friends involved in prostitution		Direct Influence of Friends
	1 friend	10	Influenced: 16
	2 friends	13	No Influence: 7
Total: 23 (57.5%)	Total:	23	Total: 23

<u>Age Groups</u>		<u>'Relationship'</u>		<u>'Relationship'</u>	
16-19	10	General Acqs*	11	General Acqs*	8
20-24	8	Schoolfriends	7	Schoolfriends	5
25-29	4	Care Friends	2	Lesbian friends	3
30-34	1	Hostel friends	2		
		Lesbian friends	1		
Total	23	Total	23	Total	16

* = The category comprised general acquaintances - neighbours or acquaintances connections formed through criminal/drug associations.

Apart from schoolfriends, other relationships important in the introduction process included friendships and influences formed whilst in care or in hostel accomodation. However, the biggest influence came from friends and other general acquaintances - this usually referred specifically to neighbours or acquaintances formed as a direct result of criminal or drug associations - using the same dealers and suppliers.

Although 23 women cited friends as influential in the introduction process, only 16 of these said that these friends had *directly influenced* them - more specifically, 'shown them the ropes' - literally taken them on to the patch and advised and instructed them into the ways of conducting the

business. This induction process had mostly just involved one friend acting as chaperone and advisor; only 4 women said that more than one friend had 'egged' them on and encouraged them to work. 7 women claimed that although they had friends working in the business, these friends had had no direct influence on their initiation into the profession.

4 women claimed that once they had been established in the business for a short time, they had themselves directly influenced other women to become prostitutes. The relationship of these new recruits to the influencers included 2 family members and 3 friends.

25 (62.5%) of the women said that most of their friends - the larger circle of their acquaintances - were not prostitutes, and that most of their other friends were not, as far as they knew, aware that they worked in the business.

The Influence of Friends

The most common story, certainly from those in the younger age group (16-19) was that they had been encouraged, indeed actively 'egged on', to start working as prostitutes by their friends - all of whom were involved in the crime-drugs-prostitution scene. Various motives were apparent - some required money for drugs, some simply wanted money. Most simply wanted to follow the pack:

My friend was working on the patch and she told me how to make the money for the gear. Most of my friends work [in prostitution], most of my friends take drugs but they don't all work.

(Sophie)

All my friends were working - they used to hang around off 'The Lane' and punters were always stopping and asking if they were doing business - eventually they just said yes. Then they showed me the tricks and I started too.

(Amy)

They [friends] were all working on the patch and always had loads of money. When I got thrown out [of home] I went to live with my girlfriend. She works. I wasn't worried when I first started because she came with me so I knew it would be okay. She told me how to talk business, how much to charge and everything. I worked with her like that for ages - it was good because sometimes the punter wanted two anyway, so we could make loads of money.

(Olivia)

All my friends were doing it and they sort of told me to, you know, egged me on until one night I started too. They told me that the money was brilliant so starting wasn't so bad.

(Holly)

All my friends were working, so I knew that if they could do it then it couldn't be so bad. They told me what to do - how to do the business. It's okay most of the time and the money is good.

(Isobel)

Some of the women were young when they were introduced to the business. 'Chloe' was 13. She was encouraged by a friend to start working and then encouraged her friend 'Poppy' to start:

My friend at school was working and earning plenty of money. She said it was dead easy. My first time was quite bad, I hated it, I didn't think I'd ever do it again, but once I'd started, that was it.

(Chloe)

Clearly, her recollection of her initiation into the business was not made to sound quite as torrid by her friend Poppy:

Chloe was working and I thought it would be fun. She said it was. I wanted money for glue. A lot of us were doing it; we just used to hang around off 'H**** Road', doing glue and picking up lorry drivers as they drove to and from the docks. We made a fortune. We could pinch off them [the lorry drivers] as well and they couldn't ever complain because they would have gotten into trouble for having sex with us - we were all too young. The punters knew we were only young, that's why they paid so well. I couldn't get as much money now cos' I'm older.

(Poppy - aged 16)

The Family Connection

Family Involvement

13 (32.5%) of the 40 women interviewed had 12 other family members currently involved, or who had previously been involved in, the prostitution business. 3 of these other family members had retired from the business, 2 did not work in the city. It is reasonable to suggest that *at least* 20% of the total number of women working in the city (100) as prostitutes were related to each other/ had close family members working in the profession.

Of the 40 women interviewed, 10 (25%) *were introduced* to prostitution by other members - female relatives - of their family.

It is necessary to make a clear distinction between the family *connection* to prostitution - that is, a familial history of prostitution, and

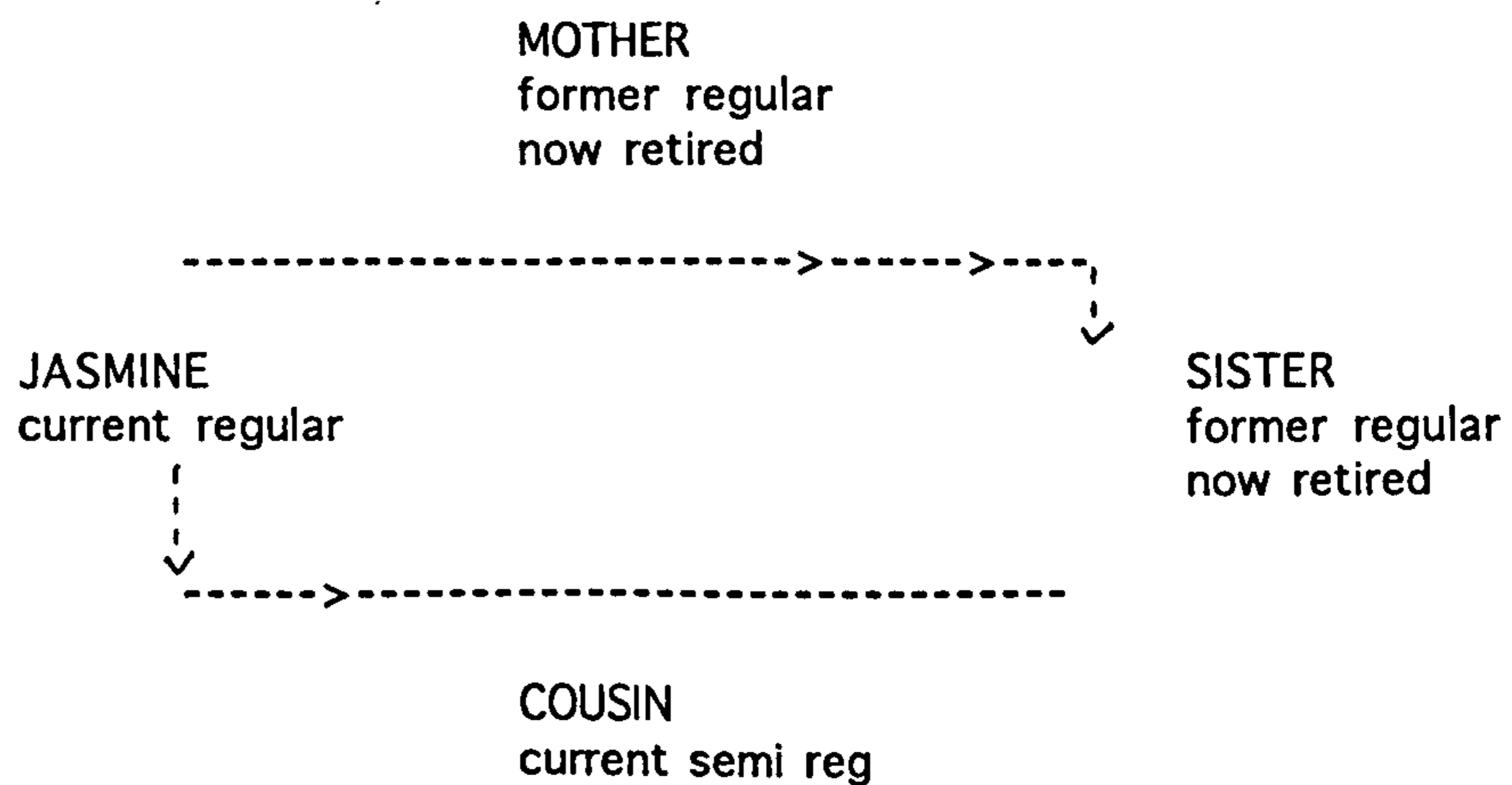
the direct *influence* of this family connection in the *introductory process*. As can be seen in the following section, a family history or family involvement, does not necessarily correlate with the introductory factor. In some cases, the family played NO direct role in the causal chain as either the introducing agent or the 'inspiration' for starting in the business.

Family Histories

Outlined below are several family 'histories' of prostitution. [The --->--- outlines the dynamics of the transmission process, that is, the role or direct influence or inspiration of the family relative in the process].

Jasmine

Jasmine's mother and father divorced when she was very young. Her mother and elder sister both previously worked regularly as prostitutes. Her mother started working when Jasmine was about 4 years old although it was not until she was in her early teens that she realised and understood that her mother (and later her sister) were working as prostitutes. Both her mother and sister had subsequently retired from the business. Jasmine was quite adamant that her mother had not encouraged her to work and that she had not been at all influenced by her mother and elder sister's involvement.



Nobody in the family was aware that Jasmine had started working and she was in no great hurry for them to find out. When I suggested that perhaps because her mother and sister had both worked they would at least understand *why* she had started, her reply was simple:

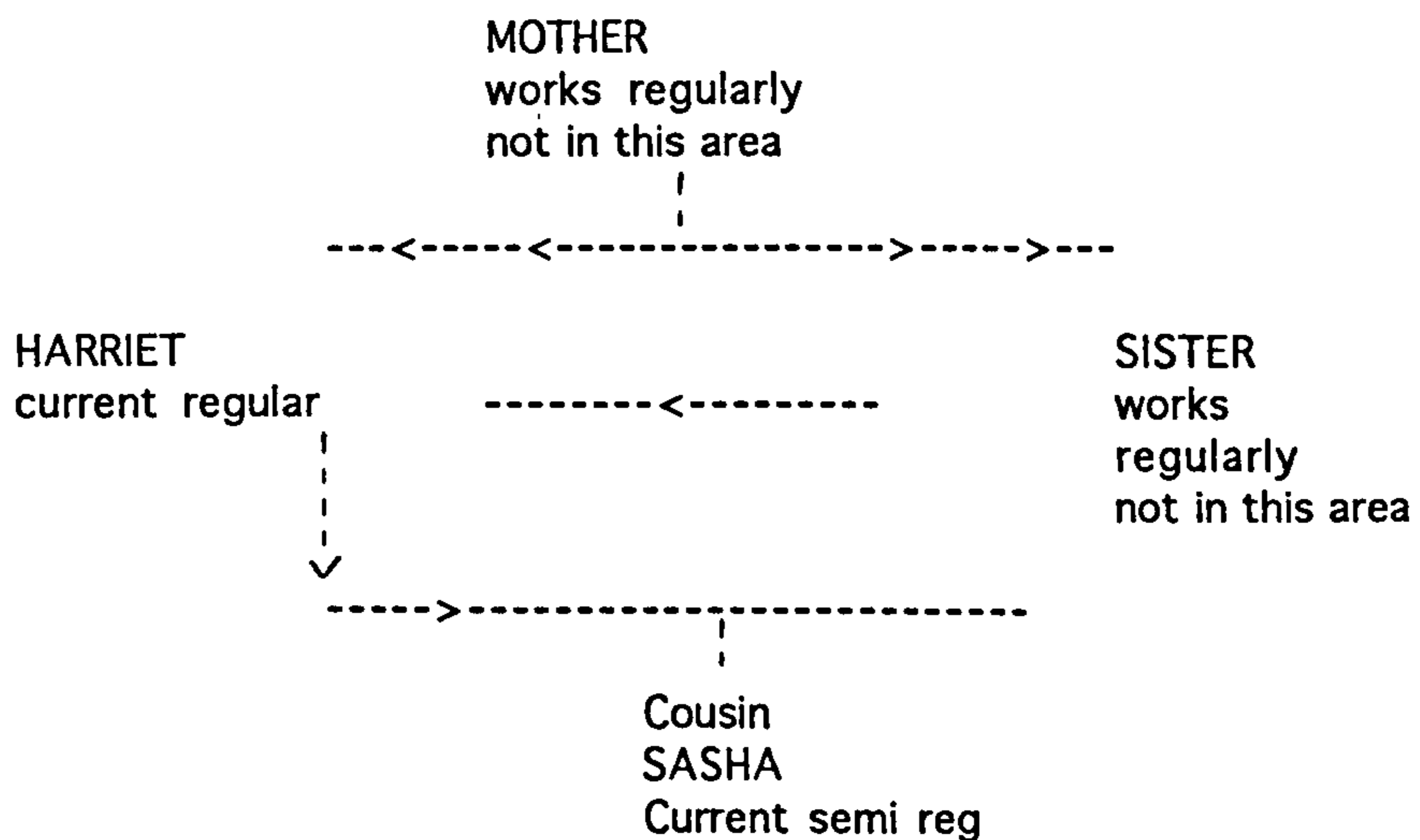
... you don't know my mother - she would definitely *not* understand, she would kill me; she didn't encourage me to start working, far from it. I always thought that what she did was horrid, totally disgusting. I never thought I would do it, but I wouldn't have been so stupid to start if I knew my mother was still at it.

(Jasmine)

No-one in the family had questioned where all the money was suddenly coming from except Jasmine's younger cousin. Jasmine had confided to her cousin what she had started doing and had told her that it was a good way to make a lot of money. Within a few months, her cousin had started working on the patch.

Harriet and Sasha

In only one instance was the mother directly involved in the induction process, as both the influencing and introducing agent. Harriet's parents are divorced. Her mother and elder sister had both worked as prostitutes since she was very young.



I have been in and around the business for most of my life - my mother and sister both work as prostitutes. I hadn't intended to go into the business but the only job I could get when I left school was in the greenhouses, tomato picking, and the money was crap and it wasn't very interesting. I thought I might as well earn some real money. My mother and sister arranged everything. They taught me all the tricks of the trade and my first time was all very well organized - I didn't have to go and stand on the street or anything sordid like that.

(Harriet)

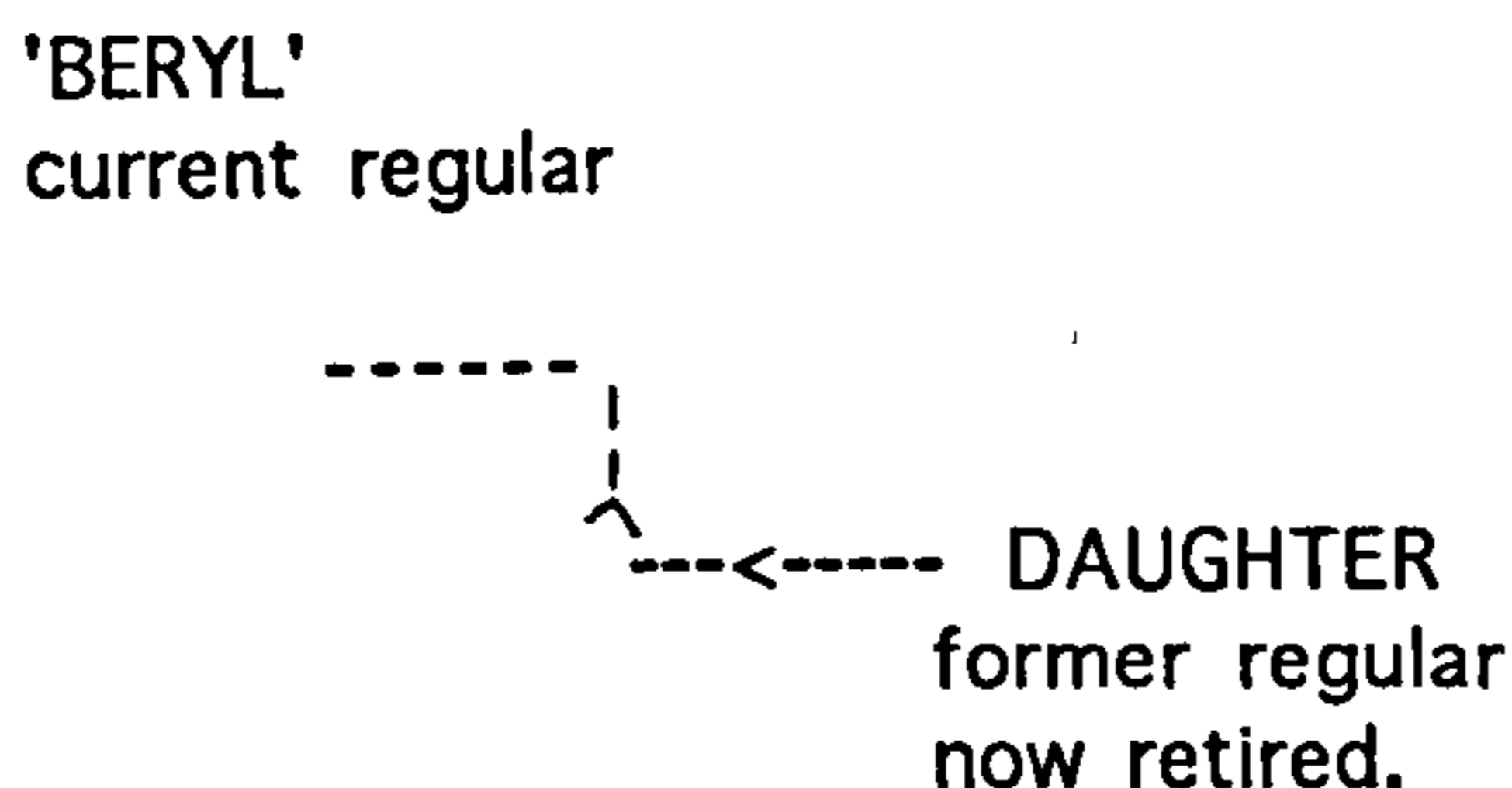
Shortly after 'Harriet' started, her cousin 'Sasha' started:

I knew Harriet was working so I knew it was a good way to make money. The day after I started I rang her and told her what I had done and she couldn't believe it, she was really shocked - she didn't think I'd have the nerve. She said I was really stupid to start doing it, but she didn't blame me for starting.

(Sasha)

Beryl

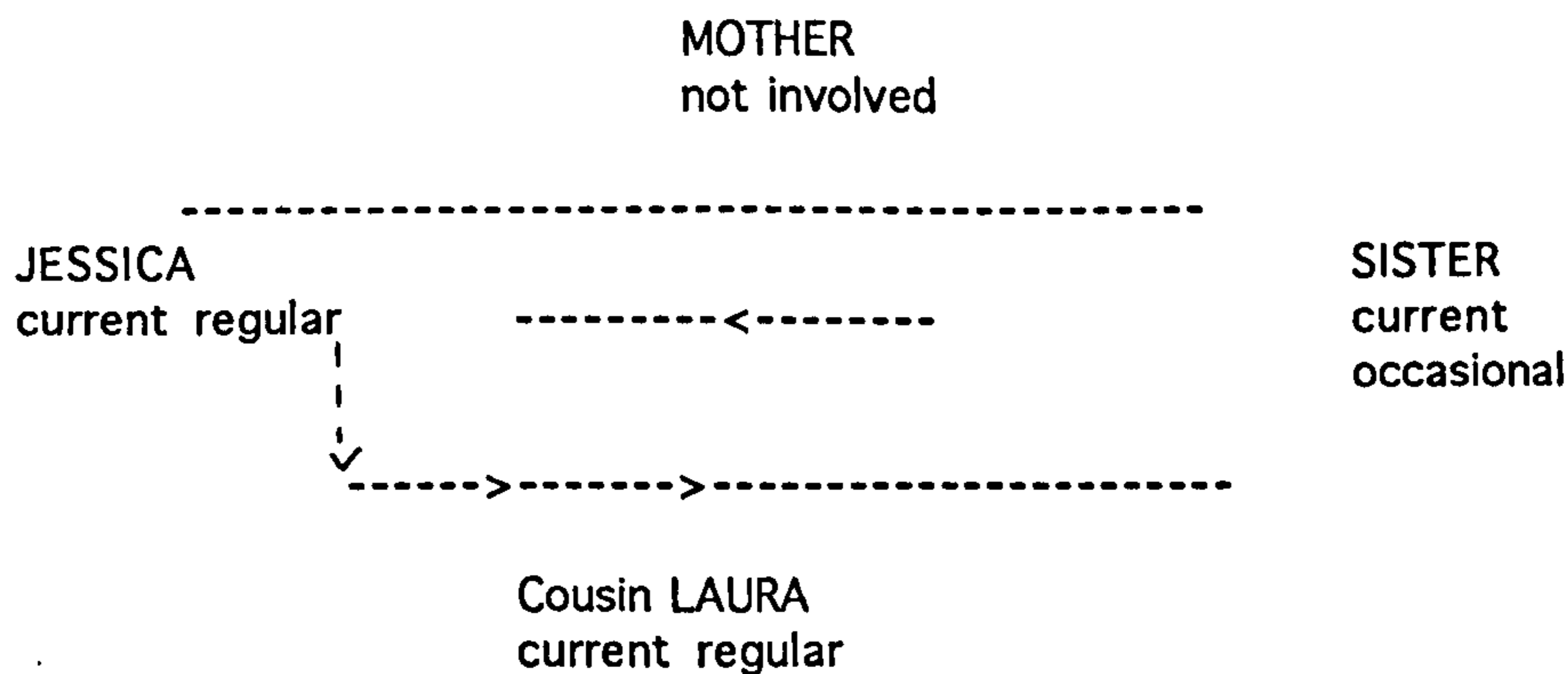
'Beryl' was introduced to the business by her daughter.



My daughter was always in trouble with the police - always drunk or fighting - that kind of thing. It was when she was up at court one day that I found out that she had been working as a prostitute. It was a bit of a surprise but I wasn't too shocked. She always had loads of money on her and I had wondered where it all came from; I mean *every night* she had wads and wads of money - it had to be coming from somewhere and after I'd been in court that day, well the penny dropped. I thought, well if my daughter can do that then so can I, so I got her to take me on to the patch. She showed me the ropes - she stood with me for the first few weeks and generally showed me what to do.

(Beryl)

Jessica and Laura



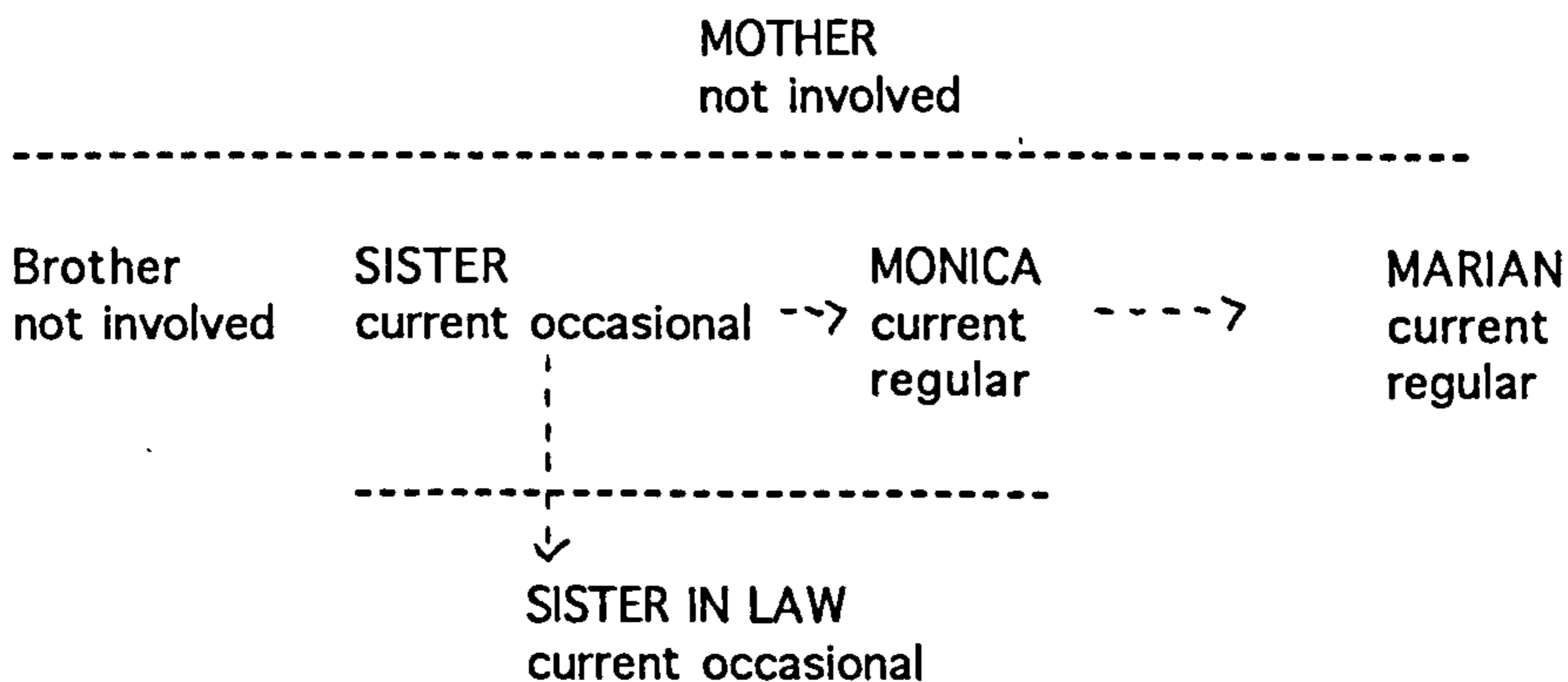
'Jessica' had been introduced to the business over 4 years ago by her elder sister. Just over 2 years ago their cousin 'Laura' started working. Only Jessica was involved in the introductory process:

Two of my cousins work on the patch. We are all really close -like sisters really. They knew I was having a really bad time - my boyfriend had run out on me and I didn't have any money. Jessica told me to start working because she said I was pretty and had a good figure and that I would be popular with the punters and make loads of money We never talk about the work though - we just work and then just forget about it .

(Laura)

Monica and Marian

'Monica' and 'Marian' are sisters. Other family members, including another sister and their sister in law were involved in the business though on a more occasional basis.



The others [sisters] always had money whenever they needed it and they didn't make it [prostitution] sound so bad so I started as well. That was 12 years ago. My older sister started us all off. I thought, well I need the money, so why not? When we're together, as a family, we never talk about what we do.

(Monica)

A couple of my sisters work. I knew I could get money that way. When I first came down here [to the patch] I said 'no' to every punter who asked. I was too scared. My sisters thought it was hilarious because I wouldn't go with anyone. In the end, Monica had a regular customer who only wanted hand relief and she said 'go and do him and you'll find it easier'. I did what Monica told me and I did find it easy. I didn't feel too bad about it at all.

(Marian)

Marilyn

MOTHER
not involved

MARILYN
current regular

<-----<-----<-----

SISTER
current regular
[in this area:
not interviewed]

When I was 16 I was thrown out of care and I went to live with my elder sister in Scotland. I found out she was working because she worked from the flat. One night one of my sister's customers raped me - he thought I was a prostitute as well. I told the police but they couldn't do anything about it because my sister refused to speak up for me or give the police the name of the client. I didn't feel bitter against the man who raped me - it had happened before so I was used to it - but I hate my sister for not speaking up for me. We don't speak to each other much now. After that night I decided that if I was going to spend my life getting abused and raped then I might as well start charging for it .

(Marilyn)

Trudie and Megan

'Trudie' and 'Megan' were cousins. Trudie had been working for 6 years, Megan for 4 years.

TRUDIE
current regular

----->----->-----

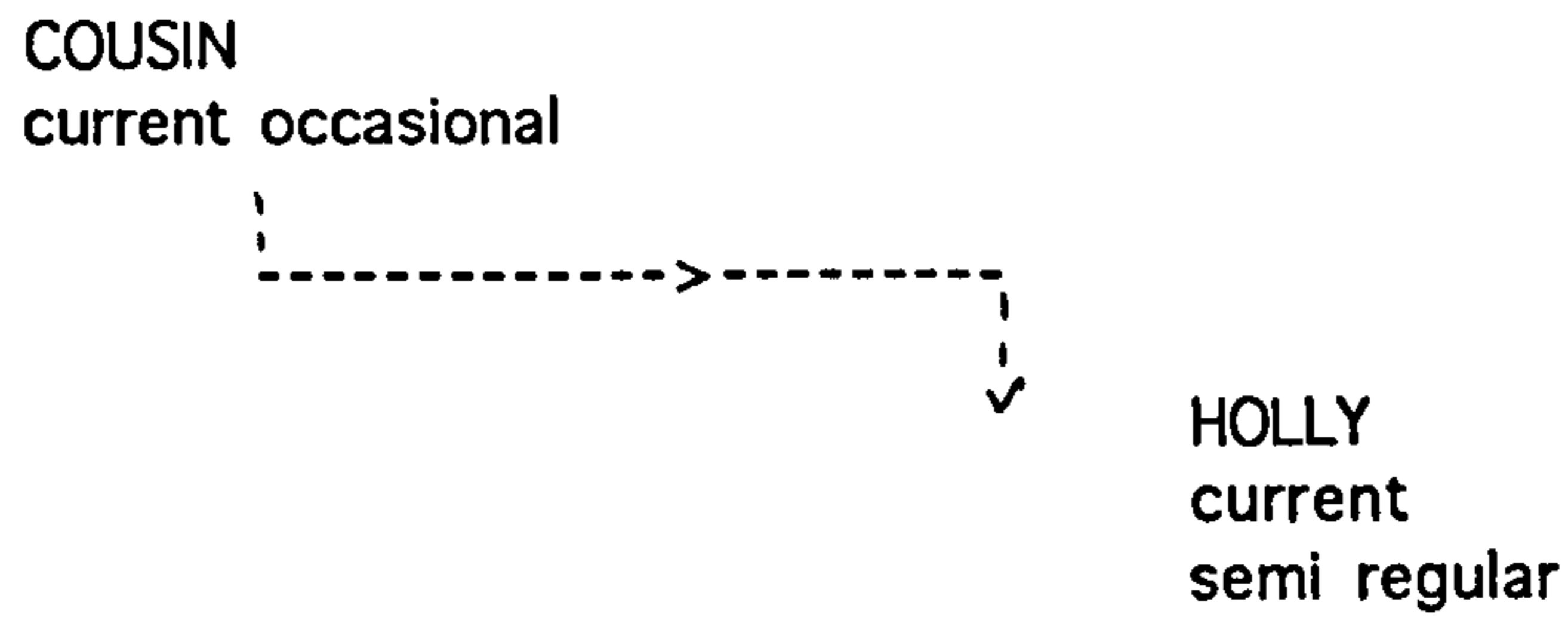
MEGAN (cousin)
current regular

'Megan' explained how she had become involved in the prostitution business:

My mother had thrown me out [of home] so I had to go and live with Trudie. She was working because she'd been thrown out of care. I had to give her some money for food and rent and she told me to start working or she would throw me out as well. Trudie told me what to do - where to stand, how much to charge, what to say to the customers. I was a virgin when I first came on to the patch. Since then I have learned a lot.

(Megan)

Holly

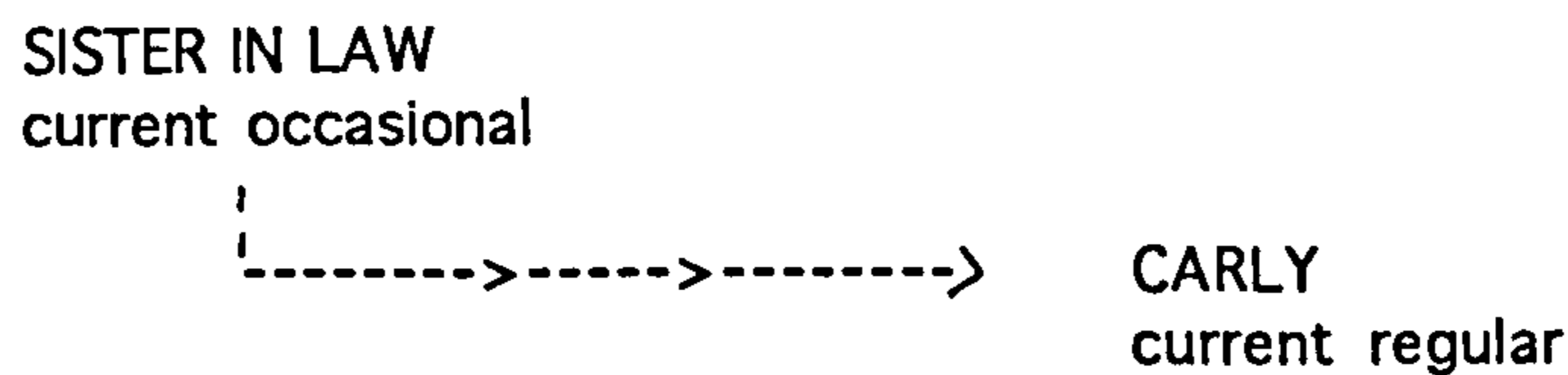


'Holly' was unsure about who actually influenced her the most to go on to the patch:

My cousin works. She told me it was the best thing to do if I didn't want an even worse [criminal] record. All my friends were working as well though. I think my friends persuaded me more than my cousin - yes, I started working cos' all my friends were - they were the ones that showed me what to do.

(Holly)

Carly



Carly had been working for 3 years ago following her divorce:

My sister in law was working and brought me down here [to the patch] and showed me what to do. I wouldn't have thought of coming down here otherwise, I mean I don't think I would have had the nerve on my own.

(Carly)

Self Motivation

7 women were self motivated to become prostitutes, that is, they did not have any friends or family members working in the business, nor did they have anyone else directly show them the ropes in the induction process. 6 of these women were currently in 30+ age categories, 1 was in her early twenties. 4 of the 7 women were in the 30+ age categories when they started working, only 3 were in the late teens, early twenties.

I used to live in London and I knew that the women there earned good money. I didn't have the nerve to start working then - it is really risky to work there - but when I came home I decided to have a go. I didn't know anyone on the patch but I knew that 'The Lane' was the place to go - it's notorious, always has been. Everyone knows what goes on down there.

(Vicky)

Belinda had worked for 18 years:

I decided to work, it was my decision, my choice. It's not something I like doing but no-one forces me, no-one makes me do this. I wouldn't have a pimp - I'm not that bloody daft - I'm not working for another man to profit.

(Belinda)

'Fiona' used to work regularly when she was younger; after giving it up for several years, she recently decided to return to the business:

I didn't have any choice, it was either this [working] or suicide. I just can't get enough to live on. I need at least £200 a week to live on and I only get £150 from the social. It isn't enough.

(Fiona)

I came onto the patch on my own. I knew someone a few years ago who worked but she isn't working now. I had been really surprised when I'd heard that she was on the game but then I thought it was a way that I could earn some money. It was difficult because I didn't know anyone and I didn't know how to go about it. In the end I just plucked up the courage and came down here.

(Phoebe)

Getting Started

According to many of the women, the actual *decision* to start working was one of the most traumatic aspects of entering the prostitution world. Several of the women recounted the experience of their first night on the patch:

It was a big decision to start; the first time on 'The Lane' was horrible but once I had got it over with it was okay after that. Standing there for the first time is the worst. The first time you do that is the worst for everyone, but once you've done it, nothing bothers you anymore.

(Tessa)

The first time I came down here I was so scared I didn't take any customers. On the second night I came down here and tagged on to a couple of my friends to see how they worked. Now it's okay, I work on my own.

(Tanya)

Lynette had only been working for 4 nights (when interviewed):

I'm desperate for money; it's urgent that I get some. I have a friend who sometimes works down here and she told me it was an easy way to make money. I haven't found it particularly 'easy' so far.

(Lynette)

Similarly, Polly had only been working for 3 nights when first interviewed:

I haven't got any money and it's the bairns birthday soon - I want to be able to buy them presents. My friend brought me down here and told me what to do - she's waiting for me in the pub. I hate the idea of doing this but I'm really desperate. I've only had two clients - the first one was horrible - I just didn't think about it; the second one was an old man - really ancient. I feel really disgusting. I haven't enjoyed it at all so far. I don't think I'll ever do this again, well I don't think I'll be doing it for long .

(Polly)

[Within a few weeks, Polly was working on a semi regular basis. She brought another of her friends on to the patch and quite happily 'showed her the ropes'].

The role of friends and associates in the introduction process involved them chaperoning the 'newcomers' for their first few nights or weeks on the patch:

When I first started I only knew 'Alexis'- she brought me down here. She told me what to do, how much to charge, how long to take and everything. I was glad she was there because I didn't like standing on my own at first. On the first night one punter stopped and he looked really weird and I didn't feel right about him but I didn't know what to do, I was scared he might turn nasty. Alexis came over and when she saw him she told him to f*** off. She told me not to do business with him because he looked like a pervert.

(Jasmine)

Alexis told me to work because it would pay for the drugs - I was spending £120 a day on heroin and other stuff. I needed the money but I couldn't stand the idea of having to have sex, it made me feel sick. After my first customer, well, I couldn't do it, so he threw me out of the car and I was sick. Alexis told me that if it was going to make me feel so bad then I would just have to do oral and hand relief. I can make enough money that way, but I find it so disgusting that I only work if I have to. I'm trying to get off the drugs so I won't have to do this at all.

(Charlotte)

The Care Girls

Those girls that had spent periods in residential care had clearly been affected by their experiences. The drift into prostitution seemed to come about from a combination of factors - a desperate need for money, a total lack of self

worth, and, perhaps the most crucial 'trigger' mechanism, pressure from others to conform to the deviant lifestyle.

'Martina' had spent her entire life in care. She had 'absolutely no idea' who her parents were but she didn't:

... think much of a mother who could leave her kid; if she was the sort of woman who could do that then I was probably better off without her.

(Martina)

She started working as a prostitute just prior to leaving care:

I was coming up 17 so was going to be thrown out. I wanted to get a present for one of the staff - he had been really good to me over the years and I wanted to thank him. I didn't have no money so one of the other girls said 'go down 'The Lane' and you'll earn lots'. So I did and I've been working ever since. A lot of girls in care work - it's a way to make a lot of money, everyone's doing it. If you don't have money well, you feel left out and stupid so you start as well. Starting working didn't bother me. I wasn't a virgin or anything so it didn't matter.

(Martina)

'Cindy' had similarly spent her entire life in care, however she did not start working until she was 19:

I don't have a family to worry about me or get mad with me for being a prostitute. No-one cares so it didn't really matter that I started. I've only got one friend who works. Most of my friends have proper jobs. They know what I do though. Most of them think I am horrible for doing what I do, but they can't earn as much money as me so I think they are probably jealous of me really cos' they haven't got the guts to do it.

(Cindy)

'Trudie' aged 23, had been working for 6 years. A victim of repeated sexual abuse by her father, Trudie was taken into care when she was 8 years old. and remained there until she was 17:

I started working when I was thrown out. I was 17, I didn't have no money, no job and nowhere to live. When I was in care, the Social services gave me £5 a week. It was never enough but when I left I had no money at all. A friend that I was in care with was working on the patch and she told me it was the easiest and quickest way to make money. Once I started that was it - I kept doing it. It is easy money. It isn't very nice, but it is easy.

(Trudie)

'Poppy' had been taken into care when she was 13 - largely an attempt to 'cure' (her word) her persistent truancy, and also halt her increasing involvement with drugs - specifically solvents - which was causing

considerable concern. It would seem that being taken into care did little to stem either problem; her attendance at school did not dramatically improve nor did it prevent her dabbling with more potent drugs. More crucially, it did not prevent her mixing with those people who were generally involved - though to a much greater extent - in the prostitution-drugs-crime scene. Indeed, Poppy firmly believed that being taken into care not only *increased* her involvement in these areas (largely because of the pressure put on her by the friendships she made in care to get involved), but also because while she was in care she became more and more depressed, more conscious of her own problems, and so sought refuge in drugs with a potentially more serious addictive effect. Far from 'curing' her problems, being taken into care exacerbated her drift into the world of prostitution, crime and drugs.

Other women, whether because of family disagreements or peer pressure also appeared to be influenced by those around them to start working in prostitution:

I was kicked out [of home] and had no money. I was in the hostel and some of the other girls were working. I hadn't even considered it - I come from a quite a good home - but we all used to hang around off 'The Lane' and I was always getting stopped and being asked if I was doing business. Even though I wasn't working, men were always stopping and asking. I refused for ages and ages but then I thought well I might as well, I was being asked all the time and being offered all that money so I thought I might as well take it .

(Molly)

I was living at the hostel. A friend of mine had a load of money - she had £90 on her one day and £120 on her the next and I said to her 'where did you get money like that?' and she said 'you'll not talk to me again if I tell you' and so I said 'I will, where did you get all that money?'. It took me ages to get it out of her but eventually she said 'I've been working down 'The Lane ' so I said 'right, the next time you go down there you can take me with you', and that was that. Once I saw the amount of money I could make, I couldn't get down there fast enough (Imogen).

Summary.

The issue of why women become prostitutes is complex. This chapter has examined several factors - both developmental and social - which may act to motivate women into entering the world of prostitution. As has already been pointed out, the *specific* role of the individuals family background or the impact of specific life events or circumstances in the process is not clear cut. However, on the road to prostitution the role of family and friends in the

recruitment and introduction process can be seen to be particularly influential - many of these various associates acting both as the motivating agents, (encouraging their friends/relatives to start on the patch) and as chaperones (offering advice and moral and practical support to the novices) once the decision to enter the world of prostitution had been reached.

For many of the women in this study, despite the 'family connection' to prostitution, their own involvement in the profession was not always regarded as inevitable, indeed many women spoke of the pressures put on them by family members to avoid starting on the game - clearly most relatives had not made prostitution sound like the ideal career. Pressure of a rather different sort was applied by friends; the influence of peer pressure to join in and 'follow the pack' should not be underestimated. Many of the women (particularly in the younger age groups) spoke of how their friends had 'egged' them on, sometimes even choosing their first customer or accompanying them on their initiation. The crucial point is that most of their friends did *not* make prostitution sound like such a bad alternative (although personal recollections of their experiences related to me frequently contradicted the bravado displayed to friends) therefore the temptation to adopt such an apparently 'easy' lifestyle was, for many, irresistible. 8

Many of the theories endeavouring to explain why women become prostitutes, are, *when taken in isolation*, insufficient explanations; rather, prostitution appears to be a complex interaction of social, emotional, psychological and economic factors. In essence, whilst many of the prostitutes in this study had experienced similar life experiences, it was not possible to establish that a single personality trait or background characteristic was responsible for these women turning to prostitution. It emerged that a variety of factors and experiences (early environmental factors - 'broken' homes, sexual abuse) and situational factors (unemployment, socio-economic pressures, drug abuse) combined with other personality/temperament characteristics (notably the desire for independence, excitement and 'easy' money) to make prostitution appear an attractive option. Money was a powerful motivation - indeed, many of the prostitutes rationalized and justified their decision to work as prostitutes by claiming that 'poverty', unemployment and inadequate Social Security payments had 'forced' them into a desperate economic situation and thus

made prostitution a 'necessity'. Yet, for many of these women, their poverty was relative; none were making a clear choice between selling their bodies or starvation. Moreover, whilst the majority of the women were, because of inadequate qualifications or lack of skills, unable to secure regular employment, many of the women consciously wanted to avoid routine work and the rigidity that a regular 'proper' job would entail. In effect, prostitution emerged as a rational occupational choice - easy money for little effort. In short, the decision taken by an individual to prostitute herself and to adopt a prostitute lifestyle was the result of a complex interaction between individual rational choice and the association with, and influence of, female friends or relatives already involved in the business. When further compounded by a multitude of external pressures - of a financial, domestic and personal nature - the combined impact could serve to make the road of prostitution seem like a very reasonable and viable option.

¹ Of the six non respondents, 3 were 'regulars', 3 were 'semi-regulars'. 5 of them had only commenced (or resumed) working in the prostitution business in the previous few months. All 6 women were in the older age categories (25+).

² The great diversity of definitions surrounding the proposition of 'broken homes' has hampered the thesis. Wootton (1959) found that researchers did not operate the same criteria or definitions of broken home - it can involve parents who live together but abuse the children, it can refer to parents who are not married (either from choice, divorce or bereavement) but do not abuse the children.

³ To reiterate: all the 40 women in the study have been given pseudonyms. Exact locations of prostitution (street names) have been altered.

The particular histories/case studies of the women can be found in Appendix E.

⁴ Family/parental awareness of involvement in prostitution is an aspect covered in more detail in Chapter Seven.

⁵ There did not appear to be any significant correlation between school attendance (or non attendance) and family circumstances/background. However, of those who confessed to frequently playing truant 12 had divorced parents, 3 were orphaned, 8 had parents who were married. Of those who attended school regularly 8 came from homes with married parents, only 3 had divorced parents. [Sample = 34 (6 non respondents to family circumstances)]

⁶ Despite the problem of definition, various British studies have placed anything from 22% to 57% of their delinquents in the category of 'broken home' (Wootton, 1959:122). The argument that broken homes produce an extremely high number of criminals, whereas cohesive homes produce few criminals (McCord & McCord, 1959:168) has dominated the literature. However, it is the *nature* of the break and the subsequent cause and effect which has produced most

controversy. Trasler (1962) argued that an individual whose childhood had been marred by the loss of a parent or some other interruption of 'normal' parent-child relationship, may exhibit criminal behaviour more than those from ordinary families (Trasler, 1962:93). Rutter (1971) maintained that the anti-social behaviour linked with broken homes was not because of the separation involved but largely '...a result of the discord and disharmony which led to the break' (Rutter, 1971:131). In their long running research project, West & Farrington (1969,1973, 1977) suggested that a multi-causal explanation was necessary to explain delinquent behaviour including a complex interaction of the individual home atmosphere, the personal qualities of the individual (only boys were analysed) and the social and economic circumstances of the family (West & Farrington, 1973:201). The authors did suggest that a significantly high percentage of delinquents emanated from homes in which there was a '...noticeable degree of marital disharmony' and therefore suggested that there was a '...statistically significant' relationship between family breaks and delinquency and anti-social behaviour (West & Farrington, 1973:51 & 72).

7 Two early life patterns have been discerned. Firstly, the girl learns that her sexuality is a status tool that can be efficiently exploited to gain male attention and affection: '...Prostitution is the result of the discovery that carrying out the implications of the 'normal' female sex role can pay off not only in a certain sort of social status, but also in cold cash' (James, 1976:187). Secondly, the girl begins to accept the role of sex object. Both these patterns establish the awareness of sex as a marketable commodity. Traumatic sexual experiences, and subsequent attitudes of fear and/or rage, may be sublimated in the process of exerting sexual power over men who must pay (Sheehy, 1973: 234).

The emergence of incest as a predisposing factor may be more related to the fact that incest is a subject more people are prepared to discuss, rather than it being a new development in 'causes' of prostitution.

8 Although I have hesitated to use the word 'gang', several of the young women in this study could be seen continually 'hanging and ganging' around together. The extent to which this group constituted a gang depends on definition. Undoubtedly unstructured groups of young girls can probably be found hanging out in most major cities in the country. In this study, a 'street corner gang' mentality dominated their lifestyle; they dressed in similar fashion and adopted the same mannerisms, language and expressions. Perhaps more saliently, they not only worked together as prostitutes, they evidently committed a whole range of other crimes and misdemeanours together in what sometimes appeared to be a very structured and organised manner - most notably shoplifting and drugtaking activities. The eventual breakdown of individual resistance to prostitution was hastened along by fear of rejection by the other members of the group. Hoigard & Finstad (1992) claim that it is a marked characteristic that most girls associate with other street kids before turning their first 'trick'. They argue that '...this is where the self image is moulded, norms for the behaviours are learned ... this process represents an essential and necessary transformation a woman undergoes before she begins to prostitute herself (Hoigard & Finstad, 1992:18). However this is a contentious point. Cohen (1980) suggests that street prostitution and gang delinquency are incompatible because 'Youth gang members create an atmosphere of fear and intimidation that repels patrons and prostitutes. They also embody a value system at odds with prostitutes. In other words, the mixing of gang delinquency with prostitution in the same immediate area would result in a conflict between illegitimate interests' (Cohen, 1980:147).

Red Light, Blue Light

Prostitutes, Punters and The Police in a Northern City

CHAPTER FIVE: THE PROSTITUTES

'The Rules Of The Game'

A. The Patch

B. The Business

CHAPTER FIVE: The Prostitutes - The Rules Of The Game.

A. The Patch

With no established call girl network and few, if any, brothels or massage parlours in the city, the women who chose to work as prostitutes had to initiate their contacts and negotiate business on the streets. 1

The Social Stratification and Organization of Prostitution

Age and Territory

On the patch there was a clearly established hierarchy. This was largely based on age. Allied to age differentials were territorial boundaries. The age groups could be divided into three categories:

Category One comprised the women aged 35+. They would tend to cluster and work from the corner of 'M Street'. 2

Category Two comprised the women aged 25 - 35. They would gather and work from the corner of 'R Street'.

Category Three comprised the women/girls under the age of 25. These younger women tended to work on 'The Lane' itself.

'The Lane' was the toughest patch - competitive, intimidating and frequently the scene of hostile exchanges - both verbal and physical - between the women. In general, the women *within each category* would get on well together. The women in categories one and two, particularly the older women, were decidedly 'street wise', many had been around on the streets for years, they knew the 'who and what' of the business and would tend to look out for each other. Both individually and collectively, the women in these two categories tended to be far more safety conscious - this was reflected in attitudes and measures adopted towards possible customer violence and safe sex. (These issues are discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven).

The Rules of the Patch

The patch had its own rules and regulations. There were codes of conduct that everyone was expected to abide by; there were standards of behaviour which, if breached, would simply not be tolerated by the other women. Sadly, most of

the women appeared to have neither the intelligence nor the wit to establish fact from fiction or gossip from truth. On occasions, the internal rumour grapevine created an atmosphere that was extremely hostile. Rumours and gossip would spread like wildfire. The slightest little thing could get out of hand; things would get exaggerated out of all proportion; things were easily misconstrued and misunderstood. 3

Those women who were known, or rumoured to be, ignoring the unwritten rules about safe sex were also walking something of a tightrope. Those prostitutes that offered business without using condoms would maybe earn an extra £10 but they took an enormous risk - long term AIDs, possibly pregnancy; short term - and a far more immediate threat - was that they risked being found out and getting kicked off the street (literally) by the other prostitutes. As one of the women put it '...prostitutes don't need *that* kind of reputation' (Monica). Even the police acknowledged that the women did have certain standards:

...although some of the them are dirty bitches and they live in the biggest hovels in the whole world, they will still not perform sexual favours without a condom.

(DET officer)

Friendship, Competitiveness and Territorial Rights.

Friendship

The majority of the women (92.5%) worked alone, and stood alone, on the patch. Only 3 women said that they preferred to work in a twosome with a friend (2 of these were involved in lesbian relationships with partners who also worked as prostitutes). On the whole, it was widely believed that standing in a group, or even with just one friend, deterred potential customers from stopping. It was fairly common to see the women gathered together at the beginning of the evening - this assembly was a time when gossip was exchanged, rumours elaborated and stories invented or existing ones wildly exaggerated. Observations about whether 'the vice' were out, which members of the vice were on duty, and details of which cars they were patrolling in, were also passed around.

In general it would seem that the women would be friendly to each other when they were out working - they would share cigarettes, buy condoms from each other and exchange information about a 'funny punter' (see glossary) or whatever, but that was where the friendliness ended.

Friendships were transient and superficial and existed only for the short time that they were actually on the patch. All the women claimed never to mix socially beyond the boundaries of the patch.

The Process of Initiation

The patch was a competitive arena. This competitiveness was both territorial and economic. Most prostitutes developed a territorial affiliation and 'poaching' (of someone else's patch or customers) was not appreciated or tolerated. The newcomer had to stand her ground. She had to prove her mettle until she was accepted or, more accurately, until her presence was tolerated by the others. Somehow, the newcomer had to find her rightful place on the patch; this could prove difficult particularly if, in the process, she perhaps unwittingly encroached on to someone else's well established territory. The process of initiation involved enduring extreme hostility - both physical and verbal - from the other women. The newcomer had two options, either she proved that she could cope with it by standing her ground, or she left. 4

Internal Warfare

The patch had a well established internal market which appeared to have been established and designed to control and regulate prices. An individual woman could try to move her prices around in an attempt to get more business, but if she was found out - if news that someone was undercutting the rest of the women circulated - then she laid herself vulnerable to terrible retribution from the others, at the very least verbal abuse and physical threats, at worst, a good battering. Several of the younger women spoke of the problems they had encountered when working on the patch:

I don't mix with anyone really. I try and keep out of trouble. I can't stand the young ones cos' they don't charge as much so they get all the customers, and the older women don't like me cos' I'm black and they don't like black girls. I get picked on for that. I try to keep myself to myself. It is very competitive, of course it is. Everytime a car stops and takes someone else I wonder 'why hasn't he stopped for me' and then when a car does stop for me I think 'he must fancy me' and I am pleased and flattered that he has stopped for me and not for one of the others. It is nice to have people stop because they think I am prettier than someone else. It is flattering - everyone likes to feel special.

(Martina)

It's hard down there [on the patch] - everyone has their own patch and has to stick to it - if you don't then there's trouble. There have been quite a few scraps, I've seen it get quite nasty a few times. It's the others who pick on us young ones that actually cause the trouble - if they left us alone to do our business then there wouldn't be a problem but they try to kick us off and so we fight back. We have to. We need the money too and we have the right to work where we want.

(Olivia)

Competition

34 (85%) of the women said that they thought the patch was an extremely competitive place, with frequent scraps and arguments amongst the women increasing the tension and shattering the calm. Table 5.1 details some of the reasons that the women believed was responsible for the competitiveness.

Table 5.1: Competitiveness of the Patch.

<u>Reasons for Competitiveness</u>	<u>Number of Women</u>
Younger girls undercutting prices/ men prefer younger women	21
Not enough punters going round	12
Too old/No longer attractive	1

6 women actually believed that the patch was not competitive. The women who expressed these views tended to be in the older age categories.

...I don't mix much with the others, I prefer to keep myself to myself. I don't think that the patch is all that competitive - a lot of the customers prefer the older women because we don't rip them off. The younger ones do a lot of stealing and that's not right. I take a lot of pride in what I do - the client always gets a fair and decent service from me.

(Beryl)

It [the patch] is friendly in the sense that we look out for each other but it's not that competitive really because we all have our own punters and people either stop for us or they don't. I work where I like - nobody has any claims down here - despite what certain people might think. I can do what I like.

(Imogen)

A particular source of anxiety for the older women was the appearance of drugs on the patch:

...I know most of the other women who work but I don't like them. I don't want to mix with them. What have I possibly got in common with them? Nowadays some of them are very young and all they want to talk about is drugs, drugs, drugs. How can I talk to them? Drugs have completely taken over their lives. They are so stupid. They give it [sex] away for nothing just so they can get their gear. I've got no sympathy with any of them, they make things bad for the rest of us because everyone thinks that we are like that - most of us aren't involved in that kind of thing and it's not fair that we all get stuck with the same reputation.

(Monica)

A constant source of anger and resentment was that the younger girls (category three) who started working on the patch appeared to be undercutting the older, more established women (categories one and two) - thus posing a serious threat to their financial well being and causing a considerable amount of friction on the patch.

With the arrival of fresh young faces on the scene, the older women believed that because they were not getting their fair share of customers they would have to lower their prices in order to attract more business. The internal market in prostitution favoured no-one - except perhaps the customers who had a wide range of prostitutes to choose from, and all at very competitive prices. The older 'regulars' bemoaned that the patch was 'getting worse':

...it's sick down here now, really sick. No-one is making any real money because the punters simply won't pay the prices. It's really bad - I don't know why I bother.

(Marilyn)

Amongst the women there was the feeling that the police 'should do something about it'. Complaints that the young girls were 'doing it for next to nothing' or 'for peanuts' or 'for the price of evostick' were matched with anger that the police were not forcibly clearing the young girls - ostensibly their rivals - off the patch. The older women seemed to think that the police had some sort of obligation, not to say a duty, to clear the younger element out of the district. When it became clear that the police had no intention of doing anything about the problem, the older women tended to take matters into their own hands and it was not uncommon for new prostitutes to receive a severe battering if they dared to enter the patch, or if they had the audacity to return. It was true that in such a small area, a kerbcrawler only had to drive

round the block (literally) and he could finance his pleasure much cheaper and with a much younger woman, however, it did become apparent during the course of the research that much of the the antagonism that developed was largely based on false perceptions, rumour and innuendo and was concocted by the older women (a) as an excuse for driving the younger women off the patch and thus reducing the competition and (b) as a ploy to gain the sympathy of the police (and the researcher) to their plight in the hope that the police would drive the younger women off the patch for them. Somewhat ironically perhaps, both the *inactivity* of the police in this matter, and paradoxically the *overt presence* of the police in the form of increased vice squad patrols, was blamed by the women for being 'bad for business'.

Partly because of the internal warfare that developed on the patch, a small group of the prostitutes - predominantly those in age category three - attempted, on various occasions in 1993, to move off the designated patch and onto a residential area running adjacent to it. This adjacent area (referred to by the police as 'the annexe'), largely comprised of tower blocks and a housing development primarily catering for senior citizens, was regarded by the police as a 'high crime' area - particularly troubled by burglaries and drug dealing. In essence, the problems that developed in this adjacent 'annexed' area during 1993, and which provoked such a fierce public outcry, stemmed from a small group of young prostitutes, working both individually, and in a gang, who steadfastly refused to work down 'The Lane'. The internal warfare was one factor, a further contributing factor was that the girls were (are) dedicated burglars and drug users and they simply wanted to work as prostitutes in the area where they committed all their other crimes and misdemeanours. The move into the 'annexed' area was thus seen as both logical and expedient. However, although moving onto this area may have reduced the threats from the older prostitutes, because it was in the heart of a residential district, their activities alienated local residents, local councillors and drew the attention of the local media. These various factions, perhaps not unsurprisingly, all directed their dissatisfaction at the police for apparently 'not doing something about it'.

As I have already indicated, it soon became apparent that the competition between the younger and older women on the patch was a serious source of tension and antagonism. It seemed wise to investigate the perceptions that each group had of each other to assess whether the opinions

and rumours that had developed were in any way accurate or fair representations.

The Views of the Older Women

The young ones - they do it for £10 or less and they do it without condoms, so not only do they undercut our prices, but they're filthy too.

(Megan, aged 19)

The punters drive round and round to find the cheapest price so everyone has to out do each other. Some do it really cheaply, but I do it for twenty [pounds] which I think is reasonable. Some of the young ones - they do it for a fiver.

(Laura)

...I know the women who are a bit older and who have been working for years, but I don't know any of the young ones. Business on the street is rubbish and it has got a lot worse. At one time, you could set your price and get it without having to bargain with the punter, but now, he can just drive round the corner and get it dirt cheap from some young lass.

(Belinda)

When I'm on the patch, I talk to the other women - in that sense I "get on" with them -but I don't see them socially or during the day. I don't like them especially. I like to keep my private life and working life completely separate. It's competitive - business isn't good, the men aren't prepared to pay. Some of the real young girls don't charge very much, so if he [the punter] thinks he can get it cheaper round the corner then he'll go there - some of them are practically giving it away.

(Trudie)

In interviews with the younger women, it soon became evident that many of the views expressed by the more established prostitutes had little or no basis in reality. The younger women vehemently denied that they would sell themselves so cheaply; on the contrary, they frequently claimed that they charged *more* money because they were younger and could therefore command - and get - a higher fee from the punter.

The Views of the Young Ones

...sometimes I chat to the others but not much. I don't have many friends. The others don't like me. I fight with them and they fight with me - because I don't charge as much as they do and I rip the punters off [steal]. I've got a bad reputation - everyone says that I give prostitutes a bad name.

(Chloe)

When I first started working on the patch, some of the older women didn't like me and gave me a good battering. I've had a couple of fights with some of them. Now they've got used to me being there and they're alright. You've just got to stick it out otherwise you'd never go back. They [the older women] try to drive newcomers off because there isn't enough business and they can't compete. The worst thing is that there are too many young girls - maybe 13 or 14 coming onto the patch, and they take away all the trade. Do you think I'm young? I don't feel that young - anyway I'm 16.

(Poppy)

We take all the business. A lot of us have been threatened. It can get scary but you just have to tough it out. A lot of us started to work in the annexe so we wouldn't get any trouble from the other women but the police moved us off and back onto 'The Lane' - that caused quite a few of us quite a lot of problems.

(Amy)

Some of the older women don't like us because they think we don't charge as much but we do the same kind of business and mostly we charge *more* than the old ones. It's just sour grapes on their part - they're old hags who can't get the business anymore so they blame us. They should look in the mirror then they'd see why they can't pull the punters anymore. At first they tried to drive me off the patch - they threatened me and stuff like that, but I stuck it out and now they don't bother me anymore.

(Holly)

...the women on the patch are really bitchy. I can look after myself, but most of them down there are f***ing animals - not nice people at all. The men want the younger girls so the older ones get tetchy about new faces on the patch because it puts them out of business.

(Charlotte)

...I don't have much to do with the others - they don't like me and I don't like them. Some of them on 'The Lane' have threatened me with a knife so I daren't go down there some nights. Why did they threaten me? They say it's because I stole off a punter but really what it is is that they are all jealous of me because I pull so many punters and make plenty of money. I do well because I'm young and pretty - some of the women down there are dead ugly and they can't pull anymore.

(Cindy)

B. The Business

Working Patterns

The patch was at its busiest (in terms of the number of women working and the volume of potential punters) in the earlier part of the week. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday nights would see an average of 10 women working the

streets; other nights would see an average of 6 - 8 women out working. (This observational data was confirmed by DET members and interviews with the prostitutes). There were several possible reasons for this:

1. There appeared to be a clear correlation between the higher number of women working at the beginning of the week and the payment of social security and other benefit payments. As payments were generally made on a Thursday and Friday the women would come out to work in the days prior in order to make extra money to supplement their income.
2. Most of the 'regular' prostitutes did not work at the weekend. This was regarded as their private time - a time that they could spend with their own boyfriends/partners/ families. This was linked to their strong belief (borne from experience) that the weekend was generally a slack period because most punters stayed at home or went out with their wives and families.

The following table (5.2) details the average number of women working on each night of the week. Although the observations did show a relatively high average number of women working on a weekend, 'occasionals' accounted for most of the business on a weekend. The increased presence of 'occasionals' was related to the the fact that the police did not patrol the patch on a weekend so the women who did chose to work were at less risk of being arrested and cautioned.⁵

Table 5.2 : Average Number of Women working on a Nightly basis.

Day	No. of Obs.	Average No. of Women*
Monday	2	10
Tuesday	7	10
Wednesday	9	10
Thursday	5	6
Friday	3	8
Saturday	1	8
Sunday	1	6
Total	28	

* First systematic count of the number of women out working made at 8pm; second count made at 10pm. These figures represent the *average* number of women out on the street.

33 (82.5%) worked, and had only ever worked, in the 'Northern City'. Only 7 (17.5%) had worked as prostitutes in other cities.

The majority of the women (35) worked only at night; however 5 of the women also worked during the day, mainly entertaining their regular customers. For some of the women, having to work on the street was regarded as the last resort:

...street work is rubbish and far too risky. At home I can control when I work and for how long. I am my own boss. It's safer and I don't have to worry about the vice.

(Belinda)

...regulars [punters] have a number they can call me at and I meet them. Usually we go over the bridge - it's quieter there and we don't get disturbed by the vice.

(Cindy)

Negotiating the Business

Generally, when the punter stopped, the woman would ask what service he required, inform him of her prices, and then either accept or decline the business. The prices were invariably non-negotiable. (On occasions, the punter would say which service he required, ask how much it would be and then attempt to bargain - always unsuccessfully - with the woman for a cheaper price). Once the transaction was agreed, the woman ALWAYS took the money first. It was regarded as the height of stupidity not to take the money before conducting the business. 6 The location of the business (where the business would take place - car, home, hotel and distance) was always discussed at the same time as the price. It was observed that most customers gallantly returned the women to their pick up point.

It was almost invariably the women who made the decision whether to accept or decline the business though this sometimes split-second decision was based on a hierarchy of other factors and considerations (discussed in Chapter Eight).

The Location

27 (67.5%) of the women provided the service in the CAR ONLY. 9 (22.5%) provided the service in the car OR in a room/hotel (paid for by the client); 4 (10%) provided the service at HOME ONLY.

Those women who only worked at home were all the older women. They all cited safety as their main reason for adopting this method of working:

...I have neighbours on either side so if anything goes wrong - if one of the clients was to turn a bit funny - then the neighbours would hear and come and help.

(Beryl)

...I always take the clients home, that way I feel more in control of the situation. If a client doesn't want to go to my place then I usually won't do business - I like to feel in control of the situation - we have to go to a place of my choosing - where I can feel that I am in control.

(Belinda)

Most of the other women said that they wished they could take the clients home with them. The women who would only provide the service in the car did so largely because they could not take their clients home. This was because: (a) they had small children at home who they did not wish to witness their activities and/or because (b) they were fearful of other family members/neighbours discovering that they were involved in prostitution.

Of the 27 who would only provide the service in the car, 21 were 'regulars', 5 were 'semi-regulars' and 1 was an 'occasional'. In general it was the younger age groups who worked this way.

Table 5.3: Age Categories of women providing the service in the Car.

<u>Age Groups</u>	<u>No.of Women</u>
16 - 19	10
20 - 24	8
25 - 29	4
30 - 34	4
35 - 39	1

Those who did provide the service from the car always appeared to make certain that they had control of the situation. The feeling of being in control was emphasised by several women:

When I go in the car, I will only go to a place of my choosing. If he says he wants to go to a place I have never heard of then I don't go with him.

(Marian)

If I do business in the car, I always insist that we go to somewhere I know. I will only go if I know that I can control the situation. I would rather go home empty-handed but alive than not go home at all.

(Belinda)

...I only work in the car - I can't take them home. My three year old is quick - you know, impressionable right now - he quickly picks up on things. I don't want him to see what I do, how I dress or look when I am going out; I never let any of my kids see any of the clients.

(Trudie)

...my daughter never sees my when I am working - never sees me dressed up or anything and she never sees any of the men who call. I keep her well away from all that - somebody else looks after her when I am working.

(Harriet)

The Service Offered

35 (87.5%) of the women said that they provided 'straight' sex only. This included manual sex (hand relief) and oral sex (blow jobs). Oral sex was cited as the service most frequently requested by clients. 8 of the women said that they refused requests for oral sex. 5 (12.5%) of the women (all regulars) said that they did not mind providing 'kinky' sexual services or obliging with unusual sexual requests, however 4 of these women were adamant that this did not include anal sex.

Men paid for the service provided NOT for the time spent with the woman. Not surprisingly then, in the eyes of the women, time meant money, and clients would be dispatched as quickly and efficiently as possible. It was rare that a man would be allocated more than 15 minutes of the prostitutes valuable time, and when the time spent travelling to and from the agreed location of business was taken into account, then it was considered reasonable if the man was given about three to five minutes to 'get it over with. Anything more was considered extravagant in the extreme. One woman, when providing hand relief or blow jobs to the customer, would actually deliver the service while he was driving round the block en route to the location. If the entire transaction took more than three minutes then *she* felt robbed !! (On one occasion, she disappeared mid interview for exactly three minutes and on her return - £15 richer - resumed the conversation mid sentence - exactly where she had broken off - a sort of 'interview interruptus'!!).

How Much Money ?

The amount of money that could be made in one night depended on several interrelated factors: (a) the service performed and (b) the number of clients.

The price of sex depended on the service required. On average, manual

sex (hand relief) could be bought for £10. Only 3 women charged more than this. Without exception, these were all teenagers (this is an important point which has already been discussed). The average price for oral sex (blow jobs) - the most frequently requested service - was £15.7 Only 5 women charged different prices; 3 of them, again teenagers, charged higher, 2 women (not teenagers) charged lower prices. Straight sex was either £20 in the car or £30 in a room or hotel. These prices were universally cited by the women as 'reasonable and fair' and it was generally believed by them that these prices were adhered to by most of the women. However, 5 women said that they always asked for more (£40).

Most women would work for a couple of hours or until they had made enough money for the night; some could work for one night a week and find that this swelled their coffers sufficiently to last them for the rest of the week. On some nights a woman could do a couple of punters and earn just £60, other nights, she could work a full night and make £170 - 200 or more. Some nights business could be good, and there would seem to be plenty of punters, some nights business would be bad and there would be no punters and consequently no money to show for standing there for hours on end.

Trying to estimate the scale of the prostitution business in the city - from the financial viewpoint - is a tricky, though not necessarily totally unreliable, exercise. The following figures are based on averages:

33 regulars x 3 clients per night x 5 nights per week = 15 clients per week x £20 per client = £300 per week; £15,000 per year. On these estimates, less than three dozen women earned just under half a million pounds a year from prostitution (£495,000). Most of the women claimed to make *at least* £80 - 100 per night. If this was the case, then each woman working on a regular basis could earn in the region of £20 - 25,000 a year. If one also includes in the calculations the earnings of the semi regulars (24 x 3 clients per night x 3 nights per week = £180 a week; £9,000 a year) and the earnings of 'occasionals and others', which constituted 43% of the total prostitute population, then it would be plausible to suggest that *at least* £800,000 a year was earned by prostitutes in this 'Northern City' in one year. This is a rather conservative estimate (based on averages) and it does not take into account the 'extras' expended on prostitution such as: (a) the price of condoms - these were always provided by the women and included in the overall price to the customer. However, most of the women received their

condom supply free - as they were distributed by a local drugs agency; (b) the price of the hotel or room - most of the women did not work from hotels, but if they did this expense would be met by the client. Those women that worked from, or had the use of, a room, usually had the room free of charge, (or paid a nominal fee of a couple of pounds) courtesy of a friend or relative.

A Lucrative Profession ?

Street work was not always profitable, and a woman could not always be guaranteed a definite income from a night's work:

Sometimes I don't have any clients at all. Business is bad right now, there are no punters around. Sometimes I don't know why I bother, I might as well stay at home and watch the tele. I would prefer to work at home but if I do the neighbours start to complain so I have to be careful - some of the neighbours can be a bit funny about things so I think it's best not to get them going.

(Monica)

...normally, I make £100 a night but it depends. Some nights are better than others. Why? I don't know why. Some times are busier than others and I don't know why that is either. What I do know is that it is tiring work. Sometimes I start at six o'clock and don't go home until eleven. I usually only work between six and eight but if I haven't made enough then I have to come out again at ten. That's tiring cos' it's like working two shifts.

(Martina)

When I first came out I didn't really know what to do or how much to charge - I just said £40 to my first customer and I got it so I just assumed that was what happened and that was the going rate. Later on, when I said £40 to another bloke he said it was too much and the other girls also said I should ask for £20 or £30 because that was what they charged. I am reluctant to do that so I always ask for £40 and if I get it then all well and good - otherwise I do it for £30.

(Phoebe)

Most nights I can earn £150 - one night last week I got £205 in 45 minutes. I look a lot younger than I actually am so the men will pay more. Some of the older women on the patch get angry with me because I take all the business - they think I do it for a tenner [£10] but I don't. In fact I do it for more than they do but they never believe me when I tell them what I charge. They say that no punter would pay that much - what they really mean is that not punter would pay *them* that much!! I only look about 14 - the punters love it - so I can get away with charging more.

(Molly)

...street work in the city is rubbish; the city is boring generally - it doesn't go anywhere and there aren't enough people passing through to make it a viable and profitable profession. There's no money to be made on the streets - maybe £20 -30 a punter, men don't want to pay for anything fancy - mind you, the women around here are pathetic, no business sense. There's no network or organization round here, it's too small to advertise, not enough punters and too many vice. In London, I can charge between £80 - 150 a client and it's far better organized. I never work on the streets in London - I don't need to. I advertise and I work through an agency - that keeps me busy enough.
(Harriet)

Savings and Attitudes to Money

8 (20%) of the women claimed to save most of the money that they earned. 5 claimed to have saved 'a lot' - as much of the money as they possibly could. In general, the idea of saving money was not seen as a sensible idea - most of the women said that they enjoyed spending their money.

...I try to save money but I have too many expenses - the flat, video, tv, drugs - and I like to go abroad on holiday two or three times a year.
(Jessica)

...I don't work to make money or to live in luxury, rather just to pay off the debts I don't like being in debt.
(Beryl)

...I need the money for the house; I try to put something by every week for electric, gas and rent. I try to be organized so I don't get into debt. Someone helped me to decide what I had to put away each week for everything and I try to stick to it. I can't seem to save anything though, any money that I have left over is gone on videos and clothes and stuff like that.
(Cindy)

...I have a nice house and nice things. Everything is paid for. I have been in debt before but I try not to get behind with things now. Most of the money goes on the kids - I don't want my kids to go round being scruffy or dressed in second hand tatty clothes. I never had nice things when I was a kid so I'm determined that my kids won't have the same sort of childhood that I had. That's why I do this.
(Trudie)

...It really is rubbish that we earn lots of money - we don't earn loads and loads. I never manage to save anything - the bills take care of most of the money - as soon as one gets paid then another one arrives.
(Sasha)

Attitudes to saving money were mixed:

...I never save. No point. I spend all the money on clothes, on shoes that are too high and the wrong colour, on debts and on drugs. What's the point of saving it - you never know how life will be so it's best to spend it all now.

(Imogen)

...I've managed to save quite a lot because I don't drink and I don't do drugs. A lot of the women on the patch spend on drugs or they work all night and then go and spend it all in the pub - it's a waste.

(Phoebe)

To some women, the drugs are the same as a pimp. I mean, they work at this and then they hand the money over to someone else for drugs - that doesn't make sense to me. I'm too practical - I can't see the point in doing this and then spending it on drugs, it's a waste, you might as well chuck it down the drain. My money goes on everyday things - food and bills - but I save a lot, as much as I can. I buy nice things for my daughter - that's why I'm doing this. She has the best of everything. She won't work [as a prostitute] when she is older. That won't happen. She is bright; she will do well at school. She won't have to do this. I simply won't allow it. If she was to end up on the patch then it would mean that I have failed her as a mother and that the time that I have been coming down here working in this disgusting job has all been a big waste of time. It simply won't happen.

(Laura)

Table 5.4: Spending Priorities

<u>Spending Priorities</u>	<u>1st</u>	<u>2nd</u>	<u>3rd</u>	<u>4th</u>	<u>No Priority</u>
Rent/Bills/Debts/ Food	27	7	2	3	1
Children/Family	5	9	1	-	25
Drugs	5	5	4	-	26
Clothes	1	5	9	2	23
Alcohol	-	2	2	5	31
Luxuries (holidays abroad/consumer goods/car	2	2	1	-	35

Table 5.4 shows that 27 of the women (67.5%) suggested that most of their money was spent on rent, bills and paying off debts. Although 25 of the women had children, only 5 (12.5%) put their children as their first spending priority; 9 (22.5%) placed them second in the priority stakes. However, those who put children as their second spending priority put rent,

bills etc as their first priority; the 5 who put their children first placed rent, bills etc as their second priority. Despite the fact that in interviews, many women suggested that they were working 'because of the bairns', 25 women (62.5%) including the majority of those with children, never mentioned their children as a spending priority - the majority seemed to indicate that their children did not benefit materially from their earnings. 35 of the women (87.5%) claimed that in the main 'luxuries' were not a spending priority.

Pimps

Perhaps the most obvious and unique feature of street prostitution in the 'Northern City' was the apparent total absence of pimps. Whilst all the police officers (in the DET) were of the opinion that this had some connection to the relatively small coloured population residing in the city, most linked the absence of pimps to the peculiar character of the women in the city:

...all the girls out there are very confident and headstrong and they don't seem to need a pimp. They seem to look after each other more than anything else - I don't think they need pimps down there.

We assume that all the girls are out there of their own free-will.

(DET officer)

In an effort to establish whether any of the women did (unknown to the police) have pimps and to estimate the scale and nature of any possible prostitute-pimp relationships, all 40 women were asked if they kept all the money that they made for themselves. The transparent naivety of the question, that is, the obvious 'real' intent of the enquiry, was not lost on any of the women.

Several women responded with a simple '...I don't have a pimp if that's what you mean', others responded with a (typical) Northern bluntness along the lines of '...I'm not that bloody daft to work like this and then hand all my money over to some bloke'. To the independently minded street prostitutes of the city, the very idea of having a pimp was totally incomprehensible:

...I've been approached a few times by fellas who wanted to be my pimp - wanted me to work for them - but I've always told them to clear off. I work for me, I'm not going to work so that some buggar else can live in luxury - what do you think I am? I think that women who get tangled up like that are stupid - really stupid - I mean, they must be bloody stupid to fall for that "I'll look after you" routine.

(Beryl)

Only one woman failed to entirely convince me that she was working of her own volition:

...I spend all the money on bills and food and things like the tv and video. Most of the money goes to my boyfriend -but he isn't a pimp or nothing like that. He *lets me* come here to work, but I don't do it for him. I suppose really he should get off his backside and find a job and look after us both - and he will, one day - it's just that right now he likes sleeping on the settee all day and watching tele. He doesn't mind me coming out here and working - if I didn't then he wouldn't get nothing for drinks and ciggies - if things are a bit tight then he does say "why don't go you back out and work for a few more hours" but he isn't a pimp if that's what you're thinking.

(Martina)

Of course, the dividing line between pimping and living off immoral earnings is, legally, a very thin one. Undoubtedly, some of the women had partners/boyfriends who knew that they worked - indeed did not actively *discourage* them - and indeed enjoyed the financial rewards that working in the prostitution business could bring. The extent to which these relationships were exploitative or based on violence and coercion was impossible to establish. 8 Some of the women had boyfriends who walked them onto the patch at the start of the evenings work and who then proceeded to spend the rest of the night in the pub until the 'shift' had finished so that they could walk them home again. The women would say that their boyfriend was 'protecting' them. The police would not disagree. According to the police there was little they could do to prevent this, indeed they did not seem to want to. If the boyfriend was there to look after the women - keep an eye on things - offer them some protection, then it was not a police matter and, after all, it saved them having to do it:

...it saves us a job because you would be looking at further offences... We could go down there [the patch] every night and bring them all in for loitering, but we don't, and we don't delve further and bring in husbands and boyfriends. I suppose really we turn a blind eye to it, but it's just the thing we do nowadays. If we had to deal with every offence then we would be well and truly snowed under.

(DET officer)

Summary.

One major characteristic of the prostitution business is the complex and varied system of stratification and organization. Sheehy (1973) suggests

that there is probably no other vocation which operates with such a fierce system of social distinctions (Sheehy 1973:231) or which offers little chance of vertical mobility (Heyl 1968:197).⁹ On the basis of this research it is possible to suggest that there is probably no other vocation in which a complex set of 'rules of the game' are imposed by the participants and which exist to act as internal control mechanisms.

Several studies (Jackman et al, 1967; Gagnon & Simon, 1973; Kapur, 1978) have suggested that one of the consequences of being 'in the life' is that the increased involvement in the world of prostitution correlates with a concomitant decrease in social relationships outside that world because:

...the sharing of a special alienation and distance from conventional society forces the prostitute back to other prostitutes for her social life.

(Gagnon & Simon, 1973:229)

The prostitutes in this study all indicated that their relationships with other prostitutes on the patch were transient and superficial and confined to the patch; occupational solidarity did not appear to transcend this boundary, all of the women claimed never to mix socially with the other prostitutes.

The patch was a competitive arena with a clearly defined hierarchical structure based on age and territorial boundaries. New prostitutes were regarded with deep suspicion and overt displays of hostility, mostly in an attempt to drive them off the patch. In 1993, 52 new prostitutes were recorded (by the police) as entering (or re-entering) the business. This compared about average with previous years. ¹⁰

Table 5.5: Number of Women entering Prostitution in the City 1985 - 1993.

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. New Prostitutes</u>
1985	42
1986	21
1987	22
1988	25
1989	17
1990	7*
1991	44
1992	46
1993	52

* It was suggested that one of the reasons for this low figure was a general lowered police response to prostitution.

The argument frequently put forward by the older, more established prostitutes was that newcomers were '...getting younger and cheaper all the time'. This was the perceived view. In fact, the reality was slightly different. The average age of new prostitutes was 23.75 years. Furthermore, although the older prostitutes believed that the younger, new prostitutes were charging far less and undercutting the general pricing system on the patch, the younger prostitutes vehemently denied that this was the case - on the contrary, they argued that they were able to earn far *more* because they were younger and were able to attract more customers.

Table 5.6: Age Categories of New Prostitutes working in the City in 1993.

<u>Age Categories</u>	<u>Number of New Prostitutes</u>
15 & Under	1
16 - 19	18
20 - 24	20
25 - 29	3
30 - 34	4
35 - 39	2
40 - 44	2
45 - 49	-
50 - 54	2
55 - 59	-
Over 60	-
Totals	52

The majority of women worked only at night, alone and on the street. Although most women could make an average of £100+ per night, street work was not always lucrative and a woman could not always be guaranteed a definite income at the end of each night. However, variables such as weather, time of the year (summer-winter; light-dark nights) appeared to play no part in either the number of women working out on the street or in the number of kerbcrawlers cruising the area.

Most women (67.5%) claimed that most of their money was spent on rent, bills and paying off numerous debts (mostly court fines - though these were *not* incurred through prostitution), 87.5% of the women claimed that 'luxuries' were not a spending priority. 14 women claimed that drugs (of various sorts) had a high spending priority, and 9 women also named alcohol as an item that claimed a fair percentage of their earnings.

All of the women claimed not to have a pimp. The absence of pimps may sound highly unlikely, but the police confirmed that there was no overt

presence on the street, and personal observation also supported this. Some of the women did have boyfriends accompany them to the patch at the start of the evenings business, but these were regarded as 'chaperones' rather than anything more sinister or exploitative. Most of the women said that they found it more scary to walk home through the streets at night alone than they did to work as prostitutes.

¹ See Glossary for definitions of 'Call Girl' and 'Streetwalker'.

² To reiterate, street names have been altered.

³ For example, rumours that one of the women was battering her children provoked such anger amongst the other prostitutes and the threat of retribution so real, that the woman concerned was too frightened to go on to the designated patch until the rumours had died down. She decided that working off the patch and risking possible penalties from the police was infinitely preferable to facing her accusers on the patch.

⁴ Other research has suggested that competition amongst streetwalkers is strong and that this competition disrupts group cohesiveness. Several studies have reported that women who operate by undercutting prices are literally chased away or subjected to verbal harassment (Anon, 1959:22; Bryan, 1968:294; Millet, 1976; Hoigard & Finstad, 1992:40).

⁵ Weekend vice patrols by the DET were eventually undertaken towards the end of the research period.

⁶ This raised two interesting questions - firstly, the vulnerability of the client - having parted with his money, some of the women were not averse to running off without providing the service, and secondly, the more complicated legal minefield that could arise in rape cases. Both of these issues are covered in later chapters.

⁷ As the women suggested that oral sex was, on the whole, the most frequently requested service, I took this to mean that it was more commonly requested than 'straight' sex.

⁸ Many writers have emphasized the exploitative nature of the relationship between prostitute and pimp and especially the terror and violence inflicted by the pimp if the woman attempts to undermine his social control; those who attempt to undermine or leave his control are subject to severe beatings and mutilation (McCaghy, 1985:360). Deutsch (1946) claims that masochism plays a great part in the life of a prostitute. This 'feminine masochism' theory is based on the proposition that '...deeply masochistic love ties' exist between prostitute and pimp to whom she is attached by '...the most hatred and yet indissoluble ties of love' (Deutsch, 1946:211). Furthermore, despite the violence and power that the pimp may terrorize her with, the prostitute '...experiences all the happiness of womanly love' (Deutsch, 1946:210). In return for all the 'happiness' provided by the pimp, the prostitute turns over all her earnings to him. Whether this is a fair exchange depends on your perspective, but why a woman would engage in prostitution risking arrest, disease, maltreatment from customers and then hand over all the cash to a pimp who may inflict yet further violence, is a perplexing question and one that has

never been satisfactorily explained by writers on the subject, especially considering the frequent argument that women enter the profession for its lucrative financial benefits.

⁹ Scandanavian research uses a 'pyramid' illustrate divisions in the prostitute market: the base of the pyramid has the lowest status (streetwalkers), the top the highest (call girl) (Hoigard & Finstad, 1992:124-131). Heyl (1968) suggest that there is little vertical mobility between the levels because the social networks within each level help maintain negative stereotypes of women working at the other levels and this prohibits mobility in the structure of the occupation (Heyl, 1968:197).

¹⁰ It was impossible to gain precise data on exactly how many women leave the prostitution business each year. A number of factors have to be taken into account: (a) women could have left the 'northern city' to work as prostitutes in another city; (b) women could have temporarily stopped working ' on the game' or (c) the women could simply have evaded police arrest and cautioning procedures (though given that the research was conducted over a year, this is unlikely). On the whole, given that the number of women (known prostitutes) on police records appeared fairly constant, it seems plausible to suggest that a comparable number of women leave the prostitution business each year - either permanently or temporarily - as enter the profession.

Red Light, Blue Light

Prostitutes, Punters and The Police in a Northern City

CHAPTER SIX: THE PROSTITUTES

The 'Criminality' Factor

A. *Prostitutes and Drugs*

B. *Prostitutes and Crime*

CHAPTER SIX: The Prostitutes - The 'Criminality' Factor.

A. Prostitutes and Drugs.

Prostitution, as a means of financing drug addictions, is one specific economic factor cited with alarming regularity in contemporary studies (Jackman, 1963; Haft, 1974; Goldstein, 1979; McLeod, 1982; Carlen, 1988; Hoigard & Finstad, 1992). It has been suggested that among lower class prostitutes (streetwalkers), drug dependence - particularly heroin - creates an economic necessity (Goldstein, 1979; Carlen, 1988) whereas among call girls, drug dependence - notably stimulants - followed their entry into the profession (Benjamin & Masters, 1964; Goldstein, 1979). In a recent Norwegian study (1992) drugs were *the* central element in the prostitutes life; out of 26 women studied, 23 had experience of drug use (Hoigard & Finstad, 1992:24). Research in a number of major British cities has shown that between 14-20% of prostitutes were injecting drugs; in Glasgow (1992) up to 70% were estimated to be injecting drugs (McKegany, 1992 cited 'Times Higher', 3 July 1992:17).

In this research, less than one third (30%) of the total number of prostitutes (T100) known to the police were involved, or were known to have been involved, with drugs. The problem of drug misuse almost entirely concerned the younger age groups. Among the total prostitute population, most drug misuse that did occur involved cannabis. Cannabis resin (dope) was the cheapest and most easily available drug, selling for around £4 a gramme or £60-100 per ounce. The largely hypnotic effect of cannabis meant that although it was commonly used by the women, this use was regarded as purely 'recreational'. The tendency was for the women to take drugs that would 'speed' them up and give them more 'bottle' to work on the patch. Amphetamines (speed, whizz) were available for £15 a gramme; about 20% of the total number of prostitutes were believed to use speed on a regular basis. Heroin (smack) sold for around £15-20 a gramme (or £10 wraps) - about 10% of the prostitutes were known to be involved with heroin on a regular basis. An estimated 5% of the women were believed to be dealing in drugs.

Those prostitutes that used drugs would tend to take them prior to setting out for the evenings work on the patch. It was very rare that any of the women would take 'the gear' (see glossary) out on to the patch with them

for fear of being pulled in for a caution for soliciting - as being found with drugs on them could lead them to being charged with an offence potentially far more serious than prostitution. The police were of the opinion that drugs did not figure all that significantly in the prostitution scene:

...drugs are not a big problem on the patch - there is only a minority that use drugs on a regular basis.

(DET officer)

Of the 40 prostitutes interviewed, 15 (37.5%) were involved - to a greater or lesser degree - in the drug scene. 5 (12.5%) had formerly been involved - to a lesser or greater degree - with drug misuse. Of the 15 involved, 8 (20%) were regular heroin users (2 were registered as addicts). Of these 8: 4 were in their teens and 4 were in their early to mid twenties. 6 (15%) women used cannabis on a regular basis and 1 woman used amphetamines only. The last 7 women claimed that they had never at any time taken been involved with '...anything stronger'. Of the 8 women regularly using heroin only 2 were registered as addicts. In practical terms this meant that they received free needles, counselling and a course of methadone treatment. Of the other 6 women who were not registered as addicts, 2 said that they were 'desperate' to become registered so that they could receive help; the other 4 said that they 'weren't bothered' about being registered because they didn't think that they would be able to overcome their dependency.

Most of the women involved in heroin use mixed a heady cocktail of other drugs - crushing Temezepam, Distalgesic, Valium (and Vitamin C) to make the more expensive drugs spin out for longer. The women involved in heroin use tended to spend at least £100+ per day on their drug supply.

The relationship between drugs and prostitution was not clear cut. 3 women claimed that their involvement in drugs had directly led them into prostitution as it was the most easily accessible way of financing their habit. 1 woman was adamant that her involvement in drugs had only started *after* she had begun working as a prostitute. She claimed that it was the influence of her friends and the easy availability of drugs on the patch that enticed to her to become involved.

'Olivia' became involved with drugs when she was 15. At the time of the first interview she was a registered heroin addict. Friends and associates played a major role in her involvement in the drug scene - influenced by them to 'follow the pack' she quickly made the transition from glue sniffing to

heroin addict. According to Olivia, the transition was almost overnight, however she was adamant that her involvement in serious drugs only began after she had been working as a prostitute. Olivia maintained that after leaving home she had gone to live with her girlfriend who first introduced her to the business of prostitution and then involved her in the drug scene:

...At first I just worked for clothes money but now I work for drugs. I shoot up every day. It costs about £80-100 a day. I usually take it before I go on to the patch but whenever I need to I do. I only take it for the pain now. I make enough [working] to pay for the gear; sometimes I have something left over but not very much and not very often - a lot goes on ciggies and booze. I drink quite a lot I suppose. I'd really like someone to help. I just want to stop. I get free needles but I need Methadone. I want to stop, I just hope that now I've been arrested that someone will help.

(Olivia)

4 women claimed that their drug use and involvement with prostitution had coincided - '...sort of happened at the same time'.

Without exception, all 8 heroin users claimed that as well as prostitution being the easiest and quickest way to finance their habit, it was also the most viable deviant alternative - all the women had criminal records for other activities and feared that further involvement in other criminal activities would land them in far more serious trouble than soliciting for the purposes of prostitution:

...I started working because I was taking heroin and needed the money. That was about six years ago. All my friends were doing drugs so I started as well. Drugs came first and then working [prostitution] - to pay for it. I've been in quite a lot of trouble for shoplifting so I daren't do that anymore, I started to do this because I knew that I wouldn't get done for it - at least I thought I wouldn't get done for it. While I was in prison I came off drugs - it was really good, they really helped me, but now I'm out I've started again. I'm not going to get as bad this time though. I was really bad before, I was glad to get to prison cos it [heroin] was doing my head in.

(Jessica)

All 8 women had started using drugs when they were in their early teens. 2 of the women started when they were just 13 years old. The clear route from solvent abuse to amphetamines to heroin use is illustrated by the fact that 5 of the women said that their drug involvement had started with glue sniffing and quickly developed into serious drug misuse:

...I started on glue - all my friends did it so it just happened that I joined in as well. Why did I start? When you're unhappy and depressed you need something to pick you up. I was very unhappy and

it [glue sniffing] helped me. There were lots of reasons why I was unhappy - lots of reasons - you'd be surprised. Later on, I started shooting up, but only speed, Chloe was doing it as well - me and her are big mates. In a way the drugs and working [prostitution] sort of happened together; at the very beginning I was sniffing glue and picking up lorry drivers to get the cash and that was that. I spent about £40 a day on the gear - that's not much and I could easily earn that much - no problem.

(Poppy)

Within a few months, 'Poppy' was a heroin addict:

...I started on heroin cos I don't need to shoot up so often. With speed I was injecting maybe 7 times a day, now, with heroin, I only need shoot up 3 times a day. That's good isn't it? Mind you, it's a dear do - a really dear do. Why do I take it? It makes me feel good, why else would I take it. I've got a lot of serious problems - you know about them - this makes me feel good.

(Poppy)

'Charlotte' first became involved with drugs when she was 16:

Somebody gave me some drugs when I was at a party and it just went on from there. I shouldn't take them really because I'm epileptic. When I had my first shot I just started shaking - I wasn't able to stop shaking. I don't know exactly what it was that they gave me but I felt really bad. My friends said it was normal and that I needed some more to stop the shaking. After that I went straight onto heroin, now I use speed as well to make the smack last out. I spend about £120 a day on the gear. It's expensive and it's made me look really bad and feel really bad and I've made a right mess of me arms - look at these marks - do you think they'll go? Some of the marks won't fade; those on my wrist are from where I tried to kill myself. I've tried to kill myself three times. I'd like to stop the drugs, cos if I stop them then I won't have to work and I would do anything to be able to stop working - I really do hate that.

(Charlotte)

7 women described their drug use as 'occasional' and recreational and involving in the main only cannabis. These women all said that they had never had any involvement in 'hard' drugs such as heroin and cocaine although 1 woman said that she had occasionally used amphetamines. 'Imogen' had been taking drugs 'occasionally' for 'quite a while':

...I spend about £30 a day on drugs but I'm not an addict. I just take it when I need it. I always keep a stash at my place so that if I need it it's there, but you musn't make a big thing out of my drug use, it's not that important. If I want a slash then I do, but it doesn't bother me if I don't have one every day. My biggest addiction is to nicotine - and money.

(Imogen)

All 7 of these women said that there was no connection between their drug use and their involvement in prostitution - that is, the latter was not undertaken to finance the former.

The drug 'history' of the women is outlined in the following table (6.1). This details their introduction to the drug scene, the kinds of drugs (formerly and currently) used, the financial burden of these habits, and the connection, if any, of drug use to a career in prostitution.

Table 6.1: Drug Histories: Involvement and Connection to Prostitution

<u>Name & Age</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Years Working</u>	<u>Drug History</u>
'Amy' age 18	Regular	2 years	Introduced to amphetamines by friends when aged 16. Occasional use only and stopped completely when she became pregnant. Claimed that there was no link between her drug use and prostitution because '...I wasn't an addict and I never took heroin.
'Belinda' Aged39	Regular	18 years	Smoked cannabis as a teenager. Claimed never to have taken anything stronger because it was a '...waste of money'. Previous Conviction: Possession.
'Carly' Aged24	Regular	3 years	Occasional use of cannabis. Purely recreational. Did not work as a prostitute to finance this use. Previous Conviction: Possession.
'Charlotte' Aged19	Semi-Reg	Several months	Introduced to drug scene by her friends when aged 16. Cocktails of 'E', amphetamines, heroin and tranquilisers. Worked as a prostitute to finance a drug habit of @ £120 a day. Drinks heavily
'Chloe' Aged18	Regular	5 years	Started sniffing glue when aged 13. Turned to prostitution at the same time. Used amphetamines and heroin on a regular basis and cannabis. Stopped using drugs after suffering a miscarriage. Previous Conviction: Possession

<u>Name & Age</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Time Working</u>	<u>Drug History</u>
'Cindy' Aged 21	Regular	13 months	Occasionally used cannabis. Claimed that she had never, and would never, use 'hard' drugs.
'Claudia' aged 24	Regular	6 years	Started using 'hard' drugs when aged 17 though had been involved with solvents use (glue sniffing) since she was 15. Influenced by her friends. Used amphetamines, heroin, cocaine, cannabis, and '...anything else available'. Worked as a prostitute to finance a drug habit of @ £100+ a day. Previous Conviction: Possession.
'Harriet' Aged 26	Regular	2 years	Occasional use of cannabis only. Preferred alcohol - wine and champagne. Considered drugs to be a waste of money and drug users to be extremely stupid - '...you might as well put a gun to your head and pull the trigger'.
'Holly' Aged 19	Semi-Reg	1 year	Occasional use of cannabis but ...only if everyone else is doing it too'. Did not work as a prostitute to finance this use.
'Imogen' Aged 24	Regular	10 months	Had taken amphetamines for '...quite a while' but did not consider herself to be an addict she only took drugs to cheer herself up - one legacy of a very serious accident was a tendency to lapse into severe bouts of depression. Spent about £30 a day on drugs (speed) but did not work purely for drug money
'Jessica' Aged 24	Regular	4+ years	Had taken drugs for 6 years since the age of 18. Influenced by her friends. Addicted to heroin and cocaine. Worked as a prostitute to finance a habit of £100+ a day. Previous Conviction: Possession.

Name & Age	Status	Time Working	Drug History
'Kylie' Aged 27	Regular	8 years	Started using drugs when aged 13. Had taken amphetamines and heroin but now only used cannabis occasionally and did not work to finance this use. Previous Conviction: Possession.
'Martina' Aged 19	Regular	2 years	Occasional cannabis use. Did not work to finance this use.
'Natalie' aged 25	Regular	6 months	Worked to finance heroin addiction.
'Olivia' Aged 17	Regular	8 months	Started working as a prostitute and was then introduced to the drug scene by her friends. Started with solvents (glue) and then quickly moved to speed and heroin. Registered addict.
'Pippa' Aged 21	Regular	10 months	Heroin addict. Worked as a prostitute to finance her habit of @ £100 a day.
'Poppy' Aged 16	Regular	3 years	Started sniffing glue when aged 13 then moved to amphetamines which she used regularly for several years. Addicted to heroin and '...anything else'. Drinks heavily.
'Raquel' Aged 30	Regular	11 years	Started using drugs when aged 18. Former heroin addict -did work to finance her habit, but had now kicked her addiction with the help of Methadone.
'Sophie' Aged 18	Occasional	2 years	Started using solvents when aged 15. Moved to amphetamines and heroin. Former addict. Turned to prostitution when aged 16 to finance the habit but had managed to beat her addiction after a prolonged course of Methadone. Had not taken drugs for over a year. Claimed that heroin had '...totally messed up my life'.
'Tessa' Aged 25	Regular	1 year	Former heroin addict. Drug habit led directly to working.

5 women in the survey were former drug users. This included 3 women who were formerly heroin addicts and 2 women who used amphetamines and cannabis. All these 5 women said that their drug use had started when they were in their early - mid teens. 3 of the women (all heroin addicts) said that their drug abuse led them directly into prostitution (in order to finance their habit). The 2 women who used cannabis and amphetamines said there was no connection between their drug use and prostitution - that is, one did not finance the other.

'Sophie' started taking drugs when she was 15. She was introduced to the drug scene by her friends and quickly made the transition from solvent abuse (glue sniffing) to amphetamines, cocaine and finally heroin. Within a few months, she was a registered heroin addict and at the age of 16 she turned to prostitution to help finance her habit. At the height of her addiction, Sophie worked every night to finance a £100 a day habit. Now aged 18, Sophie has beaten her drug addiction though she did not find it an easy process:

Heroin messed up my life completely. It made me look bad and it made me feel bad. I went really thin and spotty and I wasn't able to eat anything. I wouldn't ever get involved with drugs again because they just aren't worth it.

(Sophie)

Despite no longer needing to finance her addiction, Sophie still continues to work as a prostitute on an occasional basis.

Although all 5 women had managed to rid themselves of their drug dependency, all continued to work as prostitutes - 4 of them on a regular basis.

Summary.

Of the 40 prostitutes interviewed in this study, 20 (50%) had some experience (either currently or formerly) of drug use. Although prostitution was regarded by those using drugs on a regular basis as the easiest and quickest way to finance their habit, the connection between drug use and prostitution was not clear cut. (It should not, for example, be assumed that prostitution was the only means resorted to for financing an expensive drug habit). The police did not regard drug use amongst the prostitutes as a significant problem, in their opinion, the biggest 'problem' on the patch - both socially and from a public order point of view - was regarded as alcohol. Prostitutes were banned from most of the public houses

in the district and a number of eating establishments. In the view of both the police and local landlords, the prostitutes tended to drink too much and then get a bit 'mouthy' and menacing and cause trouble. This, and the general association/reputation of the area with vice tended to deter 'respectable' people from visiting the area on a social basis. The local landlords, some of whom had invested considerable capital in upgrading their businesses, were desperate to attract a 'better sort' of customer and viewed the prostitutes of the area as a definite hindrance to their entrepreneurial efforts. In general, the women tended to consume alcohol before they went out to work on the patch, most claimed it was to give them a 'bit of bottle - dutch courage'. Despite the public order implications, in the opinion of the police, the reliance of the prostitutes on 'falling down water' (see glossary) to get themselves out on to the street was a rather more sensible option than resorting to drugs.

B. Prostitutes and Crime.

In 1916, William Bonger asserted that prostitutes displayed a high degree of criminality largely because the nature of the profession opened up a '...vast field' for committing economic offences, and because the 'demoralising' effect of prostitution caused those women who worked in the profession to lose all self respect and fall 'lower and lower' (Bonger, 1916:507).¹ In other words, Bonger appeared to be suggesting that the women who took to prostitution were not necessarily *criminal women* per se, rather it was the degrading effect of the profession itself that prompted women to 'branch out' into other criminal activities.

In an attempt to establish the role (or effect, if any) of prostitution in the 'criminality' of the women, all 40 women were asked about 'other' criminal activities. The most crucial aspect of the questions revolved around whether the women embarked on other criminal activities *before* they turned to prostitution, or whether (like Bonger (1916) asserted) it was prostitution and all its associated evils, that prompted a drift into a more general criminality and deviance.²

The 'Criminality' of Forty Prostitutes.

Of the 40 women interviewed, 33 (82.5%) had criminal records for offences other than prostitution. Between them, these 33 women had committed a total of 347 separate offences in a wide range of categories.

(This 347 offences included 26 charges of prostitution).

The following table (6.2) details the total number of offences committed by the women and the subsequent sentences of the court. It also details the age at which the individual committed their first offence and the age they started working as prostitutes.

Table 6.2: The Criminal Histories of 40 Women

<u>Name & Age</u>	<u>Age started in Crime</u>	<u>Age Prost</u>	<u>Total Number Offences</u>	<u>Offences</u>	<u>Sentence</u>
Alexis 25 years	19	19	18	Criminal Damage ABH, GBH, Affray Shoplifting, Prostitution	Conditional Discharges; Fines; Cautions.
Amy 18 years	-	16	-	-	-
Belinda 39 years	18	21	12	Drugs, ABH, Robbery Shoplifting, Burglary Criminal Damage, Theft from person Drunk & Disorderly Prostitution	Probation Fines, Conditional Discharges, Bound Over
Beryl 55 years	-	45	-	-	-
Carly 24 years	23	21	2	Drugs, Shoplifting	Caution, Prison (suspended)
Charlotte 19 years	12	19	9	Criminal Damage ABH, Theft from dwelling, Threatening & Abusive behaviour Breach Court Order	Caution, Conditional Discharges, Attendance Centre
Chloe 18 years	14	13	29	Shoplifting, ABH Burglary, Criminal Damage, Threatening & Abusive behaviour Drugs, Breach of Bail, Breach of Probation, Breach Court Order	Cautions Conditional Discharges, Probation, Fines, Supervision Order.
Cindy 21 years	16	21	24	Shoplifting, Arson, Deception, Drunk & Disorderly, Assault on Police, Threatening & Abusive behaviour,	Probation, Fines, Conditional Discharge, Community

<u>Name & Age</u>	<u>Age started in Crime</u>	<u>Age Prost</u>	<u>Total Number Offence</u>	<u>Offence (s)</u>	<u>Sentence</u>
				Breach of Bail, Breach of Probation, Breach of Community Service	Service, Prison.
Claudia 24 years	14	19	50	Burglary, Shoplifting Criminal Damage, Drugs, Deception, Handling, ABH, Breach of Probation Breach Court Order Breach Community Service, Prostitution	Fines, Probation, Conditional Discharges, Community Service, Supervision Order, Prison.
Fiona 34 years	11	17	10	Burglary, Handling, Assault on Police, Breach of Peace, Motoring Offences, Breach of Bail Prostitution,	Probation, Conditional Discharge, Fines, Bound Over Supervision Order.
Gwen 54 years	-	25	-	-	-
Harriet 26 years	23	24	2	Motoring Offence Dishonestly using public amenity	Caution, Conditional Discharge.
Holly 19 years	16	17	13	Handling, Deception, Theft of cycle, theft from dwelling, Road Traffic Offences, Harrasment, alarm & distress, threatening & abusive behaviour Breach of Bail, Breach Court Order, Breach of Binding order.	Cautions, Fined, Conditional Discharges, Bound Over Supervision order.
Imogen 24 years	23	23	1	Shoplifting	Caution
Isobel 21 years	20	21	4	Criminal Damage Handling.	Conditional Discharge, Bound Over.
Jasmine 21 years	15	21	11	Shoplifting, GBH, Deception, Prostitution	Cautions, Probation, Bound Over Supervision Order.

<u>Name & Age</u>	<u>Age started in Crime</u>	<u>Age Prost</u>	<u>Total number Offence</u>	<u>Offence (s)</u>	<u>Sentence</u>
Jessica 24 years	18	18	18	Shoplifting, Drugs, Assault on Police Breach of Bail Breach Court Order.	Fines, Probation, Prison
Kylie 27 years	16	19	33	Burglary, Shoplifting ABH, GBH, Assault, Assault on Police, Possessing offensive weapon, Handling, Breach of Peace, Drugs, Theft from a dwelling, Deception, Harrassment, alarm & Distress, Breach of Probation, Breach of Court Order, Breach of Binding Order.	Fines, Probation, Conditional Discharges, Bound Over Detention Centre Youth Custody
Laura 27 years	-	24	-	-	-
Lynette 32 years	-	32	-	-	-
Marian 39 years	16	29	8	Shoplifting, Deception, Breach of Peace.	Fines, Probation
Marilyn 26 years	12	16	18	Shoplifting, Handling, Drunk & Disorderly Breach of Bail, Breach Court Order Prostitution	Fines, Caution Conditional Discharges, Probation.
Martina 19 years	14	17	7	Shoplifting, ABH, Criminal Damage Breach of Court Order	Caution, Fines, Conditional Discharges,
Megan 19 years	14	15	2	Shoplifting	Cautions.
Molly 19 years	18	16	1	Shoplifting	Caution

<u>Name & Age</u>	<u>Age started in Crime</u>	<u>Age Prost</u>	<u>Total number Offence</u>	<u>Offence (s)</u>	<u>Sentence</u>
Monica 33 years	21	21	3	Theft from meter Shoplifting, harbouring escaped prisoner	Fined, Conditional Discharge.
Natalie 25 years	13	25	6	Shoplifting, ABH Handling, Drugs	Fines, Probation, Conditional Discharges.
Olivia 17 years	15	16	9	Shoplifting, Breach of Bail, Prostitution Threatening & Abusive behaviour.	Caution Conditional Discharges
Phoebe 20 years	-	20	-	-	-
Pippa 21 years	20	21	21	Handling	(Pending)
Polly 25 years	13	25	6	Shoplifting, Burglary.	Fines.
Poppy 16 years	13	13	2	Theft of Cycle Shoplifting	Cautions
Raquel 30 years	19	19	23	Deception, Handling, Shoplifting, Prostitution.	Probation, Fines, Conditional Discharges.
Rose 59 years	56	50	1	Shoplifting	Caution
Sasha 30 years	23	28	5	Shoplifting, Wounding Possessing Offensive weapon, Criminal Damage	Conditional Discharge, Prison (suspended)
Sophie 18 years	14	16	9	Shoplifting, ABH, Theft of cycle, Breach of Bail Breach of Court Order	Cautions, Fines, Probation, Conditional Discharge, Detention Centre.
Tanya 19 years	17	16	1	Theft from person	Caution

<u>Name & Age</u>	<u>Age started in Crime</u>	<u>Age Prost</u>	<u>Total number Offences</u>	<u>Offence (s)</u>	<u>Sentence</u>
Tessa 23 years	-	23	-	-	-
Trudie 23 years	17	17	6	Kidnapping, ABH, Criminal Damage Making off without paying, Breach Court Order.	Conditional Discharges, Fines.
Vicky 31 years	29	29	3	Drugs	Prison (suspended)

As can be seen, 20 of the 33 women embarked on other criminal activities *before* they turned to prostitution, 5 started working as prostitutes and then committed other offences, and 8 women's criminal activities and involvement in prostitution coincided at roughly the same time.

Chart 6.1 (below) illustrates the categories of offences in which the 33 women were involved. Property crimes accounted for almost half of the total number of crimes committed by the women.

Chart 6.1: Classification of Offences.

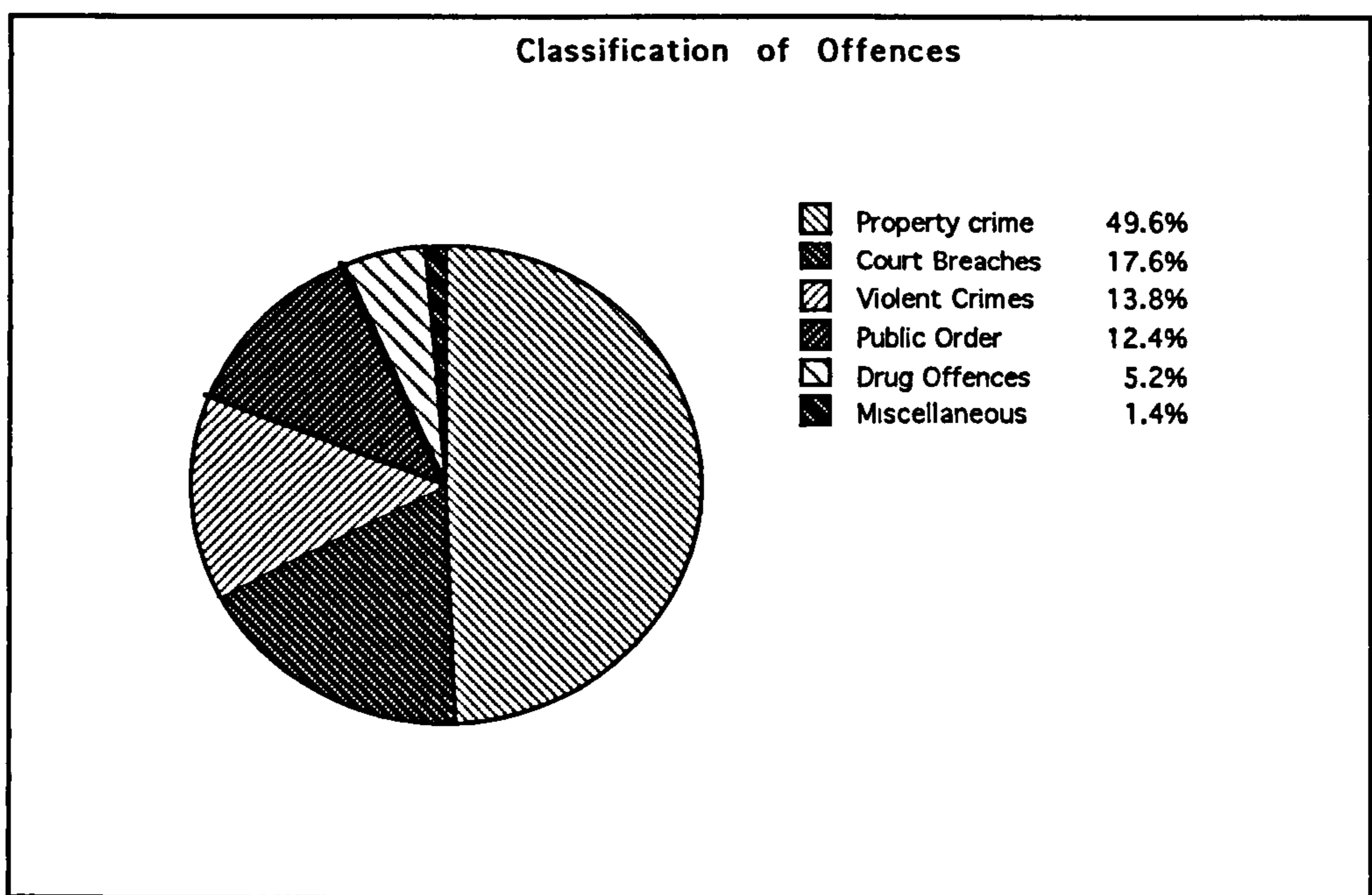


Table 6.3: Classification of Offences.

<u>No. of Women</u>	<u>Category and Offence</u>	<u>Total</u>
	<u>Property Crimes</u>	
24	Theft: Shoplifting	99
9	Handling Stolen Goods	18
7	Obtaining Services by Deception	24
6	Burglary	15
3	Theft from dwelling	4
3	Theft of Cycle	3
2	Theft from person	3
1	Theft of Motor Vehicle	1
1	Theft from meter	1
1	Robbery	1
1	Making off without Paying	2
1	Dishonestly using electricity	1
	Total:	172
	<u>Failure to Comply with Court Orders</u>	
10	Breach of Court Order	18
8	Breach of Bail Conditions	18
4	Breach of Probation	14
2	Breach of Binding Order	3
2	Breach of Community Service orders	8
	Total:	61
	<u>Offences Against the Person & Property</u>	
10	ABH	20
9	Criminal Damage	16
4	Assault on police Officer	4
3	GBH	3
2	Possessing an Offensive Weapon	2
1	Common Assault	1
1	Wounding	1
1	Arson	1
	Total:	48
	<u>Public Order Offences</u>	
8	Soliciting / Prostitution	26
5	Using Threatening and Abusive Behaviour	6
3	Breach of the Peace	4
3	Drunk and Disorderly	3
2	Harrassment/ Alarm and Distress	3
1	Affray	1
	Total:	43
	<u>Drug Offences</u>	
8	Possessing Controlled Drugs	16
2	Supplying Controlled Drugs	2
	Total:	18
	<u>Misc.Offences</u>	
2	Motoring Offences	3
1	Kidnapping	1
1.	Harbouring an Escaped Prisoner	1
	Total:	5
	<u>Grand Total:</u>	<u>347</u>

Chart 6.2 (below) illustrates the various categories of property crime and the percentage of women involved in each category. Shoplifting was the biggest single offence. 99 separate shoplifting offences were committed by a total of 24 women; 9 women were charged with 'Handling stolen property' (18 separate offences); 7 women were charged with 'obtaining services by deception' (24 separate offences) and 6 women were charged with burglary (15 separate offences).

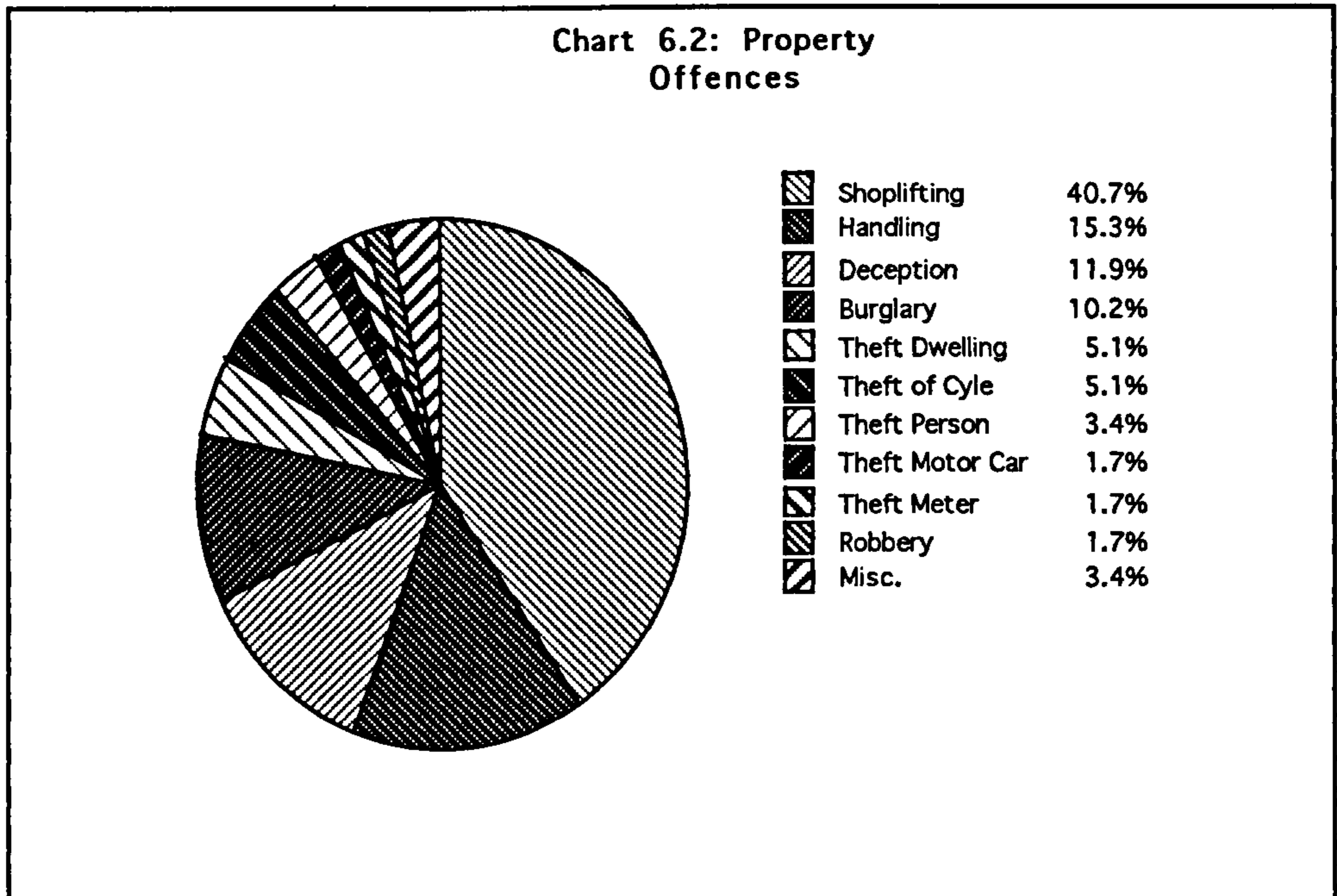


Chart 6.3 (following page) illustrates the various categories of violent crimes against either property or the person and the percentage of women involved in each category.

A total of 10 women were charged with ABH (Actual Bodily harm) committing between them a total of 20 separate offences; 9 women were charged with criminal damage (a total of 16 separate offences); 4 women were charged with assaulting a police officer; 3 women were charged with GBH (Grevious Bodily harm); 2 women were charged with 'possessing an offensive weapon' and the remaining 3 women committed common assault, wounding and arson.

Chart 6.3: Percentage involved in Violent Crimes (property/person).

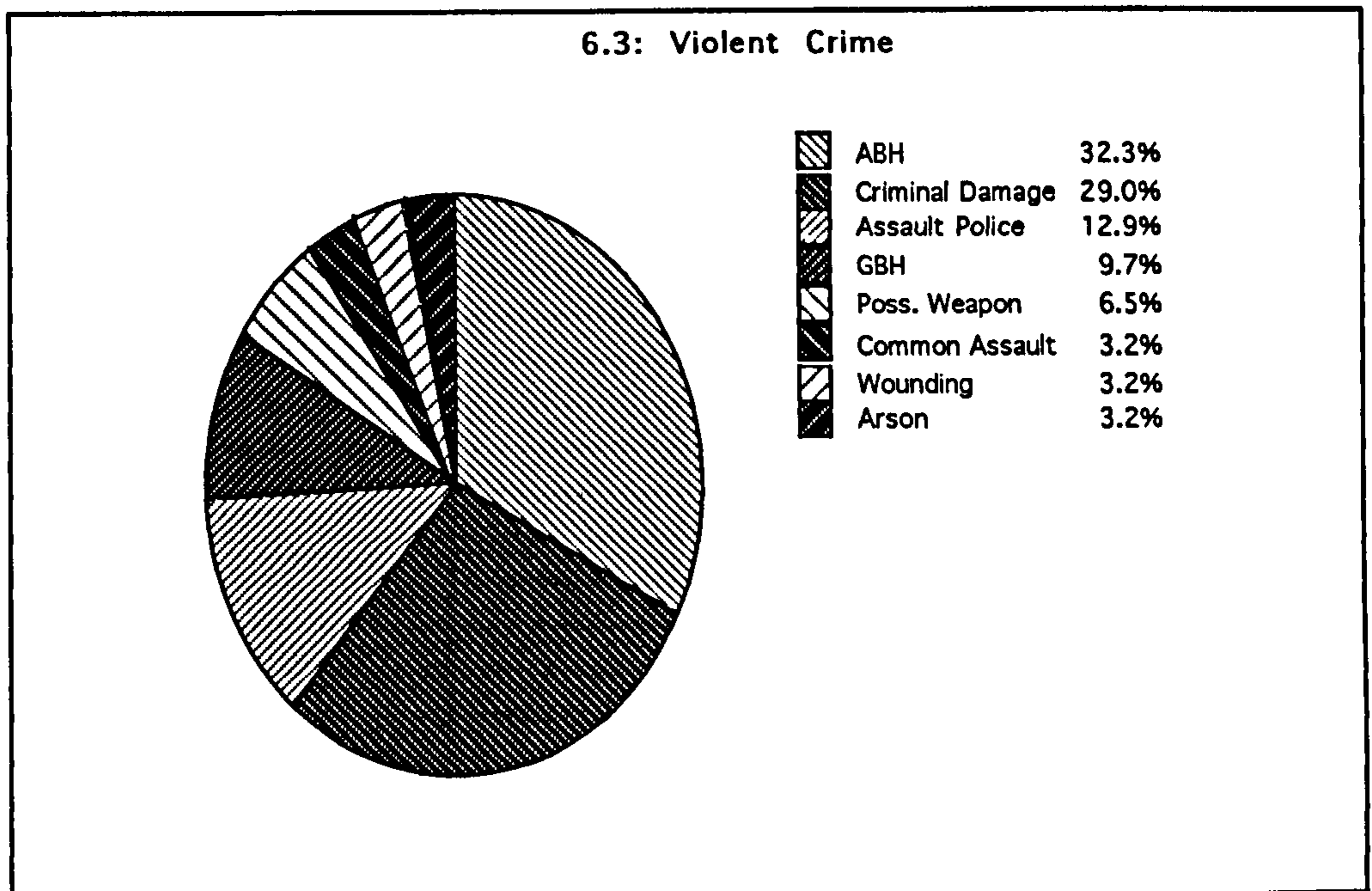
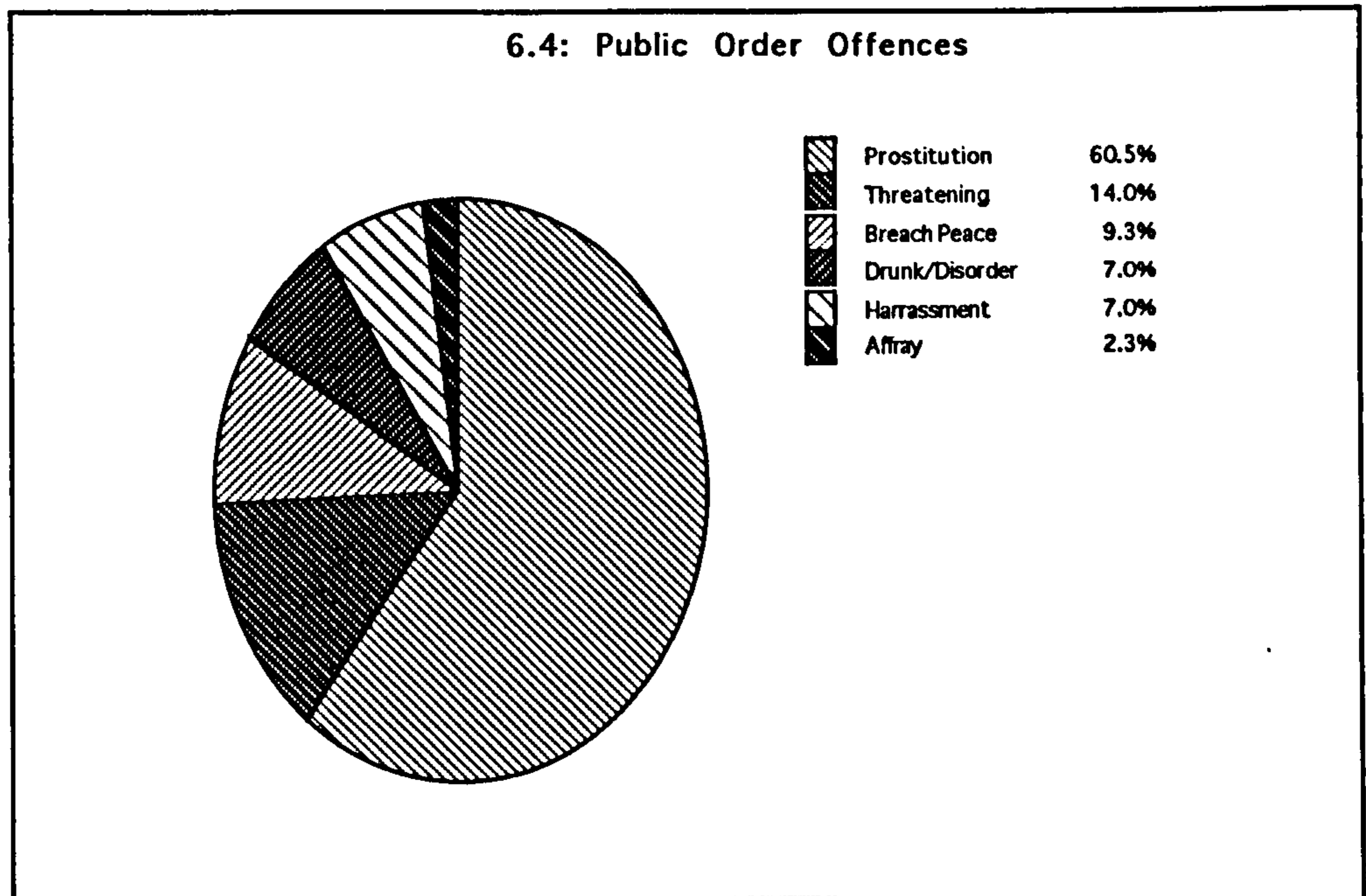


Chart 6.4 illustrates the various categories of public order offences and the percentage of women involved - these include those women charged with prostitution offences.



Sentences of the Court.

Table 6. 4: Sentences of the Court (on 33 women)

<u>No. of Women</u>	<u>Sentence</u>	<u>Total No of Sentences.</u>
21	Conditional Discharge	41
17	Fined	66
17	Cautions	25*
13	Probation Orders	27
6	Bound Over (To Keep the Peace)	8
5	Supervision Orders	5
3	To pay Compensation Only	4
3	Prison (suspended)	3
2	Prison	4
2	Community Service	8
2	Detention Centre	4
1	Youth Custody	3
1	Attendance Centre	1
		Total: 199

* This does not include cautions issued for prostitution offences.

For the vast array of offences committed by the 33 women, the most commonly dispensed sentences of the court were Conditional Discharges, Fines, Cautions and Probation orders.

Sentences of the Court: Prostitution.

Of the 40 women interviewed, 8 (20%) had been charged with soliciting - 4 had been charged on just one occasion; 4 had multiple convictions for soliciting.

In Total, 8 women had received a total of 26 convictions for prostitution. Again, the most commonly used sanctions were Fines, Probation and Conditional Discharges.

5 women had received a total of 13 Fines - ranging between £5 to £60; 7 women were given a Conditional Discharge; 6 women were placed on Probation.

Table 6.5: Sentences of the Court for Prostitution

<u>Name</u>	<u>No. of Convictions</u>	<u>Sentence</u>
Olivia	1	Conditional Discharge x 1
Jasmine	1	Conditional Discharge x 1
Marilyn	9	Conditional Discharge x 3; Probation x 1 Fined x 5
Belinda	2	Conditional Discharge x 1; Probation x 1
Fiona	1	Fined x 1
Raquel	8	Probation x 4; Fined x 4
Alexis	3	Conditional Discharge x 1; Fined x 2
Claudia	1	Fined x 1

Most of the women that had received these sentences were generally in the older age groups (the exceptions were Olivia and Jasmine) and most had received the sentences several years ago when they were much younger (in their late teens/early twenties). Without exception, all of the women who had been charged with the offence said that it had had absolutely no effect on their continuing in the prostitution business; for these women, the probation orders or fines were regarded as '...a waste of time' (Alexis) or '...just a f***ing nuisance' (Raquel).

'It Isn't A Crime!'

Perhaps not surprisingly, none of the 40 women regarded prostitution as a crime - indeed many did not believe that soliciting should be an offence. Objections were largely based firstly, on the argument that whilst women were unfairly picked on by the police, their clients - the men who paid for their services - were treated with relative impunity, and secondly, in relation to other offences, most notably shoplifting, prostitution was not seen as being so serious - either in its intent or by connotation:

...I'd rather work as a prostitute than get involved with anything like shoplifting - I haven't got the nerve to do that. I know that sounds like a contradiction but shoplifting is much more serious and this [prostitution] isn't so serious. It's not like it's a proper crime.

(Vicky)

...I don't regard what I do as a crime. Prostitution has been around for ever - it's the oldest trade in history, right? Cave men used to pay cave women - so how can it be crime?

(Imogen)

I don't see what I do as a crime; I give a decent service - most of us do. I don't think it's right that we [prostitutes] should have such a bad reputation - we're only providing what men are asking for.

(Marian)

...I hate doing this but it's better than shoplifting - I could never do that. I'd rather be called a prostitute than a thief. I see what I do as a job - it's hard work though - people don't realise that; they don't realise how much it takes out of you.

(Laura)

Although several of the women indicated an apparent abhorrence to being known as 'a thief', a notable exception to this was theft from the client.

Much has been made of the risk that the prostitute takes when she accepts business, but what about the client - what peril is he placed in? The most obvious and immediate threat is to his wallet. Several prostitutes (all in the younger age categories) cheerfully admitted that they routinely 'ripped off' their customers, in the full knowledge that the man would be highly unlikely to register a formal complaint with the police. Those prostitutes that did admit to robbing their clients painted a similar picture of the method of working:

I steal - that's how I make most of my money. While he [the client] is 'huffing and puffing' I go through his pockets; if we're in the car I can easily put my hand in his trouser pocket and easily take his wallet. Nobody has complained to the police about me - well they can't really can they? The other week I took this man back to a bedsit and while he still had his eyes shut I made off with his wallet. It had £800 in it - £800 - *can you believe it!!* - I was dead scared when I saw how much money there was, but I just took it and I ran all the way home. I don't feel guilty about it, why should I? Most of the men are dead mean - real tight bastards - they have a wallet full and yet they only give us £20. The men should pay more money.

(Chloe)

'Chloe' regarded these cash-only operations as her 'tip'.

It was difficult to estimate the number of offences/crimes made by prostitutes against their customers. The majority of the women interviewed vigorously denied that they would ever steal from their clients, indeed robbing the client was regarded by many, particularly in the older age groups, as the most heinous of crimes. Victims of such crimes (punters) did not normally complain - a lot of men would not want to actually admit that

they had been with a prostitute. As far as the police were concerned, an incident of this kind was treated as straightforward 'theft of cash'. Very occasionally a client had complained to the police but (in the experience of the DET) had usually ended up withdrawing their complaint because of the embarrassment factor; once it became apparent to the victim that details and statements of the incident were needed in order for the police to take any action, many aggrieved clients reneged on their complaints. It was not the case that the police could just arrest the offending prostitute and retrieve the stolen cash, or alternatively take the matter to court whilst the man remained anonymous.

Summary

None of the women interviewed regarded prostitution as a crime. When asked how they did classify or regard prostitution, three categories were arrived at: 16 (40%) of the women regarded prostitution as a 'job' (2 actually classed it as their 'career'); 13 (32.5%) regarded prostitution as a 'business' and 11 (27.5%) classed prostitution as a 'service' - though this latter did not appear to be based on an altruistic sense of compassion, rather on the cold hard fact that most of their clients were lonely men who, for a variety of reasons, were willing to pay considerable sums of money for the 'service' that they could not obtain in any other way.

The link between prostitution and involvement in other criminal activities was complex. Most of the women in the study (82.5%) had criminal records for offences other than prostitution, and some had received severe penalties from the court. It was evident that many of these women (60.6%) had committed some of these offences prior to commencing work as prostitutes; only 5 (15%) of the women had committed other criminal offences after starting in the prostitution business. 3 A frequent comment from the women was that one of the reasons they had turned to prostitution was because they knew that they '...wouldn't "get done" for it' - that is, they were perfectly well aware that the law was not rigorously enforced for the offence of soliciting. In essence, the cautioning system that operated (discussed in detail in Chapter Nine), rather than acting as a deterrent on their prostitution activities, seemed to have the effect of 'locking' them into the prostitution world - not only was prostitution an extremely lucrative business, it was also one where they were not liable to get arrested every

time they went to work. As such, prostitution - although a deviant lifestyle - provided them with the means for make quick and easy money but without incurring the wrath of the law. However, and this is perhaps the most important point, the resort to prostitution did not mean that the woman ceased to partake in other criminal activities. Rather, it could be seen that prostitution was a lucrative *addition* to their other activities.

¹ English penitentiary statistics showed whether female prisoners were prostitutes or not. Between the years 1894-1900, the percentage of prostitutes in the prison population was 15% of the total. In earlier years, there was a much higher percentage - between 1836-1854, 25.2% of the women convicted in London were prostitutes; between 1858-1862, 24.7% of the women convicted (in London) were prostitutes (Bonger, 1916:505). Even allowing for the fact that many women were convicted for the offence of prostitution itself (under the 'Vagrancy Act') and not for committing other offences, Bonger maintains that prostitutes did display a '...greater criminality'. Between 1843-1854, to each 100 persons of both sexes convicted of 'theft from person' in London, 36% were prostitutes (Bonger, 1916:505). European penitentiary statistics show that in Italy, out of 126,717 women convicted between 1891-1895, 1,949 (1.5%) were prostitutes - although 'occasional' prostitutes (constituting the biggest group) were grouped under another occupational heading. In a separate study, out of 460 young female criminals, 243 (52.8%) were prostitutes (Ferriani, '*Minderjährige Verbrecher*' cited Bonger, 1916:506).

² In an attempt to verify and validate the data, the responses and recollections of the women themselves were compared to official criminal records. This comparison revealed that, in the interviews, the women had been extremely honest about their criminal activities.

³ It would have been interesting to have examined the criminal records of the women who worked as prostitutes on an occasional basis to ascertain if there was any connection between prostitution and criminality. It would also have been interesting to have examined the criminal histories of (40) non prostitute women to establish why they have no involvement in prostitution. Although this would have been an extremely useful line of enquiry, an examination of this nature was beyond the scope of this study.

Red Light, Blue Light

Prostitutes, Punters and The Police in a Northern City

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE PROSTITUTES -

The 'Problems' of Prostitution

- A. A Dangerous Occupation: Violence Against Prostitutes*
- B. Coping With The Job: The 'Public' and The 'Private'*

CHAPTER SEVEN:

The Prostitutes - The 'Problems' of Prostitution.

A. 'A Dangerous Occupation': Violence Against Prostitutes.

Prostitution can be extremely dangerous. Streetwalkers are ready prey for muggers, drug addicts and other competing/rival prostitutes. Violence against prostitutes is well documented; murders are not infrequent. Violence by clients is an alarmingly regular part of the life. Silbert & Pines (1982) found that over three quarters of the 200 prostitutes they interviewed reported having been raped (cited Morris, 1987:66); of 76 prostitutes interviewed by James (1976), 64 reported being injured by customers; in a recent Norwegian study 19 out of 26 prostitutes had been exposed to varying degrees of violence (Hoigard & Finstad, 1992:57). Several of these studies have suggested that many instances of violence/rape against prostitutes are not reported to the police because: (a) women believe that they will not be taken seriously; (b) incidents that are reported to the police are not taken seriously because they are prostitutes and (c) women who do report crimes have to face the risk that *they* may be charged because they are committing an offence (of soliciting). 1

There is evidence that prostitute women complainants experience a different kind of treatment. In a Scottish survey, no prostitute who made a complaint of rape ever saw her complaint result in a prosecution; other complainers *thought* to be involved in prostitution also saw their complaints fall at any early stage (Chambers & Millar, 1983:89).

At both trial and pre-trial stages, the moral character of the victim comes under scrutiny; although a general embargo was placed on the use of sexual history evidence, for prostitute victims of rape, the issue of consent (often the central pivot in a rape trial) and her credibility is increased. 2

Assaults on Prostitutes in the 'Northern City'.

Of the 40 women interviewed in this study, 14 (35%) had been assaulted - physically attacked or mentally and verbally threatened by a customer.

Table 7.1: Assaults on Prostitutes.

<u>Number of Women</u>	<u>Nature of the Assault</u>
7	<i>Physically attacked (punched/kicked) or threatened with a weapon (screwdriver/knife).</i>
4	<i>Customers had "turned funny" on them - become verbally aggressive and abusive; drunken clients who had demanded their money back because they were not satisfied.</i>
2	<i>Serious Sexual Assault - Rape, Buggery</i>
1	<i>Handbag stolen.</i>

Most of the women were keen to talk about their experiences of assaults and bad incidents - with the exception of 'Olivia' who claimed never to have been attacked or had any problems whilst working. Furthermore, she believed that:

...it's a really stupid question to ask. The punter wants to do business, so why would he be horrible to me ?

(Olivia)

On the whole, the overwhelming impression was that assaults or having customers 'turn a bit funny' was just an accepted part of the job, and that very often it was more prudent to try to compromise or negotiate with the customer rather than try to ignite a potentially dangerous situation further.

Holly had been threatened by a customer:

...he said he wasn't satisfied and that he wanted his money back, but he was drunk and couldn't perform properly. That wasn't my fault. It wasn't fair to blame me but he started to turn really nasty so I gave him his money back.

(Holly)

Jessica recounted a similar experience:

...one bloke got a bit rough; he was drunk and said he wasn't satisfied. It was his fault not mine but he said he wanted his money back and started to get really vicious so I compromised and gave him half his money back - I wasn't happy about having to do that but it was the only way I could escape the situation.

(Jessica)

Several of the women recalled incidents that had clearly left more than just physical scars:

The punter held a screwdriver to my throat and threatened to stab me. He kept me locked in the car for nearly two hours and kept threatening me. Then he threw me out of the car and told me to run away quickly or else he would run me down. He didn't actually hurt me physically but he scared me so much that I didn't dare come out the next night in case he came back. He didn't pay me for the sex either.

(Natalie)

Megan had a client try to strangle her:

What can you do when a man has his hands around your throat? I think we should be allowed to carry knives just so we can protect ourselves. But, if we do anything like that it is called a dangerous weapon and we can get done for it. But what are we supposed to do?

(Megan)

For some of the women, their dilemma was compounded by other factors:

One bloke tried to f***ing kill me. When I tried to escape he hit me in the face and tried to trap my head in the electric window of his car. I was f***ing terrified because there was nothing I could do about it. In the end I just thumped him in the stomach and ran off as fast as I could. I can tell you, it really put the shits up me. I couldn't tell the police because I was only 15 at the time and would have gotten into more trouble than it was worth.

(Poppy)

Being attacked is part of the job. I fight back. I've been attacked twice, one man punched me, another bloke tried to strangle me. I couldn't tell the police - I was trying to rob him at the time.

(Chloe)

Assaults on Prostitutes: Attitudes and Responses of the Police in the City.

In 1993, 5 rapes of prostitutes were reported to the police in the 'Northern City'. This was regarded by the police as being slightly above average. However, the 5 rapes were committed by just 3 different men - all of whom were eventually apprehended and charged with various offences.

The fact that a prostitute actually reported an attack was enough for the police to take it seriously. Serious sexual assault - particularly rape and buggery, generated some sympathy for the individual concerned, especially if the woman had been physically beaten up as well.

The attitude of the police to some of the rapes appeared to have been divided along gender lines:

Once you say no, you say no - that is how it should be. It is more difficult to prove with a prostitute because they are there for that reason, but some of the attacks are very nasty. They maybe don't get as much sympathy from members of the public as 'innocent' victims; after all, they - the prostitutes - get in the car, they take the risk. Some assaults, even the men found some sympathy for them. Usually the men don't sympathise with *any* rape victim.

(DET officer female)

The attitude of the male officers was indeed less sympathetic. The male officers were totally motivated by the desire to 'get the blokes' responsible for the attacks; however, this motivation and attitude was inspired by the belief that the rapists needed to be caught lest they decided to pick on some 'innocent' woman. Amongst the male police officers there was the strong belief that the prostitutes were there to provide a service and that:

...they serve a purpose... If we cleared the streets of prostitutes, then where would all the perverts go ? If they [the perverts] can't vent their anger or feelings on prostitutes then they might choose some nice young girls and just drag them off the streets.

(DET officer male)

Following a reported assault, prostitutes received the same response as any victim of a sexual assault would receive. This included specialist Victim Liaison attention (both WPCs in the team were trained as victim liaison officers) provided by the police and the women would be put in touch with victim support and rape crisis. Whether or not a woman chose to contact professional help was up to them. The police were only able to do so much - the first 24 - 48 hours after an assault would be dedicated to doing medical examinations and taking statements. The police are not professional counsellors. Moreover, there were simply not enough female officers adequately trained or emotionally equipped to cope with the demand for their specialist skills.

The Effect of Rape

The effect of assault or rape on individual prostitutes was difficult to judge. While some of the victims stopped working on the patch as a direct result of the trauma suffered, most women appeared to continue working - indeed most went back out to work the following night. On a wider level, the effect of rapes and attacks on the other women working on the patch was rather curious. Attacks or rapes on the women, or news that a 'funny punter' was

going round would generate a collective solidarity amongst the women. Whilst this fieldwork was in progress, several women were the victims of serious assaults. Although during the period that these attacks were occurring most of the women said that they had been scared coming out that night, they still came. A climate of fear was not enough to render the women too frightened to abandon their activities. On the contrary, some of the women seemed to positively relish the extra attention that was inevitably focussed on the patch - interest from local newspapers or regional television programmes and the extra police patrolling the district to 'look after' them - all served to make them feel important and extra 'special'. A spate of attacks, along with the increased media attention, also had the effect of drawing people to the district - curious spectators undoubtedly lured by lurid headlines of a 'dangerous sex pervert' being on the prowl and committing 'terrifying and bizarre assaults on vice girls'. 3

The police did not think that most of the prostitutes were '...unduly traumatized' by rapes - in their experience, most started working again within a few days of an assault. As to the kind of reception that prostitute victims of rape could expect in the court process, the official view of the police was that prostitutes would get a fair hearing in court and that their records as prostitutes should not be of any significance. Privately, police officers suggested that:

...prostitutes - don't stand a chance in court. They get no sympathy whatsoever because as soon as evidence is given that she has been standing in a red light district trying to get some punters, the court - the jury - they usually think that she has been "asking for it" .

(DET officer -female)

It was generally acknowledged by the police that many attacks - perhaps the vast majority of them - were not formally reported. Individual officers in the DET (particularly the female officers) would be told about a 'funny punter' or given details of an assault, but on the whole most women did not seem keen to make a formal complaint. The main deterrent appeared to be the trauma of a possible court appearance and the almost inevitable publicity that such a case would attract. Informal reports that were made (usually whilst the police were doing their rounds) were usually made in the vain hope that the police would be able to get them their money. In the course of this research, from interviews with the women, it did become apparent that if a punter had sex with a prostitute and then refused to pay her, this was

ostensibly fraud or obtaining sex under false pretences and was classed as an assault by the prostitutes. Many of the prostitutes actually defined incidents of this nature as rape. 4 On one occasion, one of the women flagged down the police car; she appeared to be in some considerable distress. She said that she had been 'raped' the night before by one of her customers. It transpired that he (the punter) had had sex with her but had not paid her. In her view, this was rape - she had agreed to the transaction (the business) but the client had, in effect, then reneged on his part of the agreement and refused to pay her. In essence, it appeared that to some prostitutes, 'rape' comprised rather more than just a physical violation, rather it was the violation of the *agreement of consent* to have sex in exchange for money. It was the breach of trust - the failure by the client to keep to his part of the bargain (that which had been agreed to in the transaction - the type of sex, the amount of money), which violated the agreement of consent and which could lead some of the prostitutes to classify such an incident as 'rape'. On this particular occasion, when asked by the police officer if she wished to pursue the incident and make a formal complaint against the man, the woman said that she did not want to report the incident 'properly', she just wanted the police to '...put the frighteners on the bloke' - and if possible get her money. 5 In general, 'informal' reportings were always noted by the police and, if a number of incidents were all reported in the same period, then the matter would be pursued further. The police would certainly endeavour to discover the identity of the 'funny punter' and, if any information did come to light and he was spotted on the patch, then he would be given a 'gypsy's warning' (a 'good talking to - enough to put the fear of God into him'). Technically, if an offence was not formally reported to the police they were powerless.

Prostitutes Perceptions of Police Attitudes, Response and Effectiveness.

Of the 14 women who had been assaulted by a client, only 5 had officially reported the incident to the police. These 5 women had differing views on how their problem had been dealt with and on general police effectiveness in dealing with their report. 4 said that if they were attacked again they would report the matter to the police again; 1 woman said that she would not involve the police again and generally did not feel that her complaint had been taken seriously or dealt with effectively. *

'Rose' was the victim of a serious physical assault; she had nothing but

praise for the police:

One of my regulars - he turned a bit funny, he went all obsessed. When I told him I wasn't going to see him anymore he broke into my house and beat me up. I was very badly beaten up and it still makes me shake when I think about it. The police were real good to me; they came round real quick and knew that it was serious. They were real kind and sorted it out straight away. They caught the bloke.

(Rose)

When she was in her early teens 'Marilyn' was raped. (This was by the client of her sister (a working prostitute), who had assumed that Marilyn was also working as a prostitute. The case study provides fuller details). Although Marilyn had reported the incident to the police, for various reasons, the police did not pursue the case. Despite this experience, she was sure that this would not deter her from reporting other incidents to the police:

If a man is going to rape me then he is going to rape me, there's not much I can do about it. It's happened to me before so it doesn't bother me anymore. I would tell the police, of course I would - it's alright if it happens to me, I'm used to it, but it might happen to someone else who isn't used to it so you have to tell the police so that they can catch the bloke .

(Marilyn)

On the negative side:

...one bloke tried to strangle me. I told the police but they never did anything. They're useless. They're supposed to protect us but they never do anything. When we're trying to do business they swarm round everywhere giving us all a hard time and putting the punters off, and yet when you're being attacked or need some help, they're not around or they're not interested.

(Amy)

Of the 9 women who had been the victim of an assault but who had not reported the incident to the police, only 3 said that they would report any future incidents though with some reservations:

...with the vice, it depends who's on duty; some of them are horrible - bitchy and sarcastic - their attitude is that we deserve it. We could get murdered in front of them and they wouldn't care.

(Megan)

Several other women also expressed little confidence in the police:

The police are dickheads - f***ing useless. They wouldn't do anything to help us if we're in trouble. They drive round and round and observe us and think that we don't notice, that we can't see them but we can - we watch them more than they watch us.

(Holly)

Several women expressed the concern that because they had a poor relationship with the police, it completely negated any hope of the police ever taking an assault seriously, or acting fairly towards them:

...I don't like the police at all. I don't like any of them - not the social people, not probation officers, no-one. They're all useless. I've been done for assaulting a police officer but it was blown out of all proportion, it should never have gone to court, he just liked the idea of picking on me; he made a meal out of it. I don't stand a chance against the police. I can't charge him for picking on me can I? Once you've got a bad record, that's it - they pick on you forever.

(Fiona)

The police are bastards, I hate them. They're always picking on me I've been down the road [prison] for smacking a police officer, so they pick on me more. They're out to pick me up for the smallest thing.

(Jessica)

...I was hit by a customer once, but I always carry a penknife in my bag so I just got that out and threatened to cut his balls off, so he threw me out of the car and I ran off real quick. I didn't, and I wouldn't ever, tell the police because they just don't care. I don't like them - one called me a slag and a tart so I told him to f*** off so he nicked me for assault. The male vice are real posers - they think they can say anything they like to us and they know that we can't do or say anything back. The minute we do, they hassle us and charge us with something.

(Cindy)

Summary.

Irrespective of any previous experience of being assaulted, all 40 women were asked what they would do if (at any time in the future) they were attacked or assaulted by a client. 24 (60%) of the women said that if they were attacked or assaulted by a client they would report the matter to the police, although many suggested that it would depend on the nature and severity of the attack. Whilst the majority of these women believed that the police would take the matter seriously, several did not think that the police would do anything about it. 16 (40%) of the women interviewed said that if they were the victim of an assault or attack by a client, they would not inform the police - irrespective of the gravity of the assault.

It should not be assumed that prostitutes who were the victims of attacks by clients always received sympathy and understanding from other prostitutes working on the patch. On the contrary, some of the more seasoned 'regular' prostitutes tended to be irritated by all the attention that was inevitably focussed on both the women (invariably described as the 'vice girls' by the local media) and on the clients (invariably classed as 'sex perverts' by the local media). Following a spate of attacks on the patch one woman summed up her feelings about the dangers of the job:

The women [who get attacked] are stupid, totally stupid. They ask for it. You should always agree beforehand what is on offer and only accept if you are going to be in control. I would never agree to be handcuffed - I would handcuff a client, but never the other way round. I need to be in control. That's what prostitution is all about - being in control of men.

(Harriet)

B. *Coping With the Job: The 'Public' and the 'Private'*

It is well documented that prostitutes develop a set of 'beliefs' to counteract the social stigma attached to their way of life. Jackman (1963) maintains that this set of beliefs becomes part of their 'psychic equipment' which allows them to continue in the life and which they can use to retaliate against the larger society which has negative values and attitudes towards them (Jackman, 1963:135). This rationalization and justification manifests in several ways: firstly, prostitutes believe that they are essentially no worse than any other people, they are simply less hypocritical; secondly, prostitutes believe that society does not really despise them (Jackman, 1963:136) and finally, the ideology of the prostitute contains justifications based upon functionalist premises (prostitution is needed), and that as it is a necessary therapeutic practice, it should not be stigmatized. This last point was emphasized by Bryan (1968) who suggests that this functionalist stance helps reduce moral conflicts and serves as a defence mechanism against public stigma (Bryan 1968:288-289). The 'social code' they develop is to counteract the condemnation and hypocrisy that they face. On the other hand, Deutsch (1946) claims that prostitutes are so spiritually and morally weak and so totally oblivious of society's condemnation of them that:

...even the simplest moral laws have absolutely no influence on these women ... sanctions express values that are completely alien to them.
 (Deutsch 1946:207)

Of the 40 prostitutes interviewed, 9 (22.5%) of the women said that they actually enjoyed, or at least didn't mind, 'being a prostitute' - either the work aspect of it or the stigma associated with the label:

I don't mind what people think because the money is so good. Sometimes I get a bit annoyed with people turning their noses up at us, but on the whole I don't care. I'd find it hard to give up simply because of the financial benefits.

(Molly)

I don't mind the work at all. I like to give a good service - the men are paying enough for it so I reckon that they deserve to get the best. It's a hard life but I don't regret starting at all. Prostitution is addictive so it would be hard to give up.

(Harriet)

The majority of the women - 31 (77.5%) - said that with the exception of the financial rewards, they did not enjoy any aspect of the prostitution business. Although it was difficult attempting to quantify the subjective expressions of the women an attempt to classify the 'worst aspects' of 'being a prostitute', produced the following categories (some women suggested that there were several, interrelated disagreeable aspects):

Table 7.2: Coping With The Job

<u>The Aspect</u>	<u>1st choice</u>	<u>2nd choice</u>
<i>The Sex; The Clients</i>	15	4
<i>Having to stand on the Street</i>	11	3
<i>Police harrassment</i>	2	2
<i>The Danger from 'perverts' and 'weirdos'</i>	2	-
<i>Public Comments and Ridicule</i>	1	4
Total	31	

Given the catalogue of pitfalls - physical, emotional and psychological - that working as a prostitute seemed to engender, the question had to be asked 'How do you cope with being a prostitute?' The adoption of complex defence mechanisms appeared to have the objective of dichotomizing their world and

creating a clearly defined split between the 'public' and the 'private' self.

Coping strategies and mechanisms were clearly directed *towards* the clients (specifically the sexual act itself); *against* the public (particularly the ridicule and comments that had to be endured - both real and imagined); and towards themselves - a *self defence mechanism* aimed at protecting, and deceiving, the self from the reality of being a prostitute.

Coping with the Clients: Sex, Deception and Putting on a Show

It's a business. There's nothing in it for me pleasurewise - I fake and pretend a lot for the client - that's what they pay for - but I never get any actual enjoyment. I get on with it and get it over with as quickly as possible. I'm not a criminal for doing this - I do what men pay for, I don't enjoy it, but it's my life, my choice.

(Belinda)

I just switch off, I don't get involved, I don't want to know their name or anything. I just get in the car, do the business and go home. I just don't think about it.

(Vicky)

...I never let anyone touch my body. My body is my own, I'm in control of it. When I'm with a punter, I say what goes - what he can and can't do, and they never, ever touch me. I cannot stand anyone touching my body .

(Imogen)

Some women seemed to quite clearly struggle to reconcile their conflicting thoughts about working in prostitution:

...I'm not ashamed of what I do. I know people make remarks but I take a great deal of pride in what I do ... I wear different wigs to cover up my real identity, I use them so I can disguise myself, block out what I'm really doing. When I put on the wig and the short skirt I become a different person. I try to fool myself, I suppose.

(Beryl)

Being a prostitute is a bit like being an actress - you know, whatever the weather, however you're feeling, the show must go on - you come out, stand there, smile and do the business - it is like being an actress ... I know people snigger and I hate that. It takes a lot of guts to work down here - even after a couple of years I still have to 'psych' myself up to do it. I have to have quite a few drinks before I start - you know, for 'Dutch Courage' -and then when I've finished for the night I go home, have a few more drinks, a long hot bath and I just try to forget about what I've been doing.

(Sasha)

When it comes to the actual sex I just blank my mind off completely. I pretend I'm someone else. I pretend I'm somewhere else. I don't get any pleasure from the sex. Never. I always pretend I'm having a good time and that my client is brilliant because men have to have their egos massaged - you have to make them think they are brilliant. Their wives don't make them think they are anymore, so they come to us - they pay us to make them feel better about themselves. It isn't hard detaching myself from the actual sex; my husband always said I was a cold-hearted bitch who never felt anything. I said to him "well at least I'm getting paid for it now" .

(Beryl)

Would you like men using you all the time ? I'm not ashamed of what I do - if I was then I wouldn't do it. When I get depressed I need sex. Sex cheers me up, makes me feel better, that's why I work so much.

(Imogen)

The purpose of some of the strategies adopted - blanking out, pretending they were somewhere else, pretending they were *someone else* , forbidding certain parts of the body to be touched (retaining them as 'private') wearing wigs and special prostitute clothes ('we have to dress like "tarts"'), all appeared to have been deployed with the aim of depersonalizing their prostitute role and disassociating themselves from it, particularly the sexual act itself. 6 The crucial question was, did these strategies of 'depersonalization' and 'disassociation' work? Did they allow any of the women to retain any self respect or enable them to follow a 'private' life? The deep self contempt expressed by many women suggested that the effect of working in the prostitution business made it difficult for women to rebuild a positive self image or establish any semblance of 'normal' stable relationships.

Clients and 'proper' Relationships

The effect on relationships that working in the prostitution business had, was outlined by several of the women:

...I haven't had a 'proper' relationship since I started working. One of the drawbacks of the job is that it puts you right off sex and relationships. The sex has made me cold and hard hearted. I don't think I'll get married now - anyway who'd want to know me once they'd found out what I do - how would you explain this to a boyfriend?

(Vicky)

The worst thing about this job is that it makes you cold and hard - that is one of the pitfalls. When you're involved with someone, when you love them, the sex is different, you know, you can enjoy it because you feel for the man, but in this job you just get in the car, take the money and do the business and get it over with as quickly as possible. I really do hate men.

(Laura)

Standing on the Street

One third of the 31 women suggested that having to stand on the street was one of the worst aspects of the prostitution business; having to endure public ridicule and adverse public comment also ranked highly on the list of unpleasant elements of the job.

There's nothing good about what I do, it's dirty and degrading. The worst thing is having men touch me. I hate it. Also, it isn't very nice standing on the street in the f***ing cold and rain and having perverts staring at you and touching you. There are lots of perverts going round and we are the ones that have to put up with them. It's easy for people to say that I shouldn't do this, but what else am I supposed to do? You try living on the money that 'the social' give out.

(Megan)

I hate having to stand on the street - even though I've been working for ages, I hate having to walk on to the patch. I don't think you ever get used to it - having to stand there, looking like a tart and having everyone know that I'm prostitute. That's the worst bit - having everyone know that that is what I am.

(Alexis)

I hate standing out here; I hate it when people drive round and round and throw stones or call me names. People are wrong to do that - one day they might need a prostitute to keep them company. I want to stop working, I want a proper job - so far all I have ever done is cleaning and whoring.

(Martina)

It is easy money. It is. It's not glamorous or anything though. It's a hard life and a horrible way to make money. Mostly it's standing out in the freezing cold and pissing wet and having to put up with perverts staring at us and horrible old men wanting to paw me all over.

(Trudie)

Coping With the Public

It's a hard life, very hard, the work makes you hard and cold and mistrustful. Most people think that prostitutes are the worst people on earth so we suffer for that.

(Marilyn)

The attitude of the public doesn't bother me anymore. It used to - I used to care about what people thought of me but now I don't care - I just get on with my life and let everyone else think what they want to. Some of the public are okay; some are nice and friendly and say hello; some don't say anything, or they stare at us when they walk past; some are really horrid when they drive round, they say things, call us names and throw things. I try not to care but I suppose in a way it does effect me. I'm just doing a job and I don't see why I should have to put up with a lot of shit from people who don't know anything about me.

(Laura)

One of the worst things is some of the things that we have to put up with - the things people say. It hurts. People make remarks in front of us as if we can't hear them. I get quite upset sometimes but I've had to learn to develop a thick skin. Don't get me wrong I suppose I can understand why people get angry about us - what we do isn't very nice - I wouldn't want that kind of thing going on outside my front door, so I can understand why local residents get so angry about it, but people should see things from my point of view, I don't want to be a prostitute for ever - I'd like to get a good job and do something positive with my life.

(Vicky)

Coping with the Family

Nowhere was the struggle to retain the boundaries between the 'public' and the 'private' more acute than in the area of family life. For most of the women, this was a most sensitive issue.

Parental Awareness - A Well Kept Secret

15 of the women said that their parents were not aware of their involvement in prostitution. 10 women came from 'cohesive' family backgrounds (where their parents were married); 9 of these said that although they enjoyed a good relationship with their parents, they did not feel able to tell them of their involvement in the prostitution scene. Although one woman said that her relationship with her parents was poor and she had little contact with them, she would still not like them to discover that she worked as a prostitute. In general, most of the women expressed fears that their family would find out about their involvement in the business - most of their anxiety revolved around the sense of shame that their parents would feel should they discover their daughters well kept secret.

I'm terrified in case my family find out. I'm very close to both my parents and they would be very, very hurt if they were to discover that I do this kind of thing. It would kill them - they would be hurt and ashamed.

(Vicky)

I come from a real good home - even when I got pregnant my parents were real good about it, they were helpful, gave me money and stuff for the baby. They still do. They wouldn't be *quite* so understanding if they found out about this.

(Tanya)

My mother would be horrified if she found out. She brought me up to be clean. They live in a 'posh' area. I can't imagine how they would react if they found out about this. They'd kill me. They'd disown me. My mother would be disgusted.

(Sasha)

5 of the women came from homes where their parents were divorced. Although most said that they did not get on with either parent, they were still concerned that their family members did not discover their secret:

...my family don't know about this - *are you kidding !!* It would kill my mother if she found out. My old man [father] probably wouldn't care that much - he ain't exactly father of the year - he's more concerned about his bird [girlfriend] than me. Everyone else in the family [siblings] have got real good jobs and houses and everything. They would *murder me* if they found out.

(Poppy)

What's The Point in Pretending ?

13 of the women said that their parents were aware that they worked as prostitutes. 9 of these women enjoyed a good relationship (got on well) with both parents.

...everyone knows what I do. I don't try to hide it - what would be the point ? They see me coming down here, dressed like this, so it's fairly obvious - what' s the point in pretending otherwise?

(Carly)

Of the 13 that said their parents were aware, 4 said that their parents had found out as a direct result of the police informing them of their activities. (This was largely due to the requirement that a 'responsible adult' be informed/present at the time of cautioning for those under the age of 17).

My mum found out when I was brought in [to the police station]. She wasn't that bothered, but dad went crazy when he found out. He hates me for doing this, he thinks it is a filthy thing to do and he worries that the neighbours will find out. He says that as long as I don't take trouble home with me then he won't throw me out. He'd rather I didn't work but he can't do anything to stop me, so he doesn't even bother trying now.

(Amy)

In general, most of the women said that they would have preferred it if their parents had not found out that they worked. However, it would appear that parental awareness of their involvement in prostitution, had not unduly negatively affected their relationship with their parents.

Partners Awareness and Reaction

Of the 16 women who were involved in a steady relationship (including the married woman), 10 said that their partners were aware that they worked as prostitutes:

My husband knows that I work. He has found the whole thing very difficult to take. On the first night when I came out he cried, he still cries every night before I come out. He hates me working, but we need the money so I have to.

(Natalie)

My boyfriend was furious when he found out I worked and he finished with me. We're back together again now. He doesn't like me working - he thinks it is disgusting, but he hasn't got a job so he lets me work - just once a month. He said that as long as I don't get charged and have to go to court and get fined, then it's okay for me to work.

(Tessa)

My fella and me, we live in sin but we don't get on. We really just live in the same house - we don't sleep together or anything. He knows I work. I don't care what he thinks. He probably doesn't care. We're not married so I can come and go as I please - he can do the same. It's funny really, I've ended up living in sin with a man I don't love and having sex with men I don't know.

(Monica)

6 women said that their partners were not aware that they worked as prostitutes. For some, keeping their activities a secret was a strain, moreover, the deception required some not inconsiderable ingenuity.

My boyfriend, I've been with him for seven months. He knows that I worked before but he doesn't know that I still work - he thinks I've given it up. He'd kill me if he found out - that would be the end of it, he wouldn't want anything more to do with me.

(Trudie)

All my kids know that I work - I thought I would tell them myself before someone else did. They don't like the idea of what I do and they worry about me but I told them I need the money and that's all there is to it .

(Rose)

...I've been going with my bloke for two months now. I like him a lot. It's hard trying to keep this a secret. If he was to find out then he'd chuck me for sure. He thinks prostitutes are terrible people - real cows - the worst people on earth. I don't know what he thinks I do on the nights when I don't see him. If he was to drive past on a night when I'm down here [on the patch] - *I'd just die* - I'd have to make an excuse up real quick and hope he believed it, he'd never, ever forgive me - he'd hate me.

(Marilyn)

Summary

Despite the obvious pitfalls of the work, most of women did admit that, for a variety of reasons, they would find it very difficult to stop working. The financial benefits were the most obvious reason for remaining in, or, in some case, returning to, the life.

...prostitution is addictive, well the money is, most of us just can't resist the money.

(Sasha)

...I don't mind the work, some of the punters are a bit of a pain, and the police are arseholes, but I wouldn't like a proper job. It's the money I'm addicted to - I can't give that up. You can earn so much that if you leave the business for just a week then you miss it. I can live without the sex part of it, but the money - *never* !

(Jessica)

Several women claimed that although they were eager to escape from the life of prostitution, they would have no qualms whatsoever about returning should the need arise. Not only was it 'easy money', but it was an 'easy option' - one that was always available.

¹ The English Collective of Prostitutes (ECOP) claim that in the case of the 'Yorkshire Ripper' Enquiry, the police deliberately made the distinction between prostitute victims and 'respectable' and 'innocent' victims thereby downgrading the murder of prostitutes (James & Neale, 1982:2). Although Peter Sutcliffe (the Yorkshire Ripper) initially killed prostitutes, it was only when an apparently 'respectable' woman was murdered that Bradford Police published a poster saying 'the next victim may be innocent' (cited Morris, 1987:81). At the time of the trial, the Attorney General Sir Michael Havers said of the victims: '...some were prostitutes, but perhaps the saddest aspect of the case is that some were not. The last six attacks were on totally respectable women' (James & Neale, 1982:3).

² Although the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 1976, Section 2 placed a general embargo on the use of sexual history evidence, Section 2 permits the defence to apply for leave to include it, therefore leaving the judge to decide whether it would be unfair to the defendant to exclude such evidence (Temkin, 1987:121). A comprehensive study of the use of sexual history in the rape trials of prostitutes (and its impact) would be a useful addition to the literature.

³ These were the headlines appearing in the local evening newspaper of the 'Northern City' 12th, 13th, April 1993.

⁴ The definition of rape as contained in the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 1976 has 5 constituent elements. There must be (1) sexual intercourse (2) with a woman which is (3) unlawful and which takes place (4) without her consent and (5) knowingly or recklessly (Temkin, 1987:25).

⁵ Many of the incidents of rape or other incidents of assault/violence, tended to involve women who worked as prostitutes on an 'occasional' basis. Almost all the prostitutes who worked on a 'regular' basis always took the money first and so this problem of definition tended not to apply. Clearly the issue of consent is a legal minefield in cases of rape involving prostitutes.

⁶ Previous research has noted similar defence strategies - Rolph, 1955:77; Jackman, 1963:142; Hoigard & Finstad, 1992:64-74.

Red Light, Blue Light

Prostitutes, Punters and The Police in a Northern City

CHAPTER EIGHT: THE PUNTERS

A. Theories and Explanations

B. Kerb-crawling in a Northern City

CHAPTER EIGHT: The Punters

Common sense would seem to dictate that if men did not buy sex, prostitution, as a profession would cease to exist. Essential to an understanding of prostitution then is the role of the client. Fundamental questions need to be addressed - *why* do men buy sex? *what* are men actually looking for in prostitution? *what* does prostitution actually *offer and provide* - sexual variety, sexual diversity, sexual fantasy? Is mere sexual gratification all that is sought, or is the role of prostitution more 'therapeutic' - is it conversation and companionship that is really being sought? *What sort* of men buy sex? Is there such a thing as a *typical* client? One of the problems of trying to answer these fundamental questions is that the world of prostitution is shrouded in secrecy. Research on the motives of clients is limited. Most men will not tell anyone that they patronise prostitutes. The secrecy and, for some, the guilt and shame associated with the buying of sexual favours, and the implicit assumption that men who buy sex are in some way 'peculiar' or deficient or inadequate both sexually *and* socially, has meant that the world of the client is largely uncharted territory. What is well documented - and largely taken for granted - is the 'fact' that men *need* and demand sex and that women supply it.

A. Theories and Explanations.

The Ideology of Male Sexual Needs

Largely, it seems, women have sexual attractiveness while men have sexual urges. Prostitution is there for the needs of the male hunchback - no-one asks how the female hunchback manages.

(McIntosh, 1978:54)

The assumption that sex, for the male, is '...doubtless a necessity' (Bonger, 1916: 323) was (and still is), based on the deeply rooted belief that:

...the satisfaction of the sexual desires is one of the most important needs of the majority of men.

(Bonger, 1916:323)

and:

...it is impossible to exaggerate the force of sexual desire ... the desire for sexual intercourse is strongly felt by the male on attaining puberty, and continues through his life as an ever present, sensible want.

(Acton, 1857:114)

Further, in men:

...the sexual desire is inherent and spontaneous ... in the other sex,
the desire is dormant if not non-existent.

(W.R.Greg, 1883:456-457)

In the 19th Century, the assumption that sex for the male was essential was, in part, derived from, and compounded by, the widely held belief that abstinence could be injurious to health and well-being:

...sexual abstinence is infinitely more unnatural, in fact it is so unnatural and therefore sinful, that it is totally incompatible with health and happiness.

(in Royston Pike, 1967:365)

On the whole, the medical profession was divided on the question of whether men should abstain or indulge in pre-marital sex. Two distinct opinions prevailed: one advocated sexual indulgence on the grounds that the sexual organs, like all other organs, were subject to the laws of exercise and, as such:

...it is a duty and a necessity to give them exercise from the age of puberty till their decline.

(Drysdale 1861 cited Cominos, 1963:45)

The other strand of medical opinion denied the 'sexual atrophy leads to impotence' argument and advocated sexual continence to the age of twenty-five to be followed by early marriage (Cominos, 1963:45). The 'detrimental' effect (of abstaining from sex) was regarded not only as a problem for the individual male, but also the for nation and the very essence of humanity as we know it:

...imagine what life would be like without sex. The homes, cities, economic life and government would virtually disappear. Men cannot do without women. Even if it were possible for men to beget and bear children, they could still not do without women.

(Luther, in Bullough, 1976: 432)

Just as well then that prostitution exists as an ever available resource for those unable to find sexual satisfaction in any other relationship. According to Davis (1965):

...when all other sources of gratification fail, due to defects of person or fortuitous circumstances, prostitution can be relied upon to furnish relief.

(Davis, 1965:274)

The problem with this convenient scenario is that it does not address the question of why only *some* men buy sex - for the vast majority of men almost certainly do not resort to prostitutes - nor is prostitution confined to the

unmarried, the unattractive, the emotionally insecure or the perverse.

Why Do Men Buy Sex: Theories and Explanations.

At the turn of the century it was recognised that the prostitute was:

...more than a channel to drain off superfluous energy ... the motive is not one of uncomplicated lust.

(Ellis, 1906:295-296)

More recent conventional explanations in the literature suggest that men resort to prostitutes for a number of reasons - indeed, clients motives for hiring prostitutes appear to be as complex and diverse as those motivating women into the profession. 1

Explanations can be grouped into two main categories: (1) customers who patronise prostitutes for 'practical' or 'temporary pragmatic' reasons and (2) clients who patronise prostitutes because of some psychological or associated disabilities - physical, mental and emotional.² The first category might encompass (a) men who either temporarily or permanently are without women, such as salesmen and servicemen ³ (b) unmarried men/youths who may resort to prostitutes for sexual initiation and (c) married men. In this case, men may resort to prostitutes because they are separated geographically from their wives; the wife may be ill, pregnant or post partum. Sex with a prostitute may offer a welcome change from the monotony of monogamy; a prostitute may offer variety and be willing to do things that a wife will not. With a prostitute there are no complications - no worries about pregnancy, no obligation, no emotional commitment.⁴ For some, it is the very anonymity of the encounter which appeals. Davis (1965) suggests that it is the impersonality and simplicity of prostitution and '...the prostitute's availability to strangers which is one of her strongest appeals' (Davis, 1965:275).

The idea that prostitution is an integral part of the marriage system is a popular theme. Hoffinger (1847) claimed that the problem of prostitution was, in reality, the problem of marriage and that prostitution could only be reformed by reforming marriage (Hoffinger, 1847 cited Ellis, 1906:364). Bonger (1916) maintained that:

...since monogamy does not proceed from innate inclination, prostitution is a necessary correlate of marriage.

(Bonger, 1916:322)

Ellis (1906) believed that without prostitution the marriage system would fall to pieces. According to Ellis, prostitution was '...not so much the indispensable concomitant of marriage as an essential part of the whole system' (Ellis, 1906:254-255). The reason was:

...that wives have become incapable of becoming the sexual mates of their husbands. The husbands, without being carried away by any impulse of strong passion or any desire for infidelity, seek abroad what they cannot find at home.

(Ellis, 1906:296)

Moreover, Ellis (1906) argued that not only was prostitution the buttress of the marriage system, but marriage itself was, in certain respects, a form of prostitution (Ellis, 1906:363). Furthermore, prostitution had certain advantages over marriage:

...the prostitute is really paid extremely well considering how little she gives in return; the wife is really paid extremely badly considering how much she necessarily gives up. The prostitute never signs away the right over her own person as the wife is compelled to do so; the prostitute retains her freedom and personal rights'.

(Ellis, 1906:364). 5

Davis (1965) believed that the family was the bulwark of society, but:

...the attempt of society to control sexual expression and tie it to social requirements [marriage, child rearing] ... creates the opportunity for prostitution.

(Davis, 1965:275-276)

In other words, social values - notably marital restraints, the insistence on monogamous marriage, the condemnation of extra marital sex - lead to:

...the craving for sexual variety, for perverse gratification (and this) all can be demanded from the woman whose interest lies solely in the price.

(Davis, 1965:275-276)

However, Davis (1965) does not see prostitution as a threat to the family, rather he suggests that it *complements* the institution of the monogamous nuclear family. He seems to be suggesting that some prostitution is a good thing - a purely commercial transaction which poses no threat to family ties. Quite whether prostitution is the safety valve of marriage is a debatable point. The image of the prostitute as the saviour of the marriage system will no doubt sit uneasily with those (feminists) who argue that marriage is legalized prostitution. However, numerous accounts of prostitutes suggest that men do resort to their services for physical and mental relief and

sympathy, and because of marital and economic troubles:

...the release of talking about an unhappy home situation may well have saved many a marriage, and possibly even lives when nerves have been strained to breaking point.

(Anon, 1959:16)

The second category of clients may encompass: (a) men who are physically and mentally handicapped or disabled. In other words, for those men who are unable to compete with other males in winning female sexual partners '... the availability of prostitutes is a real blessing' (Benjamin & Masters, 1964:194) and (b) men who have perverse sexual requirements - sadomasochistic tendencies or otherwise unusual or 'special' services.⁶ Psychoanalytic thinking suggests that prostitutes and their clients are mentally disturbed or are likely to be '...sexually defective or inadequate in one respect or another' (Atkinson, 1965:105). Gibbens & Silberman (1960) found that men who went *only* to prostitutes tended to be passive men, often of good general character, living at home with a dominant mother and a father either dead or of no account. Men who went to prostitutes *and* to other women tended to be more aggressive and came from disturbed and unstable backgrounds; their social relationships were frequently considered to be shallow (Prins, 1980). Esselstyn (1968) maintains that most clients are motivated to seek out prostitutes because of basic mother hatred (Esselstyn, 1968:119). In essence, the relationship between prostitute and client could be seen to be mutually exploitative - the psychoanalytic theory that the woman needs to debase the father figure is matched by the suggestion that the man needs to debase the mother figure in the form of a prostitute (Rolph, 1955:85). The overwhelming suggestion underpinning conventional explanations suggests that because many prostitutes come from similar backgrounds to their clients, there is likely to be a certain mutuality of attraction and response (Prins, 1980).

How Many Men Buy Sex?

Trying to establish how many men resort to prostitutes is difficult not least because of the secrecy attached to the transaction. In a survey (1991) of prostitutes in Birmingham, an AIDS prevention project called 'Safe' monitored the range and activities of over 1000 women working as prostitutes. The researchers found that the women averaged 22 clients per week. By estimating that 1200 prostitutes worked in Birmingham (for 50

weeks a year), the researchers deduced that there were 1,320,000 prostitute-client contacts a year. Furthermore, the researchers deduced that if each one of these was a different client (possibly an unlikely assumption), and if they all came from the city of Birmingham, it would mean that every single man and boy in the area visited a prostitute at least three times a year. The study also interviewed 130 clients of prostitutes; 60% gave their area of residence as Birmingham. From this, it was estimated that between 30-80,000 men resident in the city were regular clients of prostitutes (*'Independent on Sunday'*, 13 September 1992:13).

Trying to establish the number of prostitute-client contacts in the 'northern city' of this research is a hazardous exercise (given the number of variables involved) but some estimates can be arrived at by taking the activities (and accounts) of the 'regular' and 'semi-regular' prostitutes working in the city into account. (A similar financial exercise was undertaken in Chapter Five). Although it can be estimated that there may be just over a quarter of a million *prostitute-client contacts* per year in the city, it must be acknowledged that prostitute-client *contacts* do not indicate the actual number of men involved; one of the problems of trying to estimate the number of men seeking the services of prostitutes is that it has to be borne in mind that not all the clients patronizing prostitutes would be different men; most 'regulars' (prostitutes) reported having *at least* two regular clients that they saw each week. If each client resorted to a prostitute once a month then it is plausible to suggest that around 21,500 men patronized prostitutes in the city spending in the region of £800,000 per year on the services of prostitutes. However, these estimates do not take into account the activities of the women who work 'occasionally' as prostitutes (and these constituted 43% of the total prostitute population) - these considerations are crucial to any estimates. 7

In the British *'National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles'* (1994), 6.8% of men reported that they had paid for sex with a woman at some time (Wellings et al, 1994:121). Single men were the least likely to have paid for sex (4.1%); widowed/separated/divorced men were the most likely (14.2%). Experience of paying for sex in the last five years was most common amongst those aged between 25 - 34. The authors of the survey suggest that there was no clear social class gradient for ever paying for sex although in the last five years those in social classes I and II were more likely

to have paid for sex than those in other social classes (Wellings et al, 1994:123). In multivariate analysis, raised odds for ever paying for sex were linked with age, marital status, working away from home and experience of a homosexual relationship. The correlation between a history of a homosexual partnership and paying for sexual contact with a woman leads the authors to suggest that prostitutes may encounter a disproportionate number of bisexual men as clients (Wellings et al 1994:125).⁸

What Sort of Men Buy Sex: Is There a 'Typical' Client ?

Recent surveys of clients have proved remarkably consistent. Although it cannot be claimed that there is a 'typical' client, research - conducted in a variety of countries and by a variety of methods - has indicated that the majority of prostitute users are middle aged, middle class and married (James, 1975:49; Kapur, 1978:214; Matthews, 1986b & 1993). Moreover, the assumption that men who buy sex are perverted old men in dirty raincoats is at odds with a number of surveys which suggest that clients are as likely to be 'respectable BMW types' who stop off to pick up a prostitute on the way home from the office. McLeod (1982) found that men patronizing prostitutes came from all age groups and all social backgrounds and between 70-80% were married. Significantly, when it came to the interests and motivations of clients, more than half (50-70%) wanted only 'straight' sex - thus once again dispelling the myth that only perverts visited prostitutes.

More recent surveys have largely confirmed the general picture that the majority of clients are married and seeking straight sex. In a survey of 100 clients in Glasgow, more than half were married men, the major attraction was clandestine sex and the motivation was that prostitutes would perform sexual services that wives were reluctant to provide; oral sex was the most frequently requested activity (*Times Higher*, 3 July 1993:17). In Manchester, answers to questionnaires obtained from 120 clients revealed that the average age of the customers was 39; 62% were married; 80% were in full time employment and 56% wanted straight sex (*The Independent*, 11 June 1993). Using information compiled from police records of 106 men cautioned for kerb-crawling in the Finsbury Park District of North London, Matthews (1986b) showed that the average age of clients was 39.7 years (few were under 25 or over 60); the occupational profile of 79 of the sample

revealed that 15 were unemployed; 10 were salesmen; 23 were tradesmen and 12 were of managerial or professional class. 22 of the kerb-crawlers lived locally, 60 lived in nearby residential areas, the remainder lived in Outer London and the Home Counties (Matthews, 1986b:22-23). In a later study in a different district (Streatham), Matthews (1993) found remarkably similar results. In essence, kerb-crawlers came from further afield than the prostitutes (most lived 2 - 5 miles outside the locality with a significant number coming from outside London), and most were of a different age group to the prostitutes (Matthews, 1993:13-14).

B. Kerb-crawling in a 'Northern City'

In the field work period (January -December 1993), 122 men were cautioned for the offence of kerb-crawling in the city. 9 This showed a continued increasing trend in the number of men being cautioned for the offence in the city. This increase does not necessarily indicate an increase in the number of men actually kerb-crawling, rather it appeared to correlate more with differing attitudes of the police (both individual philosophy and on a general policy level) to prostitution and kerb-crawling offences.

Table 8.1: Kerb-crawling in the City: Cautions and Convictions 1985-1993

<u>Year</u>	<u>Men Cautioned</u>	<u>Men Charged</u>
1985	4	-
1986	22	1
1987	21	2
1988	15	-
1989	6	1
1990	1	-
1991	30	-
1992	83	-
1993	122	2

In the first six months of 1993, 41 men were cautioned for the offence of kerb-crawling; in the last six months 81 men were cautioned. The dramatic increase in cautioning rates in various months can be attributed to:

1. Increased complaints from local residents to the 'chief of police' and to the local media (radio/newspaper); these brought a consistent demand that 'something be done' about the activities of prostitutes working in, and kerb-crawlers cruising around, the district.

2. A change of departmental personnel (within the DET) and a subsequent change of philosophy and attitude towards prostitution and kerb-crawling. Much of this change of attitude was 'stimulated' by the awareness of public dissatisfaction with policing efforts.

Table 8.2: Kerb-crawling in the City 1993 - Monthly Analysis

<u>Month</u>	<u>Men Cautioned</u>	<u>Men Charged</u>
January	14	1
February	20*	-
March	1	-
April	1	-
May	1	-
June	4	-
July	11	1
August	8	-
September	18*	-
October	23*	-
November	14	-
December	7	-
Totals	122	2

* - increase was a response to increased public complaints and media attention.

Almost all of the members of the DET held the strong belief that most of the men cautioned for kerb-crawling were:

...businessmen from out of town, in their fifties, salesmen, travelling reps, who go home on Friday for the weekend (DET officer).¹⁰

Was this an accurate picture of the 'typical' punter?

A Profile of 'Punters' in a Northern City.

A profile of 122 clients was constructed using police records. The data yielded information relating to the age, place of residence and occupational status of those men cautioned for the offence of kerb-crawling. ¹¹

To complement this data, all 40 women were interviewed about their clients. It was felt that these women (predominantly 'regular' prostitutes) would be able to provide an abundance of rich detail and information about their clients - more importantly, relay their impressions of, dealings with, and feeling towards the men who buy their services. Police records do not

record the marital status of men arrested for kerb-crawling. However, when asked informally (by the police) a large percentage said that they were married; 90% of the women interviewed claimed that their clients were all married.¹²

The Age of Clients

When asked to give some indication of the age of most of their clients, almost all of the women thought that most of their customers were aged between 40 and 50. (When asked about age ranges of their clients, the women provided an array of descriptive responses such as 'old', 'oldish' and 'ancient'.

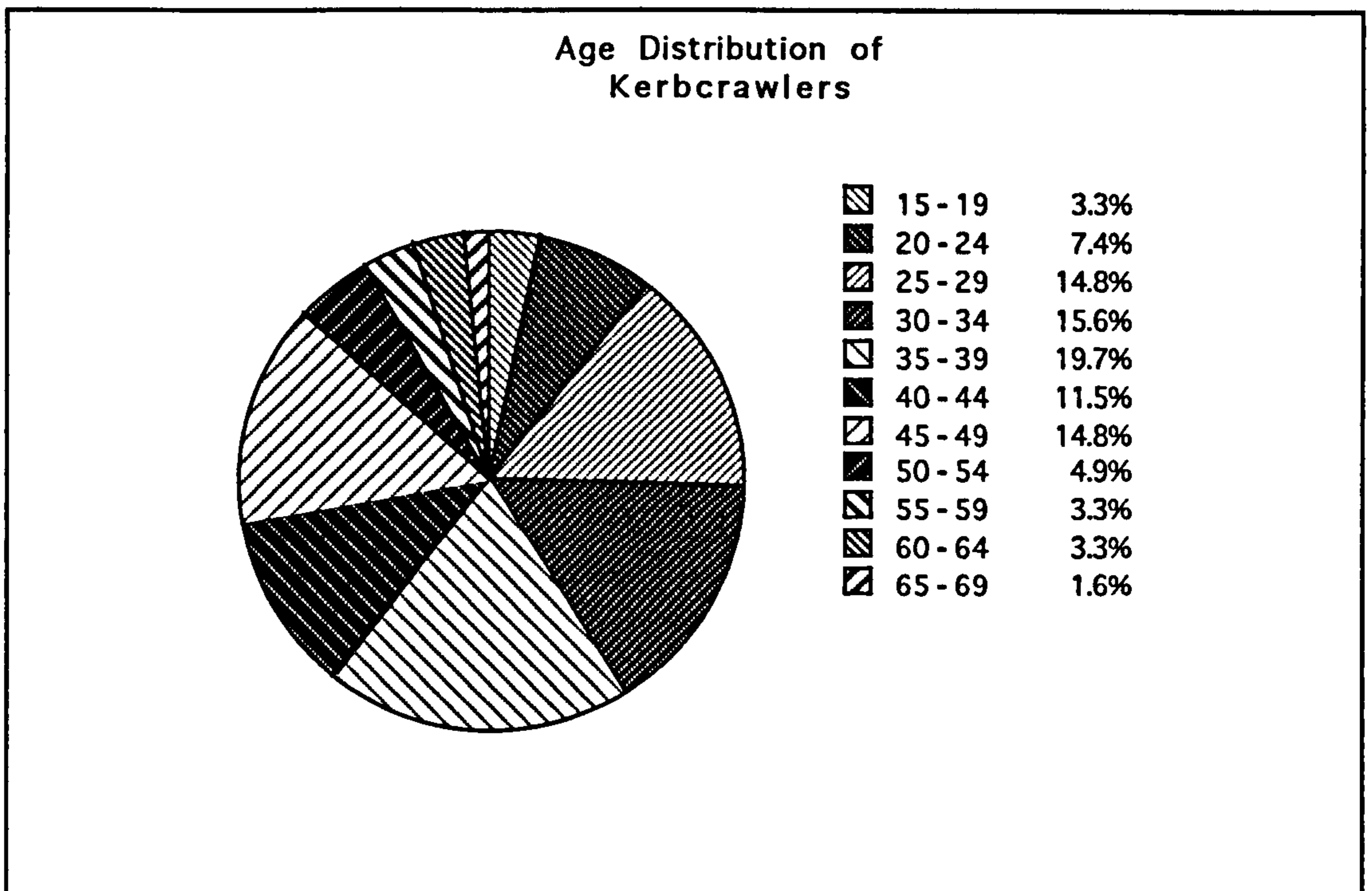
Data compiled from official records put the average age of the clients at 37.9 years; the youngest being 18 and the oldest 67 years of age.

Table 8.3: The Age Categories of 122 Men Cautioned for Kerb-crawling (in a 'Northern City') between January 1st and 31st December 1993.

<u>Age Categories</u>	<u>Number of Men</u>
15 - 19	4
20 - 24	9
25 - 29	18
30 - 34	19
35 - 39	24
40 - 44	14
45 - 49	18
50 - 54	6
55 - 59	4
60 - 64	4
65 - 69	2
Total	122

The following chart (8.1) shows the age distribution of men cautioned for kerb-crawling in the city.

Chart 8.1: Age Distribution of 122 Men Cautioned for Kerb-crawling (in a Northern City) between January 1st and 31st December 1993.



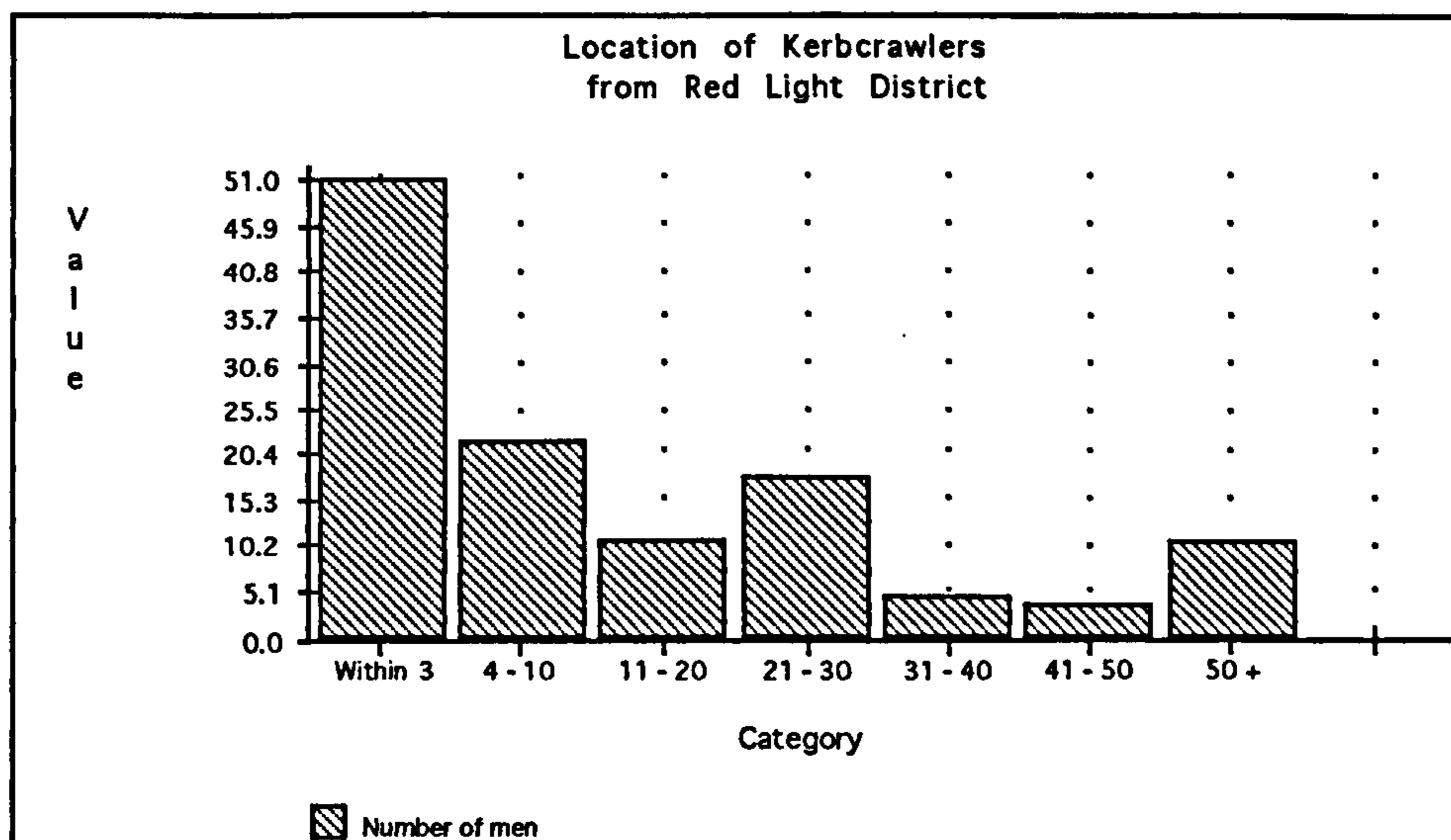
The Area of Residence.

Out of a total of 122 men cautioned for the offence of kerb-crawling, 103 (84.4%) came from within the County; 96 (78.6%) from the North Bank (which includes the 'Northern City') and 7 (5.7%) from the South Bank. 10 (8.1%) came from the neighbouring counties of North, South and West Yorkshire; 9 (7.3%) came from outside the region altogether.

The majority of men - 73 (59.8%) gave their place of residence as within 10 miles of the city; 51 (41.8%) lived within 3 miles of the city centre (and hence the red light district) and 22 (18.0%) resided between 4 - 10 miles of the city.

The following chart (8.2) shows the areas of residence and distance in miles from the red light district of men cautioned for the offence of kerb-crawling in the northern city

Chart 8.2: Areas of residence (Distance in miles from the Red Light District) of 122 men cautioned for Kerb-crawling (in the Northern City) between 1st January - 31st December 1993.



Occupational Status.

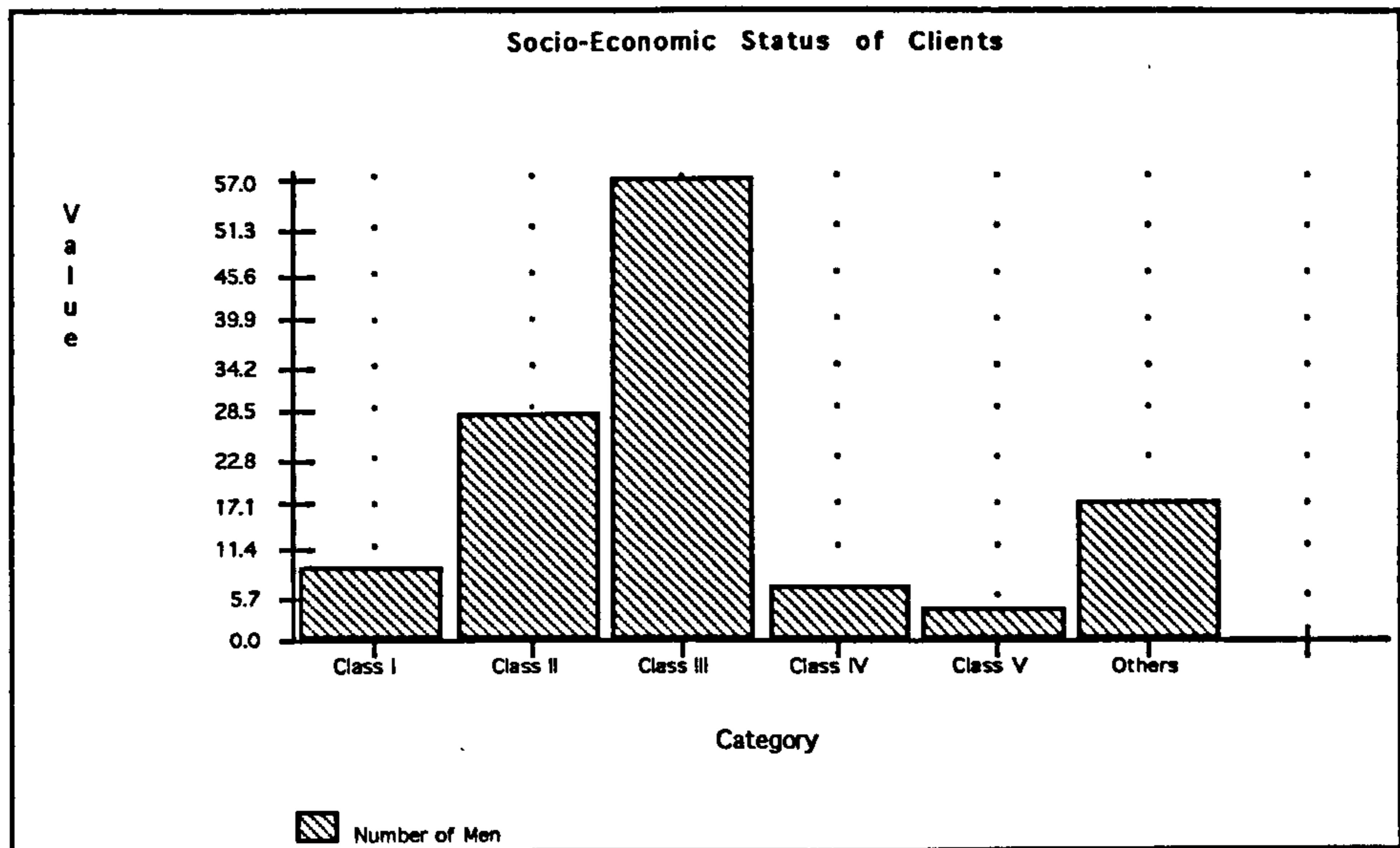
Using the Registrar General's classification system of socio-economic groupings, it can be seen that the men cautioned for the offence of kerb-crawling in the city occupied a broad social-occupational range.

From 122 men cautioned, the following classifications emerged:

Table 8.4: Socio-Economic Groupings of Men Cautioned for Kerb-crawling (in a Northern City) between January 1st - December 31st 1993.

<u>Social Class</u>	<u>Number of Men</u>	<u>%</u>	
I	9	7.3	
II	28	22.9	
III	57	46.7	Manual (27.8%) Non Manual (18.8%)
I	7	5.7	V
V	4	3.2	
Others	17	13.9	Unemployed 9 (7.3%) Retired 6 (4.9%) Students 2 (1.6%)
Total	122		

Chart 8.3: Occupational Status of 122 Men Cautioned for Kerb-crawling (in a 'Northern City') between 1st January - 31st December 1993.



To summarize, of 122 clients cautioned for the offence of kerb-crawling in the northern city, the average age was 37.9. The extent to which this study confirms the 'married, middle aged and middle class' thesis is debatable - the age distribution was fairly even between 25 - 50 and a mean of 37.9 is hardly middle aged. 86.6% were in full time employment - the majority held jobs in Social Class III. A large percentage of the men lived locally - within three miles of the red light district - roughly the same distance in mileage as the women working as prostitutes.

The Relationship between Clients and Prostitutes.

On the surface, the relationship between prostitute and client is usually well defined. It is always on a commercial basis and, as such, is largely a business transaction - a clinical process - comparatively impersonal and devoid of any mutual respect, emotion or affection. As Benjamin & Masters (1964) point out:

...what is to be provided and what is to be received are predetermined and mutually understood to an extent seldom present in other sexual relationships.

(Benjamin & Masters, 1964:31)

On a deeper level, the prostitute-client relationship is *extremely* complex - it is driven by a variety of motives and affords a variety of interpersonal benefits - gratification both financial and sexual. For some clients, visiting a prostitute may be a regular and planned part of their life; for the prostitute, the sex itself may be a purely perfunctory affair. Bryant (1982) suggests that prostitutes may exhibit latent (or manifest) hostility and disgust towards their clients, and may also exhibit self hatred and disgust (Bryant, 1982:296). Similar emotions may be experienced by the client towards the prostitute and towards himself. Some clients may be especially anxious about the possibility of detection and the social consequences that may follow (Bryant, 1982:297; Matthews, 1993:14-15).

Young (1975) suggests that because sexuality is entwined with the financial aspect, the buyer assumes that he is dealing with an object - a commodity - not a person (Young, 1975:105). The client may exercise considerable power over a woman - he may use (or threaten) physical harm, he may withhold payment, however, it may be a case of mutual exploitation for, as one prostitute put it:

...men come to us seeking an oasis in their loneliness, fooling themselves out of desperation that the friendliness they have bought is genuine.

(Anon, 1959:16)

The question may then be asked - *who exactly is being 'tricked?'*

Prostitutes Perception of Clients.

All 40 women were asked about their attitudes towards their clients - what they felt about their customers. Responses could be categorised into three main groups:

<u>Response</u>	<u>Number of Women</u>
'Most of the customers are okay'	20
'Absolutely hate the clients'	14
'I quite like most of the clients'	3
'No comment'	3

Without exception, the women who said they '*absolutely hated*' the clients all included in their comments '*...and I hate the sex as well*'. Words like 'disgusting', 'horrible' and 'repulsive' were frequently used to describe what they felt about the service they provided. This appeared to be part of the

coping mechanism adopted towards the business:

I hate the clients and I hate the sex. It's disgusting. You imagine - all those horrible perverts touching you everywhere. All the customers are old and smelly. All men who use prostitutes are perverts.

(Chloe)

In the main, attitudes to clients were not related to any specific distinguishing characteristics (such as the age of the women), although the women (14) who '*absolutely hated*' their clients tended to be in the younger age groups.

After just three nights of working as a prostitute, one of the women had decided that the business was '*...totally disgusting*'. Three months later, she still displayed the same attitude towards her clients, but she appeared to have justified her decision to stay in the business by focussing on the financial rewards:

...I still hate it - really I do. Really, I don't like it at all, but the money is too good not to come here.

(Jasmine)

Why Do Men Buy Sex: Prostitutes Opinions.

All 40 women were asked for their opinions about *why* they thought men went to them (prostitutes) for sex. The question, perhaps not surprisingly, elicited a wide range of responses. These could be grouped into three categories - what could be termed (1) 'marital-sexual', (2) 'pathological', and (3) 'practical'.

15 women expressed the belief that men visited prostitutes because of marriage problems - this could be further defined as the fact that (i) they (the clients) were '*...not getting it at home*' or that (ii) they wanted sexual services that '*...their wife was not willing to do*'. More than half the prostitutes specifically cited oral sex as the most requested service. (Clients requests will be discussed in more detail in the following section).

The belief that marital problems were the prime motivating factor for clients patronizing prostitutes was a view echoed by many of the women:

Men visit us [prostitutes] because they aren't getting it at home and because their wife won't do oral sex - that's what most of the men ask for.

(Trudie)

Most of the clients are nob-heads - totally pathetic most of them. They come to us cos' they aren't getting it at home. Most women go off sex once they're married so they don't give their man enough, so the man comes and sees us. I don't think I've ever had a client who wasn't married. I turn down single ones anyway - they're the worst - that's why they're single - because nobody wants them.

(Imogen)

Some of the punters are really pathetic but I don't mind. I feel sorry for a lot of them. Most of them say that their wife has just had a hysterectomy or has just had a baby so sex is either too painful or they have just gone right off it. They just want sex. When they come to us it isn't like they're cheating or having an affair ... it's just pure sex and there's no harm to it.

(Monica)

10 women expressed the view that men who patronized prostitutes: (i) '...must have something wrong with them', or (ii) they were 'perverts' (iii) they wanted 'kinky' sex or (iv) they liked having sex with young girls.

Most of my clients are oldish and married. They come to us because they are all perverts - they want oral sex with a young girl like me rather than with their dried up old wife.

(Holly)

2 women believed that men visited prostitutes simply because: (i) they were lonely or because (ii) it was '...less hassle to visit a prostitute'.

Men come to us because they're lonely. I do feel sorry for some of them because they are obviously so very lonely. Some of them are a bit shy and they probably wouldn't be very good at chatting a girl up and if they [the clients] are older then it's harder for them to find a woman - so they come to us.

(Vicky)

A similar view was expressed by 'Martina':

We don't bother them. We don't need chatting up and we don't need attention after. Men just do the business and go. We make life very simple for them.

(Martina)

13 women said that they either 'didn't know', 'didn't care' or 'had not previously thought about why men visited us' [prostitutes].

Why Do Men Buy Sex: Police Opinions.

In the view of most of the police officers in the DET, kerbcrawlers were variously regarded as being '...incredibly sad', or 'perverts'; although a degree of sympathy was displayed to the plight of the men who *had* to buy sex, on the whole kerbcrawlers were regarded as 'deficient' in some way:

Obviously if a man has to degrade himself to the extent that they've got to go round in a car to an area where they know we might be watching them and pick a woman up, then obviously they're in a bit of a sad state ... those men who actually come out to pick a woman up - they're real sad cases. I think they like the buzz, I think they're addicted to it - like a drug - and they obviously get better sex down there [on the patch] than they do at home ... of course they do, especially for someone who's in their middle ages, they pick up a girl who's perhaps nineteen years old ... these girls are good at their job and the men, they get different types of sex from prostitutes than they do at home ... and it's with a different girl so that's the excitement as opposed to being with a woman for twenty years who you know everything about ... it's going to be real good sex, isn't it?

(DET officer - male)

It maybe gives them a thrill going with someone strange, but if they wanted a woman they could go to a nightclub rather than go to a woman who could have all sorts of diseases ... the kerbcrawlers are more embarrassing than anything else. They're absolutely distraught when you catch them and they realise that people might find out. There have been some genuine excuses, like they have a disabled wife and they haven't had sex for twenty-five years - things like that. One of the kerbcrawlers was in tears one night - one of the male officers felt really sorry for him.

(DET officer - female)

Clients Requests.

Irrespective of their personal feelings towards their clients, amongst the women working on the patch there was a clear code of conduct which held that clients should get a 'fair and decent service' and under no circumstances should they be 'ripped off':

The clients get what they pay for. I wouldn't rip anyone off - that wouldn't be right. I give them what they want - most of them want blow jobs - they pay a fair price and I give a decent service.

(Imogen)

Most of the clients are okay. When a car stops for me I think "he must fancy me" and I feel pleased and flattered that he has stopped for me and not for someone else. It's nice to have people stop because they must think that I am prettier than someone else. They have chosen me out of all the others so I give them a good service.

(Martina)

Trying to establish which service was most frequently requested by clients was a difficult methodological task. It could only be ascertained by asking the prostitutes which service they provided most. Although almost all the

women said that they categorically refused to provide anal sex, it should not be assumed that men did not request this particular service in large numbers. The indication was that the women were asked for anal sex on a fairly regular basis. A broad estimate would suggest that one out of every six customers would request this particular service.

5 of the women (all 'regulars') admitted that they did not mind providing 'kinky' sexual services or obliging with 'unusual sexual requests' - although 4 of these women were adamant that this did not include anal sex.

35 (87.5%) of the women said that they provided 'straight' sex only; for the majority of these women this included manual sex (hand relief) and oral sex (blow jobs). Oral sex was cited as the service most frequently requested by clients. 8 women said that they refused requests for oral sex. 13

Men pay for the service not for the time spent with the woman providing the service. Perhaps not surprisingly then, the overriding aim of the women was to dispense with and dispatch their clients as quickly as possible. However, it should not be assumed that all clients primarily wanted sex. A very small percentage of women reported to have (or had) clients who paid them just to sit and talk. According to a couple of the more seasoned women:

Most of the clients do want to talk quite a lot. In fact if they don't want to talk I think they are a bit strange and I get suspicious and don't want to know.

(Monica)

Some of the punters are real buggers - they want it for a fiver. I don't like any of my clients at all. I get the business over as quickly as possible - they get five minutes and that's it. I don't mind talking to them for a while. The work is 90% talk and 10% sex - it's the sex bit I like to get over fast.

(Laura)

Regular Clients - Regular Money

Of the 40 women, 23 (57.5%) had regular clients - men with whom they had a regular arrangement and who had bought their sexual services for many months and/or years. Regular customers were regarded as money in the bank. The overwhelming opinion was that regular customers were a useful and desirable commodity simply because they represented a guarantee that at least some money would be earned. Those women that didn't have regulars wished they did. Along with financial security, regular customers elevated a

woman's status on the patch - an ability to attract - and keep - a client for any length of time was seen as an indication of popularity and physical and sexual attractiveness.

All the women with regular clients had well organized routines; they met their clients at the same time, same place, and same day(s) of every week. 14 Several of the women set aside a specific night(s) of the week especially for regular clients. It was seen as essential therefore that those nights allocated exclusively for regular customers were not disrupted in any way otherwise it could disrupt the entire elaborate system. Being cautioned by the police on 'regulars' nights' was greeted with particular annoyance; so were requests for interviews as it was considered that this would jeopardise the whole meticulous timetable. Most arrangements with regular clients were made away from the patch:

Regulars - I have a couple and I wish I had more. It's safer, it's regular money and it's less hassle. I don't feel anything for them, I just know where and when to meet them. I don't meet them on the patch; that makes sure that neither of us [prostitute and client] gets caught by the vice.

(Natalie)

All the women had their own, very different reasons for liking regular clients. 'Poppy' acquired her first regular customer when she was just 13:

...I had him for one and a half years until I was fourteen and a half. I didn't really need to see other people; he gave me enough money for the gear I needed.

(Poppy)

I had a regular client for three years, he was married - he just wanted some extra sex. He gave me £100 a week and visited me two or three times a week at home. It was like having a proper job. It's not like having an affair because there was no love involved - we liked each other but it was a purely business arrangement. I liked it because it meant I didn't have to work the streets.

(Monica)

Molly had a regular client for over 2 years:

He was forty-five and single and he had a good job. I saw him twice a week. He just wanted regular sex. He paid me really well, I liked him quite a lot really. I took him to my bedsit - he was the only person I ever took home. I don't know why he stopped coming - he just did.

(Molly)

The idea that any emotional attachment should develop between the women and

their regular clients was totally dismissed:

There is no attachment at all... I don't fancy them or anything.
It's just business - nothing else.

(Laura)

Nor was there any suggestion that regular clients received any preferential treatment:

You have to make a distinction between boyfriends and punters. The punters - I never care about them. It doesn't make any difference whether they are regulars or casuals - they pay the same money, they get the same time and the same service - you just do the business with them - no feelings, no love, nothing.

(Beryl)

Several of the women did suggest that there were some drawbacks to having regular customers. It was suggested that after a while some men could make certain 'demands' of them (insist that they wore certain clothes) or they expected extra 'privileges'.

The most serious problem, and one that was experienced by several of the women, was when the regular client developed obsessional-possessive behaviour:

...some of my regulars have got a bit possessive and wanted me to stop seeing other men - which rather defeats the object of working in the first place. I'm a lot wiser now. I don't encourage anyone to make themselves at home or allow anyone to start giving me orders or expect me to start behaving like a wife.

(Beryl)

One woman had been seriously assaulted by one of her regular clients:

... he broke into my home and beat me up very badly. I was terrified, really scared. I hadn't wanted to see him anymore because he'd started behaving real funny - become all obsessed and weird - but when I told him I didn't want to see him anymore he wouldn't take "no" for an answer - couldn't accept it - and he came and beat me up. I'm really wary now of who I get involved with.

(Rose)

Turning Clients Down: Selection, Discretion and 'Women's Intuition'.

The issue of safety was high on the list of priorities. Most of the women claimed to turn down more clients (per night) than they actually accepted. In the process of negotiating the business with the potential punter, the women had to make split second decisions. Some of these decisions were based on a

variety of factors - past experience, personal preference, or simply the rather tenuous reliance on 'intuition'. It was clear that for most of the women, selection and assessment of total strangers was based on a hierarchy of multiple considerations. These could be classified:

Table 8.5: Reasons For Refusing Business With a Client.

<u>Reason for Refusing clients</u>	<u>Number of Women giving it as their</u>		
	<u>1st reason</u>	<u>2nd reason</u>	<u>3rd reason</u>
<i>The Client:</i>			
<i>'looks funny/weird/strange'</i>	11	2	-
<i>'asks silly prices; won't pay enough'</i>	10	1	-
<i>'asks for kinky sex; anal sex'</i>	3	5	-
<i>Black/Asian</i>	-	1	2
<i>'Too Old/Too Young/Drunk'</i>	6	-	-
<i>'Never Turns Down a Client'</i>	10	-	-

In many cases, assessment was largely instinctive, men would be turned away if they looked 'peculiar'. Most women based this on instinct and intuition and sometimes on more practical measures:

...you can tell straight away what sort of a person a man is just by looking at them - you can see it in their eyes if they don't look right. Also, the state of their car - if the inside of the car looks really dirty then I won't get in.

(Phoebe)

Basing acceptance or refusal (of business) on the state of the car appeared to be a fairly common criterion adopted by some of the women:

I look at the car. If it's a nice car then I accept. I like nice cars, those that have nice interiors. That's what I look at when the bloke is doing the business.

(Laura)

10 women gave financial reasons - the fact that the man wouldn't pay enough money as their first reason for turning a customer down. The overwhelming opinion was:

... if a man isn't prepared to offer the money, then he isn't worth going with.

(Molly)

As already indicated, the most frequently requested service was oral sex. Most of the women were happy to provide this service (8 would not). Regarded as absolutely abhorrent were requests for 'kinky' sex - specifically

anal sex. It was evidently frequently requested but the overwhelming majority of women said they refused to provide this service (1 woman did claim to offer the service). Anal sex was regarded as repulsive and the request of 'perverts':

None of the women will do anal sex. I always say that if a client wants that then he should go to a man.

(Vicky)

Three women admitted that they would not do business with blacks or 'paki's'.

... I'm not being racist - but black men get very rough and don't behave well. Most of my clients treat me very well - with a bit of respect - but black men are horrible, they are rude, they treat us like dirt.

(Sasha)

Another, more practical concern was:

...supposing the condom bursts and I end up getting pregnant with a black kid - how would I explain that to my other kids and my boyfriend ?

(Trudie)

Only one woman said that she didn't mind blacks or 'foreigners of any sort', though her eagerness was clearly motivated by financial concerns:

...foreigners are heavily into the kinky stuff - they seem to like that and they have more money to spend - they think nothing of spending £80 or more for half an hour. I can charge that kind of money because I will do things that the other girls on the patch will not.

(Harriet)

It seemed surprising that although 15 (37.5%) of the women said that they had been offered more money not to use a condom (and had all refused), this particular factor was never (at any time) mentioned as a specific reason for refusing business with a client. Whilst several of the women did mention AIDS as a serious consideration, the prime 'health' concern cited by most of the women was the risk of pregnancy. Amongst the prostitutes, it was popularly believed that the danger of serious health problems - AIDS, Venereal Diseases - came not from the clients, but from some of the other women on the patch who, it was believed, were 'not so careful'.¹⁵

Ageism

The issue of a clients age was linked to the issue of safety. Although 21 (52.5%) of the women said that they would accept business with men of any age, 19 (47.5%) of the women said they would not accept business with

anyone who looked to be under 25. In this last category 15 (37.5%) said they would only accept business if the client looked to be over thirty; 4 (10%) would only accept business if the client looked to be over forty.

In general, older clients were more popular with the women. Older men were regarded as less trouble and more reliable because they didn't try to '...get clever' or 'pull any fast ones'. The preference for older clients was not confined to the older prostitutes:

I only ever go with older men because they don't mess around. They just pay the money and get on with it. They don't try any funny business or try to rip you off.

(Megan)

Older clients are more reasonable, they just do the business and leave. Young lads can be a bit rough and they tend to try it on a bit. They come down here [the patch] for a bit of a laugh and they are usually drunk so it can be a bit nasty.

(Marian)

Similarly:

The young lads are the worst to deal with, they turn a bit rough and aggressive, or they are just out to have a big laugh and try to be clever.

(Amy)

Older men are more straight and reliable; young lads come down here for a laugh or to experiment and brag to their friends. I don't like that. I offer a decent service and I don't like to be made a mug of.

(Belinda)

On a more practical level, and in stark contrast to the majority opinion:

... I won't go with older men, they are totally useless. It can take them ages and ages to get started - let alone finish. Old men are pathetic at sex; they can take so long to get going that it's not worth it financially - you can lose a lot of money from other customers. Also, I turn down ugly bastards. I will not go with ugly bastards. Why should I - no-one else will.

(Imogen)

Whilst most of the women did express a preference for older clients, some of them firmly believed that the men preferred older prostitutes because they were more reliable and 'decent':

The older women don't rip the client off. The younger ones do a lot of stealing from the client, or they take the money first and then run off and that isn't right. I take a lot of pride in what I do; the client always gets a fair and decent service from me.

(Beryl)

Summary.

Essential to an understanding of female prostitution is the role of the client. If providing sexual services is regarded by some as an anathema, buying sex is behaviour equally stigmatized. Little is known about the interests and motives of clients. There are few reliable estimates of the proportion of men who have ever paid for sex or the frequency with which such contacts take place. Those surveys which have been conducted - with the objective of establishing the prevalence of commercial sexual contacts - need to be regarded with caution. It would appear that motives for hiring prostitutes are as diverse and complex as those which motivate women into the profession.

Although relatively little research has been conducted, recent surveys of clients have proved remarkably consistent. This study, with data compiled from official police records and complemented with observation and conversation, suggests that most clients of prostitutes were (in the main) men in their late thirties to forties who lived locally and who were in full-time employment. It would appear that a large percentage of the clients were married men. This can be gauged firstly by the usual response of men when stopped by the police - 'Does my wife have to find out about this?' or 'You won't tell my wife will you?', and secondly, by the accounts of prostitutes who firmly believed that the majority of their clients (90%) were married, and indeed patronized them because of marital problems - most notably because wives were either for various reasons disinterested in sex or were reluctant to indulge in certain sexual practices; oral sex was the most frequently requested sexual service.

From my own fieldwork observations and informal conversations with several clients of prostitutes, it became clear that there was a great deal of confusion and ignorance in the minds of men arrested regarding the actual laws concerning the offence of kerbcrawling. Almost without exception, men arrested for the offence would protest their 'innocence' or plead that they: (a) '...didn't realise it was an offence to drive round a red light district to look at the women' or that (b) they '...had not actually had sex with a prostitute' or that (c) they were '...just driving round the area because curiosity' had got the better of them and they were just driving round to '...have a look'.

As to the motives of these men, one said that he had never patronised a prostitute before:

'...I don't normally bother with whores but the wife's no good anymore so I came out here [to the City] to get some relief from one of these. I didn't realise I was doing 'owt wrong. I've not been here before and you won't see me here again. I've paid her me money [the prostitute] but she didn't do it [the business] cos' you lot [police] showed up so I never got what I'd paid for - I want me money back .

(Punter)

Another man thought it was unfair that he had been pulled up by the police and protested that he had not actually had sex with the prostitute. Constantly referring to the women as 'whores', he remarked:

...I don't know how these whores can go with men they don't know, and I don't know how a man could go with a woman when they don't know each other. It's disgusting. I like to talk to a woman first before I have sex with her. That's why that whore was in my car - I was just talking to her. I wasn't planning to have sex with her - I made a mistake with her.

(Punter)

One man, (a businessman from outside the city) was absolutely horrified that he had been stopped for kerbcrawling and apologised profusely for committing the offence but added:

...I had no intention of picking up any of those women because frankly I didn't think there was much of a choice down there [the patch]. Most of the women are extremely unattractive, frankly, I'm rather surprised and disappointed with what I saw. ...I knew that this was the area to come to but, well, frankly, I've seen better.

(Punter)

It seemed clear that for some men, visiting a prostitute was a regular and planned routine in their life. Whilst it is impossible to speculate about *their* feelings towards the prostitute, and the importance of the transaction, both emotional and sexual, with them, it was clear that for the prostitutes the relationship was regarded purely as a business transaction with no emotional involvement or gratification; regular clients were actively sought by prostitutes though these relationships were prized largely because they represented a guarantee of at least some financial security.

Perhaps the most surprising feature of the relationship between the prostitute and her client to emerge from this study was the level of control that the prostitute held over the entire transaction. In the process of negotiating business it was the prostitute who firmly controlled the situation and who made all the decisions. A prospective punter may drive round and

round a red light district and *think* he is making *his* choice - in reality, it was the woman who, having already spotted his interest would, through a hierarchy of criteria and personal considerations and preferences, already have decided to a large extent whether *she* wanted to do business with him. The women set the prices, negotiate the business, decide the service that is on offer and then decide whether to accept or decline the business. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that the prostitutes were not 'victims'; they were not at the mercy of the demands of men and they were not being exploited because they were not entirely unwilling participants in the encounter. On the contrary, in terms of the business of prostitution, women were very much in control.

¹ Useful literature includes Kinsey, 1948; Rolph, 1955:92; Benjamin & Masters, 1964:196-197; Esselstyn, 1968:119; Gagnon & Simon, 1973:230-231; Sandford, 1975:109-113; James, 1976; Kapur, 1978:214-226; Hoigard & Finstad, 1992.

² Benjamin & Masters (1964) refer to these two groups as 'voluntary' and 'compulsive' clients respectively (Benjamin & Masters, 1964:194).

³ In ancient Rome, men resorted to prostitutes because the female population was 17% less than the male population therefore many men could not marry at all even if they wanted to, so they had to have recourse to prostitutes (Keifer 1934:62). The association of the military with prostitution is well documented. Aside from demographic concentration and subsequent preponderant male population, Bryant (1982) suggests that military culture emphasizes manliness and sexual aggressiveness; also military personnel develop a significantly fatalistic and hedonistic orientation to life (Bryant, 1982:286).

⁴ The Kinsey report (1948) revealed that men resorted to prostitutes because they provided an 'easy' and 'certain' sexual outlet; they were cheaper than dates with non prostitutes; they involved no later responsibilities and the prostitute offered variety - providing services that other women (notably wives) would not (Kinsey Report, 1948:597).

⁵ Within marriage itself, sex is regarded as so fundamental and essential that in (some) States in America '...physical impediments or willful abstention from intercourse may be grounds for divorce' (Bryant, 1982:265).

⁶ The 'problem of perversion' has produced differing views in the literature. For some, prostitution is a means whereby '...rich perverts satisfy their inclinations' (Bonger 1916:322); in recent years, research has suggested that prostitutes indulge in perverse sexual practices because of some '...infantile sexual impulse' on the part of the female (Glover, 1957). Abraham (1920) claimed that women who prefer, or even enjoy oral and anal sex, were exhibiting sexual responses which represent a perversion based on penis envy - oral and anal sex are not sexual variations per se, but means of avoiding the sexual contact that would remind women of their genital inferiority (cited Kaplan, 1991:171). The idea that

'kinky' sex is indulged in as a result of some failing in the female character must be questioned. Indeed, from interviews with prostitutes, this research suggests that it is more plausible to argue that 'perverse' sexual practices represents the requests (needs and desires) *of the client* not the prostitute.

7 To summarize: the estimates are based on 'averages' - the average number of clients per night, and the average price of sex. 33 'regulars' x 3 clients per night x 5 nights per week = 15 clients per week x 50 weeks per year = 750 clients per year. 33 'regulars' = 247,500 client contacts per year. 24 'semi-regulars' x 3 clients per night x 3 nights per week = 9 clients per week x 50 weeks per year = 450 clients per year. 24 'semi-regulars' = 10,800 client contacts per year. Grand total = 258,300 client contacts per year. This total excludes the activities of 'occasionals'. It must be emphasized that client contacts do not indicate the actual number of men involved. If the 258,300 men sought the services of a prostitute once a month this would suggest at least 21,500 men were patronizing prostitutes in the city; if one takes into account that the number of men officially cautioned for the offence (annually) represented only a small percentage of the number of men actually seeking the services of prostitutes then this figure does seem plausible.

8 In a local survey such as this - based primarily on official police records and personal observation - it is impossible to corroborate or refute such an assertion. However, it may not be beyond the realms of possibility that the high number of requests for anal sex *may* have some relation or association to the suggestion of a high proportion of bisexual clients. On the other hand, the high request for anal sex may be related to wives' aversion to anal sex and the fact that it is against the law.

9 A man may receive a caution for kerbcrawling if he is observed to be *persistently* cruising around the area. Following the first caution, the man would be advised that if he was observed within the red light area within the following 12 months then he would be arrested, charged and taken to court for the offence. The caution would be registered on the local computer.

10 Several of the DET later vigorously denied ever having stated this or even having ever held this view. And yet, even when presented with a profile *constructed from official police records*, some of them vehemently disputed the profile that emerged!!

11 Data covers the period 1st January - 31st December 1993. It has to be acknowledged that this is just a profile of the men cautioned for the offence.

12 As the marital status of the men cautioned for kerbcrawling is not recorded formally on the Official Home Office cautioning form, the police were asked (by me) if they would, whilst in the process of cautioning men for the offence ask for their marital status. Whilst some police officers in the DET were willing to co-operate with this request, others were not or forgot to ask, so reliable 'official' data on marital status of clients was not obtained.

13 Given that oral sex was the most frequently requested service, it was difficult to understand why it was priced so cheaply compared to other sexual services. According to the women, oral sex was popular because it was something that their wives refused to do not because it was one of the cheapest services on the 'menu'.

14 Cohen (1980) claims that most clients are quite faithful to particular prostitutes and that this fidelity can be explained by both the personal nature of the

service and by habit (preference for familiar prostitutes and locations) and the level of trust which is established between client and prostitute after repeated encounters (Cohen, 1980:140).

¹⁵ Prostitutes are often among the best informed as to how to protect themselves (and others) from sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS. IF large numbers of prostitutes were infected with the AIDS virus and transmitted the virus to their clients then it would be likely that rates amongst heterosexual men would be considerably higher than has been reported particularly if the estimated percentage of men patronizing prostitutes is in any way accurate. However, the hysteria surrounding AIDS has tended to divide people into 'guilty' carriers (prostitutes) and 'innocent' victims (clients). There is little direct evidence that prostitute women are a 'high risk' group, it is '...certain kinds of sexual contact which transmit the virus, not the exchange of money for carrying them out' (Richardson, 1989:42). Surveys have suggested that few female prostitutes are HIV infected, rather it is the clients who indulge in high risk behaviour. In a 1993 survey of 280 prostitutes working in London 98% claimed to use condoms; of the 228 that agreed to be HIV tested only 2 tested positive for the HIV virus and both of these were IV drug users. A second study looked at 112 male clients; of the 40 that agreed to be tested 2 tested positive for HIV. Of the 94 who answered the question, 34 reported having sex with other men (Guardian, 6 August 1993). Most HIV testing studies in Europe have identified levels under 5%. In (West) Germany, only 1% of 2000 registered prostitutes were HIV positive - almost all of these used IV drugs. In the USA rates of infection are higher and on the African continent infection rates are higher still; in one Rwandan town (Butare) 29 out of 33 prostitutes tested positive to the AIDS virus (Richardson, 1989:53).

Red Light, Blue Light

Prostitutes, Punters and The Police in a Northern City

CHAPTER NINE: THE POLICE

A. *The Policing Of Prostitution in a Northern City*

B. *The Law in Action*

CHAPTER NINE: The Police.

The debate about the role of the police is as complicated and diverse as the police mandate itself. Ostensibly the police operate under the banner of 'law and order'; in practice, as a force, the police provide a twenty-four hour service. They are asked to provide and deal with a variety of 'social service' (Punch, 1979) as well as 'order maintenance' (Reiner, 1985) and crime control/law enforcement matters. The *potential* mandate of the police is so diffuse it could expand almost infinitely (Morgan, 1989:172).

In the 19th century, the 'service' role was deliberately cultivated in order to secure legitimation (Reiner, 1985:57). Is it a role which the police need to be *seen* to be fulfilling? Box (1983) suggests that the service function reflects the more acceptable face of police work (Box, 1983:111). However, the service function was not (and is not) the dominant function the police were established to fulfill. The police were formed at a time when there was immense social dislocation and disruption brought about by urban and industrial development and the perceived threat of the urban poor and the so-called 'dangerous classes'. In his historical review of the police, Reiner (1985) suggests that the 'new' police were mandated with either the 'order maintenance' requirements of an industrialized liberal democratic society and its problems of order, crime and social conflict (Reiner, 1985: 18), or the 'control' requirements of capitalism so motivated to deal with the control of crime, riot, political dissidence and public morality (Reiner, 1985: 24-25). Irrespective of the differing interpretations of 'police history' it does seem clear that the goals of the police were not merely the prevention of crime, but also the prevention of disorder. Reiner (1985) argues that 'order maintenance' - the settling of disputes/conflicts by means other than formal law enforcement - is the core of the police mandate. It is inherently political. The obligations of the police - to be impartial and efficient and secure public consent, and the very nature of the policing task - balancing the rights and freedoms of the individual and the needs of the state - accentuates the problem of defining the police role. The problem with prostitution is that police 'tactics' to control or regulate street prostitution do not fit neatly into the traditional (service/law enforcement/order maintenance) functions of the police.

What Do the Public Want ?

The discrepancy between what the public demand (service), what the police think they should be doing (crime control/law enforcement) and what they end up having to do (order maintenance), can, in part, be traced to the expectations that the public have of the police and that the police have of themselves - the latter strongly affected by cop culture. The control function of the police is clearly at odds with their service function. Moreover, Reiner (1985) points to the evidence which started to emerge in the 1960s which suggested that most rank and file policemen believed that the service aspect should have low or no priority (Reiner, 1985: 76). The demise of the 'benign bobby' and the emergence of the 'techno cop' (keen on intelligence gathering, surveillance and the 'neutralizing of offenders') has left the public with an ambivalent attitude to the police. As Box (1983) notes:

At times there appears to be a strong sense of community acceptance of the police as service workers, but not far beneath this cosy calm surface there has always lurked the uneasy dim awareness that the police were fundamentally more concerned with control, particularly over dissenting, or potentially dissenting sections of the population.
(Box ,1983:112-113)

Which groups are being Policed - Who, Why and How ?

Recent literature suggests that the police act primarily as agents of class control, moreover, they act primarily on the powerless. Box (1983) and Brogden (1988) suggest that 'order maintenance' is particularly applicable to working class groups and specifically those who the 'dominant majority' see as problematic or distasteful. Reiner (1985) is more specific. He argues that certain groups in society (including vagrants, homosexuals, prostitutes, ethnic minorities, youth groups and radical political organizations) have become 'police property' simply because the 'dominant powers' in society leave the problems of social control of that category to the police (Reiner, 1985:94)

The prime function of the police then:

...has always been to control and segregate such groups ... the concern with police property is not so much to enforce the law as maintain order using the law as one resource among others.

(Reiner, 1985:95)

Brogden (1982) similarly suggests that the young 'street' population has always been the prime focus of police order maintenance and law enforcement

work. In other words, the police claim their authority on behalf of the whole society but they use that authority on behalf of one section of society to police another section of society. In a sense, the police:

...run their own show, make their own definitions and operate behind a rhetoric of their own choosing.

(Kettle, 1980: 58-59)

Setting Priorities.

The decisions that the police make about priorities are particularly significant. The police have to prioritise; limited resources render full enforcement of every law impracticable. What amounts to selective prioritizing, or selective enforcement, is a matter for professional judgement. Brogden (1982) suggests that the priority of the police is to '...keep the public happy' (Brogden, 1982:229). The dilemma in setting priorities or making policy decisions is that inaction may undermine public confidence whilst 'other' action may provoke public hostility (Pike, 1985:73). A further problem with decision making is that it is often unregulated; decisions are often made in circumstances which are not amenable to scrutiny. 1 The police are not immune from the suspicion that *their* priorities may not be in accord with those of the public at large. The police are quick to denounce criticism of them as being politically motivated, anti-police or anti law and order; they seem to regard 'consultation' as an unwarranted intrusion upon their operational independence and professional judgement. If the police wish to regain the great 'British advantage', consumer wishes cannot be arrogantly dismissed or treated with complacent indifference. At times, the enthusiasm of the police for public liaison appears to have been largely a cosmetic exercise based on the secure knowledge that they are only required to listen to the community, not actually act upon what they hear. 2

A. *The Policing Of Prostitution in a Northern City.*

The Police force into which I intruded as an ad hoc observer was one pervaded by a peculiar mixture of apathy and anger. At the heart of the matter was a deep disillusionment with a system that appeared to be primarily geared to looking after the criminal and not the victim. This frustration was compounded by a sense of irritation and resentment that they

(the police) were the ones that bore the brunt of public criticism. 'Do-gooders' - which seemed to include just about everyone outside the police force - were treated with particular venom:

What really annoys me is all the 'do-gooders' who want to help the criminals and yet there is no regard for the victim. If they pooled all that energy and helped the victim who has had a traumatic experience and who needs help - there's only one agency for them [victim support] yet there's probably forty people ready to help some shitbag ... where's the morality in that ?

(DET officer)

From an officer with over twenty years service, there was the belief that rising crime figures were not a result of a 'different sort' of policing, rather it was a sign of the times:

Society has gone down in general - standards, principles and morals - and we accept more and more. Social workers - the 'open-toed sandal brigade' - they come in here and say "you can't do this and you can't do that". The kids know too much, they want too much and they get away with too much.

(DET officer)

In relation to the 'service' aspect, there was concern expressed that the police didn't seem to be giving the public the right expression, or rather:

...we get a crime to investigate and then we ring up a few weeks later and basically say "I'm sorry we've done this and done that but we can't do anymore" ...you were giving them (the public) the right impression, but you weren't doing right *by* them.

(DET officer)

The Divisional Enquiry Team: A Profile.

The policing of prostitution in the city was undertaken by the Divisional Enquiry team, formerly known and popularly referred to (within the force) as the 'plainclothes department', and (by the prostitutes) as 'the vice'. 3 Throughout the field work period the DET underwent several personnel changes. The material in this chapter is based on interviews conducted with those officers who were continuously involved in the research, that is, 2 WPCs and 4 PCs. (At its maximum, the team only consisted of 8 officers, at its minimum they were operating with just 4 officers).

Age and Experience

The ages of the team ranged between 24 to 47 years with lengths of service

ranging between three and a half years to twenty years. As well as general uniform duties (beat work) most of the officers had gained experience in other areas of the service - most had done CID, Drug Squad and Shop squad attachments. Several had served with the SPG and the two female officers were trained VLOs (Victim Liaison Officers) - indeed they were the only two female VLOs based at the station. Prior to joining the force, all had held a variety of other jobs - welder, motor mechanic, bricklayer, catering assistant and supermarket worker. In other words, none were direct entrants from school, and none were graduates but, as one officer frequently delighted in telling me, they had all been to the '...university of life'.

All the officers had specifically requested to join the DET - primarily because of the drugs work - but some had found the change from uniform to plain clothes a tremendous transition - a very different sort of policing to what they were used to:

You're detached from the 'normal' sort of policing that you do in uniform and what you do is more selective so you're not as busy as you are in uniform - the uniform just run round like lunatics for eight hours a day.

(DET officer)

The Priority of Prostitution: Putting Prostitution into context...

Apart from prostitution and kerb-crawling, the DET dealt with a wide range of activities and offences including Homosexual offences (importuning); Indecency offences (including 'flashing', indecent acts); Indecent/Malicious Telephone calls; Obscene publications (pornographic videos, literature), Missing persons and Drugs. They also had routine 'public order' duties to undertake. The two areas of Missing persons and Drugs, undoubtedly constituted their most serious and persistent problem and accounted for most of their time and effort.

Missing Persons.

In 1993, the DET dealt with 312 missing persons enquiries. While some enquiries lasted for days and weeks, the vast majority were cleared up within hours of the initial notification of 'missing'. The missing persons work was regarded as important, all reports were treated seriously and usually dealt with promptly - especially when younger people were involved. As one member of the DET observed:

...it seems to be a street thing nowadays where kids have got to get some street 'cred' basically by running away from home and showing that they can survive on their own for a few nights on the street.

(DET officer)

The 'missing persons' work consumed a great deal of time and manpower. It was regarded by some members of the DET as the 'bugbear' of the department - without which they would thrive and be able to do so much more particularly in the drugs area. The ambivalent attitude shown towards missing person enquiries (136's as they were called) may be related to the 'service' element of the work; after all, going missing is not a crime, and a great deal of the enquiry is routine '...chasing round after teenagers' usually because of domestic rifts and tiffs.

The Policing of Prostitution: Better the Devil you know ...

Prostitution and kerb-crawling appeared to come way down the list of priorities. Despite the fact that the subdivision was unique - the only subdivision with prostitutes on the North bank - it was apparent that prostitution was the thing that got pushed to the back if 'other things' cropped up. The prostitutes had to take something of a backseat because the police's main 'sense of mission' was totally dominated by their 'fight' against drugs.

The overwhelming opinion among the DET was that the prostitutes were there and whatever they did wasn't going to move them. The overriding policy therefore seemed to be to let the prostitutes 'do their thing', an attitude largely guided by an '...if it ain't broke don't fix it' mentality. The philosophy of 'inaction being the easiest action' appeared to have developed largely because no-one was quite sure exactly *what* to do about prostitution:

... we could put a lot of pressure on them and move them but where do we move them to? If you continually keep moving them the only thing left to them is to work from home and then somebody ends up with a neighbour who is using the house as a brothel which isn't a good thing so perhaps it's better the devil you know...

(DET officer)

The overwhelming belief that prostitutes could never be cleared off the street dictated a policing policy with the avowed aim of monitoring, containing and controlling - monitoring them so that prostitution wouldn't get out of control. The deliberate policy of confining the women to a specific area ('The Lane') was simply because it was a non residential area. If any of the women strayed off onto the 'residential area', the police would harry them back onto

the designated patch. This policy of containment - when it was actually enforced - had three main aims. Firstly, so that the prostitutes could be easily monitored; secondly, so that the 'sensitivities' of the people in the residential area would not be offended and thirdly, so that the welfare of the prostitutes could be observed. The police did however, have more than just altruistic 'best interests' in mind:

It's nice to know who's out there because they are the low life really and they know what's happening and who's doing what. A lot of them are criminals or know criminals and if you have a good working relationship with them, they'll talk to you and tell you what's happening.

(DET officer)

Along with control and containment, the primary object of the actual police patrol was to make the women aware of the police presence, to make a note of which women were out working that night, check up on their welfare (particularly if they were new or had not been seen for a long time), and to catch up with the 'local gossip' (see glossary). The 'local gossip' was very much a two-way process; the prostitutes would inform the police of any 'funny punters' (see glossary) going round the patch, in turn, the police would offer reassurance to the women about any previous incidents (attacks, robberies) and advise them about people they should be looking out for. Occasionally the prostitutes would offer information on other things. Some of the prostitutes were regarded as being a good source of information:

A lot of them have drug habits and druggies are not very faithful people, they will soon grass on their friends - the people that they call friends - those that are dealing to them. We get quite a bit of information from them.

(DET officer)

However, the value of the information that could be elicited from the women was a point of disagreement amongst the team members; half the team regarded the prostitutes as a good source of information, the other half believed that the information received had to be given a very wide berth. Moreover, one officer suggested that the police did not get enough information out of the prostitutes and that they were not used to their full potential. It was agreed that the prostitutes were only inclined to give information if it would benefit them personally, or if they were paid. Information was only received voluntarily from the prostitutes if it directly concerned their welfare or self interest. As one of the DET observed:

At the end of the day we are still police officers - as friendly as we are with them - they are still guarded as to what they tell us unless they actually decided to give us 'proper' information. We work in plain clothes to try and break down the barrier. The uniform is a barrier, they still know who we are but it is one less barrier for them to deal with.

(DET officer)

Relationships, Rapport and the Rules of the Patch.

It was seen as absolutely essential that some sort of working 'relationship' and rapport be established with the prostitutes. On the whole this was achieved - a not inconsiderable achievement considering the mutual suspicion and hostility which underpinned the relationship. One of the most illuminating aspects of the relationship was the enormous amount of 'reasonableness' that all parties displayed towards each other especially given that each party just barely tolerated the other. So, how was this extraordinary relationship cultivated? Why was it necessary and who benefited from it?

On the part of the police, apart from the essential requirement of a good sense of humour and a mind so broad it could expand almost indefinitely, it was not felt that any 'special' qualities were needed in order to be able to deal with sexual 'offenders' or sex offences. One should not confuse broadmindedness with a greater level of tolerance. 4 Knowing 'how to talk to them' (prostitutes and kerbcrawlers) appeared to be a natural trait that you either had or you didn't have. The male officers seemed, on the whole, to have it. The prostitutes preferred the male officers. The PCs were talkative, humorous and charming and tended to think that every woman found them totally irresistible !! Both parties seemed to positively enjoy the banter and exchanges of witty repartee. 5

In essence, although the relationship between the police and the prostitutes was, on the whole, extremely amicable, the police did let the women know, in no uncertain terms, who was 'the boss' and it was always stressed that if any of them broke 'the rules' - a sort of unwritten but well understood set of 'agreements' that existed between the police and the women (instigated by the police) then they would be arrested and charged. It was an unwritten rule that the women would not start working on the patch until 6.00pm. If they came out before this time then they were locked up. One of the reasons for this rule was the opening of the large shopping complex

situated in the red light district. When this shopping complex was first opened it was feared that problems would arise when female staff who worked in the shops started to leave at night, either because they would be bothered by punters driving round and mistaking them for prostitutes, or else they would be hassled by the prostitutes themselves who, once the clock strikes six, claim the area as they own and do not take kindly to 'strangers' If one of the women started to work before the deadline, then it was usually the other women on the patch who informed the police of the wrongdoer.

The set of rules that existed, and the friendly but firm assertion of authority usually had the desired effect on most of the women. Those women who persistently chose to ignore the rules or who ran off, ignored them or accepted a 'tap' (see glossary) right under the noses of the police, were dealt with firmly - the police did not like to be made to look foolish or inept; their patience and their 'tolerance' was not limitless.

Police Attitudes to Prostitutes.

The prostitutes themselves elicited little personal sympathy or understanding from the police. The officers suggested that all the girls who worked as prostitutes had '...low standards'. One of the biggest 'bugbears' amongst the police was that the women squandered the money that they did earn. To one of the male officers, their lack of financial sense was a constant source of irritation:

...some of them could have made a fortune, they could have earned thousands, but they waste it all on booze, fags and drugs. You work out how much money they could earn over the years ... they don't deserve any sympathy.

(DET officer)

Most of the police had developed a cynical attitude to the women:

I don't buy the excuse that "my kids need feeding" and stuff like that because if they weren't spending £50 a day on heroin then they could spend £50 a day on their kids. I don't buy any of those excuses. Whether I've become hardened to it or not I don't know but the ones that come out for the first time and say they need to get some money, well, what have they been doing for the last twenty years ?

(DET officer - male)

The prevailing attitude amongst the police officers was that the women had chosen to work on the streets, and having made that decision they deserved little sympathy or 'special treatment':

...I can understand why they do it - for the money -but they are hard faced bitches, they know the game; they're street wise. They've put themselves in that position because they want to be out there - it's up to them.

(DET officer - male)

Everybody has a choice...they chose to be out there. It is quite lucrative - if you can do it - but there are lots of people who aren't very well off and who have to rely on benefits and they manage without having to turn to prostitution.

(DET officer - female)

One of the girls, I went to school with her. I was a good friend of hers. It was a good school, she lived in a good area, had a nice family. I used to go to her house for tea and now look at her. I feel sad for her ...I don't feel sorry for her circumstances because she is there out of her own doing, but I look at her and think she's had the same start as me and there she is - a heroin addict and a prostitute - you couldn't have a worse outcome really could you ?

(DET officer - female)

Many of the objections to the prostitutes revolved around the 'offence' they caused:

The girls, standing out there as they do, taking punters down alleyways, leaving durex everywhere - that causes a problem ... it's more upsetting to have women stood out on the street with their skirts up to their necks ... just blatantly offering themselves.

(DET officer -male)

Prostitutes Expectations of and Attitudes to the Police.

Whilst certain prostitutes did appear to go out of their way to provoke a hostile reaction from some of the police officers, the attitude of most of the prostitutes to the police was, in the main, amicable and friendly. However, it transpired that the role of the police - the purpose of the police patrol - was perceived in a variety of ways. Most of the prostitutes criticised the police for failing to protect them adequately. The main question appeared to be *how were the police*, and more specifically, *how was the role of the police perceived* by the women at the receiving end of local police force policy ? It soon emerged that on the whole, most women believed, indeed assumed, that the police were there to protect them and that this 'protective' function was the primary reason for police patrols.

The vice are okay, they're just doing their job. The only reason they caution us is so they can keep an eye on who is working on the patch so they can look after us.

(Sasha)

They drive around so they can protect us. They're always friendly and nice to me, they warn me about funny punters and I appreciate that.

(Laura)

One punter wanted me to do some filthy perverted things and I refused. I told the police but they said that unless I take the number of the car they couldn't do nothing. If anything like that happens again I will take the number - men haven't got the right to go round asking us to do filthy things. I like the police, they're always nice and friendly and they give me advice if I need it. They protect us quite well down here [the patch] but I think that we should be allowed to carry knives with us so that if we get into trouble then we can get ourselves out of it.

(Martina)

The police are there to look after us, that's what they get paid for. I suppose they are quite observant about things, they seem to be quite good at catching weird bastards. They should just look after us though; a couple of them [vice squad members] pick on me all the time and it's not fair they shouldn't do that.

(Imogen)

...I don't know why the police bother driving round and round. I know they're just doing their job but they're bad for business and it isn't as if they actually stop us from working. If they were to be a bit tougher then I think I might probably stop working.

(Trudie)

..If I was badly injured then I might tell the police - not for their sake but for the other women on the patch. The police are supposed to protect us, that's what they're there for, but they never do. They are real sneaky; they drive round in different cars and there's more of them than there used to be. We have noticed. If you want the truth it's annoying all the girls. Why are they doing it? They are supposed to look after us, not confuse us.

(Tessa)

...The police are bastards. They told me where I can work and I assumed that meant that if I worked from that place I wouldn't get arrested. So what have they done - driven round the corner, come back and arrested me. That's f***ing sneaky; they're not playing the game. I have a right to work here and they are being f***ing pigs about it.

(Raquel)

On the whole the police are good to me - well the vice are - the uniformed boys tend to be a bit rude, but they can't touch us; uniformed police aren't allowed to arrest us for working so I don't let it bother me what they say, I ignore them. Are they allowed to arrest us? *Are you sure?* Well I didn't know that.

(Rose)

It was felt that the problems that had developed on the patch, particularly the number of younger girls working on the patch, were in part, the fault and failing of, the police. Interestingly, both younger and older women felt that the police should be on their side and working to protect them.

The police aren't interested in attacks, I don't know what they do all the time. They should concentrate on picking up the young girls - they're the real trouble on the patch, they make life difficult for everyone else.

(Poppy)

The police should be firmer with the young kids who are working away from the patch - they take all the business and they are giving us all a bad reputation.

(Monica)

The 'Biggest Nuisance' - Prostitutes, Punters or the Public?

When it came to ascertaining who the police regarded as the 'biggest nuisance' - the prostitutes or the kerbcrawlers - four of the DET (2 male and 2 female) believed that the kerbcrawlers actually caused the biggest problem and indeed the greatest danger simply because they were a hidden, unknown quantity:

...we don't know who they are. We should know all the girls working the streets, they *shouldn't* cause us a problem.

(DET officer)

1993 saw a steady increase in complaints from members of the public about the activities of prostitutes in their residential area. Complaints were always logged and a member of the team would either visit the complainant or the area (unit beat) officer would call in an effort to appease the situation. When the prostitutes strayed off the designated area and onto the housing estates it caused problems largely because the residents did not confine their disquiet to the Divisional Superintendent of policing. At various times in 1993, letters to the local MP, Director of Local Housing, and, more dramatically to the local newspaper seemed to indicate that the residents were determined to have their grievances aired. It appeared that complaints could easily snowball and be blown out of all proportion. The complaints were about the noise, cars driving round and the apparent activities of pimps in the street. 6 The vast majority of complaints were levelled at the activities of the prostitutes - congregating outside people's houses, urinating in doorways,

using residents gardens and doorways for 'business', leaving used condoms in gardens. Some complaints were from 'respectable' women being mistaken for prostitutes. Some complaints were anonymous, desperate requests from elderly residents for the police to 'do something about it' - they were too frightened to go out and confront the prostitutes themselves.

At the same time, the police were acutely aware that they were a ready scapegoat for 'other' complaints and discontents from the residents. At times, it did provoke some irritation:

We got a call the other week saying that they [the residents] were 'plagued with prostitutes' in the residential area. Well, we know that they are not 'plagued with prostitutes'. Okay, so we hadn't been on the patch for a few nights but... the prostitutes are quite disciplined; they know where they can and can't go. They will try it on now and again but they soon move back on to the patch.

(DET officer)

In reality, the 'plague of prostitutes' was generally no more than a handful. As was outlined in Chapter 5 the women who worked off the patch (in the residential area) primarily consisted of women who were either too scared to go on to the designated patch for fear of getting a 'good kicking' for some misdemeanour or other, or, they were the girls who were merely killing time mid evening before embarking on their more productive burglaries. Nevertheless, to the residents, their presence and activities were enough to cause considerable distress and anger. 7

Summary

On the basis of both interviews and prolonged personal observation, it appeared that just over half of the 40 women interviewed (52.5%) had an amicable and positive relationship with the police. The criteria for this 'amicable and positive' relationship was based on the observation that these women were chatty, friendly and amiable towards the police, usually on first name terms, and would frequently relay information and gossip. Several of the prostitutes were regarded as 'useful' to the police; several were police informers. 19 of the women (47.5%) appeared antagonistic and abusive, both physically and verbally, to the police - this antagonism was directed both at individual vice squad officers with whom they came into contact, and the police establishment as a whole. The poor relationship was judged to be one where the women verbally abused the police, using both bad language and gestures to indicate their irritation, or where the women literally ran off

when the patrol car or individual officers approached, or women who 'kicked off' attempting to evade arrest,

Following any serious incidents on the patch (rape, robbery, assault), the police would make a deliberate point of reassuring the older prostitutes that the suspect (allegedly) responsible had been apprehended. The police made a point of passing on this information and the older women appeared genuinely appreciative that the police had gone out of their way to reassure them. In contrast, the younger prostitutes were not sought out and informed of any developments. Indeed, the younger girls were the most frequently 'targeted' by the police - continually harassed - followed slowly by the vice car and told, in no uncertain terms, that if they didn't leave the patch they would be locked up. The younger prostitutes responded to the police in a manner both aggressive and abusive. At times, it was clear that the police had defined the older prostitutes as a more 'respectable' group who were deserving of extra sympathy and who accordingly should largely be left alone - unhindered by police action. In contrast, it was evident that the police viewed the younger prostitutes as altogether more troublesome creatures who deserved to be dealt with both more vigorously and more frequently. Although this attitude *may* have developed as a 'kneejerk' reaction to public criticism of perceived police inactivity and ineffectiveness in clearing the younger girls off the streets, in general, individual police officers were vociferous in their condemnation of the younger girls; however their attitude was both aggressively intolerant and cynically dismissive:

...I tried to be sympathetic, tried to persuade her to go home and not to work on the patch, but she just stood there, chewing gum and twiddling with her hair and laughing at me - she evidently doesn't care what kind of life she is getting in to, so why should I?

(DET officer)

B. The Law In Action.

The Cautioning System.

The first, and most popularly used sanction against soliciting is the caution. To recap: in terms of the law, within a twelve month period a woman may be cautioned for 'soliciting for the purposes of prostitution' twice, on the third (and any subsequent occasions) she can be charged with the offence and taken to court. Cautions for prostitution (and kerb-crawling) were registered on

the local computer. In theory, a woman could amass two cautions in every city (or with every police force) in England and Wales and never be prosecuted for the offence. The same applied to men cautioned for kerb-crawling. The lack of communication and co-operation between police forces (even local police forces) appeared, to this observer to be staggering, and largely borne from the almost total indifference that was displayed towards prostitution.

In 1993, 102 cautions were issued against women soliciting for the purposes of prostitution, and 10 women were charged with the offence in the city. ⁸ This was a slight increase on the number of cautions issued in previous years.

Table 9.1: Soliciting in the City: Cautions and Convictions 1985-1993.

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Cautions</u>	<u>No. Charged</u>
1985	43	4
1986	30	14
1987	50	16
1988	47	18
1989	24	9
1990	13*	1*
1991	89	11
1992	87	1
1993	102	10

* Low figures can be attributed to low policing priority given to prostitution.

Table 9.2: Monthly analysis of the Cautioning figures in the City 1993

<u>Month</u>	<u>No. Cautioned</u>	<u>No. Charged</u>
January	13*	1
February	9	1
March	9	1
April	1	-
May	1	-
June	6	-
July	7	2
August	6	-
September	15*	1
October	21*	3
November	7	1
December	7	-
Totals	102	10

* The increase in figures for the months January, September and October can be attributed to:

1. Increased complaints from the public to the media and the police about the increased activity of prostitutes in their area and the demand that 'something be done' about the problem.
2. Change of departmental personnel and subsequent change in philosophy towards the problem.

Arrest and Cautioning Procedures: The Rationale.

The decision to arrest a prostitute would be based on a number of factors: (a) the woman's activities of the evening (b) the number of 'taps' she had accepted (c) reference to the mobile filing system which would guide the police as to who was 'due' for a caution (most cautions were issued on a six - nine monthly basis); occasionally decisions would be made in the office prior to the patrol that certain women would be arrested if they were observed to be out working. On a few occasions a woman would be arrested because the team were hoping to get some information from her. Some first cautions were issued to women who had not been observed to have had any customers - they were simply picked up because they were new faces on the patch and therefore unknown to the police. 9 On the whole, the decision to arrest and caution a prostitute would be made on the spur of the moment - the only 'rationale' inspiring the decision was the fact that nothing much else was happening.

The Use of Cautioning as a Deterrent: The Views of Prostitutes.

In this study, it was evident that the cautioning system for soliciting had little or no deterrent effect. All 40 of the women interviewed dismissed the cautioning procedure as ineffective - though there was some confusion about what exactly it was meant to achieve. If the rationale behind the cautioning procedure was to deter the women from continuing in the profession then its underlying purpose was totally lost on most of its recipients:

Getting a caution won't stop me. I was cautioned for shoplifting once and that was embarrassing and humiliating and I wouldn't like to be done for that again. But the caution for prostitution is different; they do it just so that they [the police] can get our details and keep an eye on us. It's not meant to stop us - *is it ?*

(Molly)

The caution itself was variously described as 'an occupational hazard', 'one of the perils of the job' or, quite simply, 'a nuisance'. All 40 women said that receiving a caution had not, and would not, deter them from working in prostitution. Indeed, such was the contempt with which the cautions- and the police officers administering them - were held, that very often, although they were told not to return to the patch following an official caution, most of the women were back on the streets touting for business within 30 minutes of leaving the police station. In such instances, although the police would have been empowered to arrest and charge them (irrespective of the number of previous cautions) they did not. Moreover, the women *knew* that the police would not take further action against them. The police held little authority or influence over the women and, perhaps as a consequence, received little respect.

When asked if receiving a caution *bothered them* 27 (67.5%) said that being cautioned - the actual procedure of being arrested and taken to the police station - did not bother them, however, 13 (32.5%) of the women said that they found the whole procedure unpleasant with 11 of these citing the embarrassment and shame as the factor that bothered them most; the remaining 2 women found the procedure annoying due to the time the caution took and the loss of business that they suffered.

On the whole, the embarrassment and shame was the most prominent factor mentioned by women.

...I hate being taken in for a caution. I hate having to go to the station because everyone there knows that I'm a prostitute and it's embarrassing and degrading. Getting a caution does make me worry, but I get into debt so I have to pay that off or I borrow from my cousin [Trudie] to pay the debt off so then I owe her money, so I have to come out to work. The caution does make me think a lot about what I do so in a sense it does have a big effect, but I have to work so I just have to forget about it.

(Megan)

...I found it embarrassing having to go to the police station because it's awful having everyone know that you're a prostitute. But the police were very helpful and nice and they told me that I wouldn't be bothered all that often - maybe once a year - so it isn't so bad, I don't mind that. I'd hate it if I was taken to court though, if it got in the paper it would cause problems at home.

(Phoebe)

...I've had a couple of cautions but I'm not going to stop working. It's embarrassing having to go the police station because then everyone knows what you do and they come and stare and have a good laugh. I guess that's just part of this job though.

(Natalie)

When I was first caught I was terrified - really scared and ashamed; I didn't know what it was going to be like, I didn't know what would happen - if they would tell people and things like that - but when I realised that all the police wanted was my name and address and a photo then I didn't mind being taken in. It hasn't stopped me. If I was taken to court then I might stop cos' people would find out then.

(Polly)

...I don't like going to the station - all the police stand there and stare and they all know that I'm there because I'm a prostitute. That isn't very nice. I like to get it over with quickly. It doesn't bother me so much that I would stop working though. If I was taken to court then my boyfriend would be pretty mad and the neighbours might find out so that might stop me working for a while.

(Tessa)

...Being brought in for a caution is a nuisance cos' they [the police] always do it right in the middle of the evening just when I'm on peak business, or they wait until one of me regulars turns up and then they pounce, so not only do I get a caution but either me fella gets done for kerbcrawling or else he scarpers as soon as he sees the vice coming up. I wouldn't want to go to court. I hate courts.

(Imogen)

The threat of being charged and taken to court did seem to give some of the women pause for thought. 25 (62.5%) said that being charged with the offence would not unduly bother or deter them from working as prostitutes:

Nothing will stop me; it wouldn't bother me if I got taken to court because most people know that I work anyway.

(Holly)

...I suppose being taken to court would bother me, but then again I'd rather go to court than have no money.

(Jasmine)

...I've had several cautions. Going to court won't bother me cos' I don't have a family to worry about me or find out about what I do. All I would do is pay the fine and continue to work. If they wanted to send me to prison it wouldn't bother me.

(Cindy)

8 (20%) said that being charged with the offence would most probably stop them from working and 7 (17.5%) were adamant that having to go to court

for the offence would definitely make them give up working as prostitutes. (It is perhaps worth noting that all those who said they would most possibly stop or would definitely stop working in the prostitution business if they were charged, were not drug users - they were not working in prostitution in order to finance an expensive drug habit). The most powerful deterrent appeared to be the realization that following a court appearance and the subsequent publication of details in the local newspaper, 'everyone' - family, friends, neighbours - would find out about their involvement in prostitution and this might, in turn, bring about a number of other problems:

...if it went to court then I wouldn't be that bothered for myself and I probably wouldn't stop - why should I ? But my dad wouldn't like it at all, he'd be dead angry and ashamed especially if the neighbours got to find out. I'd get thrown out of home and I've got my bairn to think about, so I think I might stop working for his sake - and the bairns - I wouldn't want her finding out when she's older that I was on the game - even though I'm doing it for her sake, I wouldn't want her to know.
(Amy)

...I don't mind being cautioned but I would be horrified if I was taken to court. Everyone would find out. I couldn't bear it. My son would find out - ooh no, I just couldn't stand it.
(Marian)

...If I was cautioned all the time and taken to court then I would definitely stop working because everyone would find out and I would have my child taken away from me and I can't risk that.
(Tanya)

...If the police were tougher and threatened to take me to court then I would stop. If they were coming round here all the time then it would be too hard to keep working. The police should be tougher I suppose, but there again, we're not doing any *real* harm, are we ?
(Sasha)

The use of Cautioning as a Deterrent: The Opinions of the Police

Perhaps not surprisingly, questions relating to the 'effectiveness' of the cautioning system as either a deterrent or punishment elicited some strong views from the police. This section therefore concentrates on the opinions of the police - people who do not make the law but who have to enforce the law - put it into action.

The four male officers in the team did not think that the cautioning system was effective against the prostitutes; the two female officers believed that it was effective as a means of monitoring the women working as

prostitutes. None of them believed it acted as a deterrent. The overwhelming opinion was that because prostitution was worth so much money, because the women could earn so much money without having to work, there would never be a deterrent. Moreover, the police were convinced that it takes:

a special sort of girl to work on the street; girls who are a bit more streetwise, a bit more criminally minded.

(DET officer)

One of the female officers believed that the cautioning system worked better for the police than for the women because by arresting the women every few months, it provided the police with the opportunity to ask questions about personal and domestic circumstances that may have altered:

It doesn't seem to be a bad system, there isn't a great deal wrong with it as such, there are far more advantages to it than people realise.

(DET officer female)

The male officers were far more disillusioned with the system:

...they come in here and they're laughing. They know they are only going to get a caution and they know that they are going to get released, they know that nothing is going to happen and they know that nothing is going to happen twice. They just go back on the streets and do it again.

(DET officer male)

The girls know what they can get away with, they take it right to the line - they go as far as they can. Some will go over the top. In theory we are supposed to refer them to the social services so that they can get help but with the vast majority of them you're fighting a losing battle, most of them don't take any notice, nothing we can say is going to change their mind about working.

(DET officer - male)

...It doesn't deter them; they get charged and they're not bothered. They go to court and get charged maybe £20-30. They earn £200 a night so one £20 is nothing to them. They don't seem to be bothered about getting their names in the paper - other people knowing what they are doesn't seem to be a deterrent either.

(DET officer - male)

The police were also aware that because of the way the cautioning system worked, prostitution was not regarded by the women as a 'risky' business. However, one officer did not think that prostitutes were treated too leniently:

...we don't put a lot of pressure on them but at least we know where they are and what they're up to. I don't think it's too lenient. It's the same as most offences in theory, like shoplifting, you're likely to get cautioned for the first two offences so it's the same.

(DET officer - male)

When it came to the kerbcrawlers, there was unanimous agreement that the cautioning system was totally ineffective. However, my suggestion that a lot of men did not appear to understand the kerbcrawling legislation was dismissed:

Men know that if they are going down there to pick up a prostitute that it is wrong. *Everyone* should know that it is wrong. They are there for a specific reason...they know they shouldn't be doing it.

(DET officer - male)

Summary .

The policing policy operated by the DET was aimed at monitoring the prostitutes and controlling and containing their prostitution activities to a specific area in the city. However, the policing of prostitution was characterized by a lack of commitment and no clear strategy - apart from the occasional 'purge' of the patch - and this could be regarded as a knee-jerk spasmodic reaction inspired wholly by complaints from the public. 10 The primary interest of the police lay in their drug-related enquiries. At times it was difficult to fathom exactly *what* aspects of policing the members of the DET did enjoy, or, more saliently, what offences they thought were the responsibility of the police. Public order duties were greeted with indignant irritation; missing persons enquiries were dutifully undertaken though privately regarded as a 'pain', the vice patrol was perceived as boring and tedious - not 'proper' policing. The prevailing attitude of the police was that there was not a lot they could do to prevent women from working as prostitutes. The women who worked as prostitutes in the city were seen as a determined lot; if they wanted to work in the business then they would and there was no effective deterrent to stop them. However, several of the police officers believed that they should adopt a tougher approach to the prostitutes:

At the moment, they 'tap' in front of us sometimes and we tell them not to and they say "oh don't pick me up" - we need the kind of relationship where we [police] say "it stops now or the penalty will be greater than you're used to" - we're soft with them and because of that they're just playing at it with us. If we gave them something to respect us for then they would come over to us more. They think we're too daft.

(DET officer)

I think we should charge them more often, but ... if you're going to take them to court you need the evidence. Just driving round like we do, we don't see it. Sometimes maybe we aren't patient enough to sit there and watch them.

(DET officer)

It was clear that the use of cautioning was not an effective weapon - either for deterring women from starting in the prostitution business, or preventing them from continuing. Many prostitutes regarded the procedure simply as something that the police had to do, though most believed that the process - taking their details and photograph- was all part of the 'looking after and protecting' service and that ultimately it was for their own benefit. Few were actually so deterred by the caution that they ceased to work. A number of the women believed that if the police enforced the law more rigorously then they would stop working as prostitutes, however, the most effective deterrent seemed to be the threat that, if they were charged and taken to court, people - friends, family members and neighbours - would discover their activities and they would be shunned by the people that mattered to them. From the prostitutes point of view, the relative infrequency with which they were cautioned and charged led them to believe that the police took no action against prostitutes. As a result, many of the prostitutes appeared to have arrived at the conclusion that the police were indifferent - too soft with them - and that they could transgress any and all laws with relative impunity.

¹ Holdaway (1983) suggests that because much police work is done in 'private settings' (car/office), supervision is rendered difficult. The considerable discretionary powers of the operational officer can therefore affect the capacity of the management to appreciate what is 'really' going on (Holdaway, 1983:165).

² The idea that the police should be more responsive to community needs assumes that it is desirable to be more responsive locally. Morgan (1989) argues that consumers, with limited experience and knowledge of local crime conditions, are not necessarily the best judges of their own welfare (Morgan 1989: 181-182).

³ The members of the DET expressed the opinion that they would rather be known as the 'vice squad' (a) because it would make them feel more 'dramatic' and 'dynamic' and (b) because the term vice squad tended to have a more 'dramatic' impact on the members of the public with whom they came into contact. Men pulled over for kerb-crawling offences tended to look rather nonplussed when confronted with '...Sir, we are from the Divisional Enquiry Team' - as one of the male officers observed: '...people don't know who we are or what the hell we are doing. At least if we say 'vice squad' people know exactly, or have a pretty good idea, what they are being pulled up for. Divisional Enquiry Team doesn't make it exactly obvious does it?' (DET officer).

⁴ The exception to this was with the kerb-crawlers where one of the male officers believed that: '...you need good communication skills to be able to speak to the punters because it is an embarrassing situation for them ... if you don't know how to talk to people you can make a difficult situation worse (DET officer).

⁵ Cunnington (1980:126) reported similar findings, however her observation that male officers were more easily bribed and would accept money or services from the prostitutes in return for being allowed to go free, cannot be supported in this study. Those who think I may have been 'duped' by the police, or that the police might have been on their 'best behaviour' because an observer was present, should bear in mind the length of this study. Cunnington (1980) further observed that with female officers: '...the atmosphere resembles something of a hunt with the prostitutes as prey... the women were stricter, but more scrupulous in upholding the law, particularly in their cautioning and arrest procedure (Cunnington, 1980:126). In this study, the WPCs in the team were more critical and judgemental of the women. It was accepted by the WPCs that the prostitutes got on better with the male officers except when it came to reporting attacks and assaults and then the female police officers would be specifically sought out.

⁶ The police officers were adamant that the idea that pimps were operating in the area was incorrect '...pimping just wouldn't get started, we would stamp on it straight away' (DET officer male) and further '...pimps usually like to look after younger girls who are a bit more naive - we don't have many younger girls' (DET officer female).

⁷ In the Autumn of 1993, largely as a response to public complaints and media pressure that 'something be done' about the perceived increasing problem of prostitution in the city, the police instigated a 'purge' on the patch. A combined operation involving uniformed officers, the DET and 'Specials' and using increased surveillance, observation and the use of a police van with 'Vice Van' clearly marked on the side was all designed to deter prostitutes and kerbcrawlers from operating in the residential area. The operation was hailed a great success by the Divisional Superintendent who not only promised that the patrols would continue, but assured residents that the problem would not recur.

⁸ Not all of these cautions were issued to different women; some women received multiple cautions for the offence of soliciting.

⁹ Haft (1974) questions whether women arrested and cautioned in this manner are not only being discriminated against but are also being deprived of the 'due process' of the law (Haft, 1974:216).

Women stopped by the police who had a lot of condoms in their handbags faced the problem of having this used as 'evidence' of prostitution. Given the vast amount of money spent by the Government promoting the idea of 'safe sex' this is surely counterproductive. It is also possible that non prostitute women could be cautioned for soliciting purely on the basis of having condoms in their handbag.

¹⁰ Since the completion of the fieldwork, the police force in the 'Northern City' have tried several initiatives to deal with the 'problem' of prostitution and kerb-crawlers - most appear to have been instigated as a direct response to complaints from local residents. The 'First Class' initiative (August/September 1994) involved sending letters to the homes of identified kerb-crawlers telling them they had been spotted in a known red light area and 'advising' them of a clampdown against the activities of prostitutes and kerb-crawlers. The police believed that this initiative had contributed to a decrease in the number of kerb-crawlers in the area, and that the arrival of the letters in private houses may have 'caused a little bit of distress' (report in local newspaper, 29 April 1995). In the

latest initiative (April, 1995), the police devised a 'Policing Plan'; this comprised 'new' cautioning and arrest targets of 108 prostitutes a year with the aim of ending (or at least giving some respite) to what local residents were (still) describing as '...a long running nightmare in their area' with kerb-crawlers making the area '...like Brands Hatch' and prostitutes taking their customers into gardens and '...making a noise until two in the morning' (report in local newspaper, 29 April 1995). Given that the number of prostitutes cautioned in the research year (1993) was 102, this 'new' cautioning quota of 108 per year suggests that: (a) the number of women working as prostitutes in the 'Northern City' has remained fairly constant and (b) the police are issuing multiple cautions to the same women.

Red Light, Blue Light

Prostitutes, Punters and The Police in a Northern City

PART FOUR: CONCLUSIONS

The 'Problem' of Prostitution

Prostitution and the offences relating to it, are a practical example of society's over-eagerness to translate immorality into criminality.

(Louis Blom-Cooper, 1964:69)

Red Light, Blue Light

Prostitutes, Punters and The Police in a Northern City

CHAPTER TEN: 'A Different Sort of Offence,
A Different Sort of Offender?'

**CHAPTER TEN: The 'Problem' of Prostitution -
A Different Sort of Offence, A Different Sort of Offender?**

This thesis has examined prostitution in a 'northern city'. Based on extensive direct observation and formal and informal interviews, the study employed a triangulation of perspectives - those of the women working as prostitutes, those of the police unit responsible for policing prostitution offences, and it utilized documentary material in the form of primary (personal) and secondary (public records) data.

The thesis had three central concerns:

1. To analyse why women enter the world of prostitution; to examine the motivating factors, the dynamics of the introductory process and the role of family members and friends in the process both of encouraging the first act of prostitution to transmitting the skills, values and ethics that go with the business.
2. To examine the importance of prostitution in the individuals life; to put the 'deviance' of prostitution into context with other aspects of the individual's 'criminality' and to discover how the participants themselves subjectively defined, perceived and rationalized their activity.
3. To observe how prostitution was policed; to examine the efficacy of local policing philosophy and strategies deployed to counteract the 'problem' of prostitution and the attitudes of police officers who have to operate within the constraints of existing legislation which is regarded as both inadequate and ineffective to deal with the reality of the problem.

One of the principal findings of this thesis is that it challenges the traditional stereotypical depiction of prostitutes as hopeless, downtrodden 'victims' of male exploitation and oppression living lives of misery, poverty and wretchedness. The picture that emerges of prostitution in this northern city is of a business organized and controlled by the women who work in it. As an occupational group the prostitutes in this study were strong, independent and shrewd mercenaries; most of the women were not forced into the business, on the contrary, for most of the women the road of prostitution was neither inevitable nor inescapable but rather a rational choice - the most viable economic option available to them.

The Role of The Law.

The laws governing prostitution in this country are ambiguous, hypocritical and contradictory. It could be argued that prostitution is the subject of criminal law largely because of a social judgement that it is immoral. As Blom-Cooper (1964) points out:

Immorality and criminality are far from co-extensive. ... The law has never really made up its mind as to what it understands by the word 'prostitution'; instead it has dealt with the matter empirically, judging the matter largely on the amount of moralistic fulmination directed at the prostitute.

(Blom Cooper, 1964: 66 & 68)

The question is not whether the criminal law does enforce morality - for self evidently it does - but whether it *should*; how far should 'sinful' conduct be punished by criminal law? There are many contentious areas of human behaviour that do not lend themselves to statutory prohibition.

A persuasive view of the proper scope of legislation in a morally pluralistic society was given its classical expression by Mill in 'Liberty' (1859). Mill held that the only ground on which the majority should attempt by law to restrict the freedom of action of any member of society was self defence. Immoral behaviour (that contrary to the majority code) should not be legislated against unless it was clearly and directly harmful to other people. Mill recognised a sphere of private conduct, a sphere within which because what people do affects directly only themselves and their willing associates, the law should not trespass within it. The regulation of human behaviour involves moral judgements:

I find it difficult to support the position that the criminal law can be stripped of its moral judgements. To the contrary, the very stuff of the criminal law is moral ... the assumption that either society or the individual should be regulated is a moral one. And certainly the decision to regulate specific substantive actions is moralistic. A moral decision is taken when it is decided to protect others by means of the criminal law. Legal reform or even legal revolutions cannot be achieved by taking morality out of the law.

(Quinney 1972, cited Cohen, in Downes & Rock 1979:24)

There is a wide difference between legality and morality - even if we change the law we would not necessarily change moral attitudes. One of the problems is that this deep-seated moral condemnation of prostitution has hampered rational and objective analysis; more crucially, the moral hysteria that surrounds prostitution has dominated and, to a large extent, influenced legislative measures and social policy initiatives addressing the issue of

'what to do about it'. Prostitution is conduct that requires a pragmatic, utilitarian approach. The practical problem surrounding prostitution is *how* to regulate it in the interests of prostitutes, the clients and the public. 1

Alternative Strategies: The Case For Decriminalization

The standard liberal position is that prostitution should be decriminalized. Liberal arguments emphasise the importance of equality before the law and of individual rights and claim that government interference in the lives of individuals and especially in the 'private sphere' of human existence, should be minimal. The sexual relation is seen as contractual; prostitution is seen as a business transaction (a contract entered into by two individuals); the only role of the state would be to regulate certain aspects of the law and ensure fair trading practices.

In essence, decriminalization would mean that all references to prostitution would be removed from the criminal law. 2 According to Birenbaum & Sagarin (1976) decriminalization could be achieved through simple obsolescence (legal and judicial authorities could chose to disregard a law) or it could be brought about because of a change in public opinion (there may be a diminishing sense of moral rigidity concerning the activity or because people are convinced that the law has not succeeded in diminishing the act or has brought with it substantial secondary evils). In the view of the authors:

...criminal sanctions should be removed ... because the mores have changed (or perhaps the moral outlook never was what the legislators made it out to be) or because, although the mores have not changed, there is recognition that society suffers more from the effects of illegality than from the action that has been outlawed.

(Birenbaum & Sagarin, 1976:158)

Decriminalization does not, and would not, signify state approval of prostitution. As Haft (1974) points out:

To assert that prostitution should be decriminalized is not to assert that prostitution is moral or immoral; it is simply a judgement about the proper use of the criminal law, which is intended to protect people and property and not to legislate on an individuals moral conduct.

(Haft, 1974:220)

In reality, decriminalization is really a plea for destigmatization. Perhaps one of the most appealing aspects of the proposal is that by removing the 'criminality' aspect it *may* lift the stigma associated with prostitution and

thus may make more acceptable a hitherto socially outcast group. As the English Collective of Prostitutes (ECOP) point out:

Prostitute women are often scapegoated for all the problems occurring in a particular area; bad housing, lack of playgrounds, dirty streets, violence and theft. All these genuine complaints tend to be blamed on prostitution and in fact on prostitutes, thus forgetting that many inner city areas which are not red light districts have exactly the same problems. The law must protect all sectors of the population and prevent one sector being singled out and scapegoated by the rest of the community.

(ECOP, 1984:13)

Decriminalization has many attractive features but it would not stop, or solve, the basic behavioural problem or motivating attraction of the profession. An argument commonly raised is that decriminalizing prostitution would make it appear more acceptable and that this would 'open the floodgates' and encourage more recruits into the profession. There is no clear evidence to suppose that this would be the case; in the view of the police it was not a likely scenario:

I'm not sure that every girl that suddenly becomes desperate for money decides that she is going to go on the street ... it takes a special sort of girl to do it - you're talking about girls who are a bit more streetwise - a bit more criminally-minded to do it.

(DET officer)

Advocates of decriminalization are extremely vague about the fineprint of such a strategy - about exactly what it would actually mean, who it would effect and how it would actually work in practice. Prostitutes are not the only people involved in prostitution; if a strategy is to work then it has to benefit everyone involved in the business, and everyone affected by the trade. 3 Prostitutes, punters *and particularly the public* would find little to benefit them if the offence of prostitution was removed from the criminal law. The liberal arguments, whilst recognizing that the actual contractual relationship within prostitution falls into the 'private sphere' of human conduct, ignores the fact that prostitution is conduct which transgresses the purely private, on the contrary it is behaviour very much in the public sphere. With this in mind, it is unrealistic to imagine that public opinion would ever become so tolerant and liberalistic in its views on prostitution and attitudes towards prostitutes, that it would either create, or support, a social-legal movement powerful and persuasive enough to overturn centuries of discrimination and stigmatization. Whilst decriminalization may remove the 'criminality' of prostitution, it is unlikely that it would remove the criminality of prostitute

women in the eyes of the public. In the view of one police officer:

...you would still need to monitor the girls because of the circles they move in.

(DET officer)

It is an error to see decriminalization as a panacea; in terms of prostitution, even if the illegality was removed from the primary act (of soliciting) some of its associated evils (pimps, drugs) would undoubtedly continue to thrive - probably even flourish. Critics have argued that it could create a 'sexual free for all' for men (Wilson, 1983:224). It is entirely plausible that the process of decriminalization would render the police so powerless that they would be unable - and indeed unwilling - to offer any protection whatsoever to prostitutes; within the police there may develop a 'you wanted your freedom so suffer the consequences' kind of attitude. It is not inconceivable that prostitutes, as a 'low-status, powerless group whom the dominant majority see as problematic or distasteful' (Reiner, 1985:95) would become even further isolated and victimized.

Legalization - The Arguments For and Against

Next to decriminalization, the most commonly proposed 'alternative strategy' is that of legalization, that is:

... the state control of prostitution through the organization of brothels which promises to remove the trade from the street and relocate it within a more comfortable and manageable setting.

(Matthews, 1986:193)

Advocates of legalization cite several advantages to the brothel system namely: (1) that brothels would remove prostitutes from the street, thereby simultaneously negating both the 'public nuisance' aspect of prostitution and affording prostitutes protection from pimps and violent clients; (2) that brothels would protect non-prostitute women from potential rapists; (3) that compulsory medical checks would prevent the spread of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases and (4) that the state would reap a cash bonanza from prostitution revenue in the form of taxes. Under scrutiny, it soon becomes clear that some of these claims are not entirely sound. 4

In countries where prostitution has been legalized there is little evidence to suggest that the strategy of 'reasonable regulation' or the creation of an 'oasis of tolerance' (Punch, 1983) has been a complete success in achieving any of its objectives. In Germany, several city authorities have assisted in concentrating prostitutes into well inspected parts of town where

the women can carry on their trade in an orderly manner. In 1959 prostitutes in the Reeperbahn district of Hamburg were equipped with identity cards and prophylactics and were obliged to have medical inspections twice a week. It was estimated that over 45,000 prostitutes were bringing in an average of £150 million per annum. Perhaps in view of the tremendous tax revenue to be derived from prostitution, between 1965 and 1967 large state brothels were built in Dusseldorf, Cologne, Stuttgart and Hamburg - the two best known brothels in Hamburg being the '*Eros Centre*' and the '*Palais d'amour*'. These prostitution 'hostels' are fully equipped with private rooms, showers, sauna, tennis courts and a multi-storey car park for visiting clients.

Like the Germans, the Dutch are renowned for their tolerant and liberalistic approach to sexual matters; their attitude to prostitution appears to be both pragmatic and realistic and based on an appreciation that as prostitution cannot be eliminated regulations to make it more manageable need to be formulated. In Holland, it is estimated that more than 1.5 million men pay over one billion pounds a year on sex (Times Higher Education Supplement, 22 January 1993). In theory, brothels are illegal, but in many Dutch cities the municipal authority both recognise and control the brothels (legislation which would have formally legalized brothels was thrown out by the Dutch parliament in 1993); for example, in Amsterdam 200 brothels are allowed within a zonal red light area; this area is controlled by the police, health authorities and the local council. Although it is technically illegal for the proprietor of a brothel to earn money employing prostitutes the authorities tend to turn a blind eye. In essence, the brothels are officially 'tolerated' - as are the coffee shops selling soft drugs. The more liberal approach adopted by some European countries does have a downside; prostitutes from the Third world and illegal immigrants proliferate in the brothels (Guardian ,10 June 1992). According to one observer of the Dutch scene:

The red light district is seedy and dangerous rather than a showpiece for enlightened social policy. The brothels have gyrating girls and transvestites putting their bodies against the windows. Drug pushers and thieves work through the crowds outside ... because the use of soft drugs is tolerated by the police, the bars are full of cannabis smokers. According to many prostitutes, the district has been going 'downmarket for years'

(Cohen, 'The Independent', 24 April 1992)

In other Dutch cities, 'toleration zones' have been created as a way of minimizing nuisance to residents; in Utrecht, the city council gives an annual grant of £120,000 towards the running of a 'toleration zone' - an area which has car parking spaces and a 'finishing off' bus complete with shower, toilet, contraceptives, a doctor and social workers (Guardian, 25 July 1994).

The crucial question of whether legalizing prostitution has cleared prostitutes from the streets, or whether the women who work in these centres/hostels/zonal areas are any better protected (from violence) or whether they are any 'cleaner' is a contentious issue. Customers can certainly ask to see the prostitutes stamped card and thus assure themselves that they are buying non-infected merchandise, but, for the women working in the establishments it would seem that there is not much to be gained. Conditions in many brothels are squalid and rents are high (The Guardian, 8 May 1995). One prostitute who had worked at an Eros centre suggested that they were:

...a catastrophe ... there's no way you can actually refuse a client. The girls are forced to work ... it's worse than science fiction, a society completely organized around the men who've got enough cash, and their pleasure

(Jaget, 1980:172-173)

Just as there is no clear evidence that prostitutes do protect 'respectable' women from male predation, the notion that prostitutes working in brothels would eradicate male sexual violence against women on the streets (prostitute and non-prostitute) cannot be supported. In so-called 'toleration zones', violence against prostitutes is reported to be common (The Guardian, 8 May 1995).

It would appear that the incidence of HIV in the tightly regulated brothels has been restricted to about 1% of prostitutes. However, it has to be acknowledged that brothels only constitute a small percentage of the trade (in Germany 12%, in Holland only about 20%); most prostitutes prefer to work independently. Out of 1250 independent street prostitutes in Amsterdam it is estimated that over 50% are HIV positive (Guardian, 10 June 1992). In essence, the argument that brothels check the spread of sexually transmitted diseases is plausible only insofar as it affects the women who do actually work in the regulated brothels; as has been reported, most prostitutes do not. Moreover, the regulations that do exist only check the women, the men are not checked and are thus at liberty to (potentially) infect whole brothels. As

research has indicated (see footnote 15, Chapter 8), it is not prostitutes who need educating in matters of safe sex, but the customer class. What about male homosexual prostitutes? If the containment of AIDS is the main priority and argument for the establishment of brothels, then brothels for homosexual men would have to be formally, legally established. How would society react to that?

It would seem that brothels do not 'get rid' of prostitution. Since 1982, prostitution in Hamburg (Germany) has increased - the brothels have become merely an *addition* to other forms of prostitution - predominantly street prostitution. In 1982 it was estimated that only 12% of all prostitutes in (West) Germany were registered (English Collective of Prostitutes, 1984:18). Prostitution, although legal in Germany, is a politically awkward issue; when it comes to social security payments, pensions and retraining rights, prostitutes fall into a legal grey area. Legalization has increased the middlemen (legally recognised pimps) and further isolated the women from their families and society. The stark reality is that in countries where prostitution has been legalized, the majority of prostitutes work independently, uncontrolled and unprotected.

The Case For Brothels - The Opinions of Prostitutes.

Of the 40 prostitutes interviewed in this study, 22 (55%) of the women said that they would not work in a brothel and would not like to see them established. There was a deep scepticism that brothels would actually work in practice - either for the prostitute herself or for the customer.

A number of reasons were put forward against the idea of working in legalised brothels:

<u>Arguments Against Brothels</u>	<u>No. of Women</u>
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Financial Considerations

- | | |
|--|----|
| * Want to keep all money earned for self | 12 |
| * Would object to paying income tax | 3 |

Loss Of Independence

- | | |
|--|---|
| * Loss of right to choose <i>who</i> to do business with | 5 |
| * Loss of right to choose <i>when</i> to work | 1 |

The Stigma

- | | |
|---|---|
| * The stigma that would be attached to brothels and the 'sense of shame'. | 1 |
|---|---|

The most prominent argument against brothels concerned financial matters, specifically the fact that the prostitutes would want to keep all the money that they made for themselves, and they would not like to pay tax on their earnings:

...if we had to work in brothels we wouldn't end up with much money - someone else would end up making a fortune - we wouldn't end up with anything.

(Poppy)

...it's not right that I should do all the work and then hand the money over to other people; I'm not doing this so that someone else can profit.

(Beryl)

I wouldn't work in a brothel. Definitely not. I would never make enough money - there would be rent, medical bills and tax and National Insurance to pay and the owner would take a cut so there wouldn't be enough for me. If they made brothels legal I would take up shoplifting fulltime; I would rather be done for shoplifting than work in a brothel - everyone would know what you did, you'd never be able to hide the fact. I would rather be known as a thief than a prostitute.

(Megan)

The second most eloquent argument against the establishment of brothels concerned the loss of independence that would ensue - more particularly, the fear that a prostitutes current right to choose the 'who, where and when' of the business would be eroded:

...I like making lots of money and I can make loads out here; being in a brothel would be like having a proper job - the same hours every night, the same blokes - I'd hate it.

(Amy)

The place would end up being run by all the wrong sort of people. I like to choose who I go with. I would hate it if I was locked in a bedroom and couldn't decide who the landlord was going to send up the stairs for me next.

(Martina)

I wouldn't work in a brothel, I'd lose all my independence. As it is now, I can work where I like and I can go with who I like. I don't want anyone telling me what to do. I think there should be some proper rooms in the area though - you know, proper bedsits where we can take our customers. If there were rooms on the patch then we could take our customers there and it would save a lot of time so we could make more money. I wouldn't mind paying a bit of money for a proper room .

(Imogen)

Only 1 woman stated that her main aversion to working in a brothel was because of the stigma that would be attached to them:

...I couldn't work in a brothel - everyone would know what I did. Anyway, I don't think that men would go to brothels - I don't think they would use them because it would be easy for their wives to find out about it. Men would worry that their wives will know where to look for them so they won't use brothels - it would spoil all their pleasure.

(Marian)

13 (32.5%) of the women indicated that they would prefer it if prostitution was legalised and brothels were established. Of these 13, 11 were regulars; 2 were semi-regulars. When asked for their reasons, a number of opinions were expressed. However three clear, though interrelated issues emerged. The most popular opinion was that brothels would take away the necessity for women to stand on the streets 'looking like tarts'; in turn it was believed that this would reduce both police harassment and public ridicule, and it would also reduce the risk of violence from both customers ('weirdo's' wouldn't get through the door), and from other prostitutes (all currently competing in the same small marketplace):

...prostitution is a business and it should be organized properly. If it was [organized] then there wouldn't be attacks - we would be protected and the police wouldn't be able to touch us.

(Belinda)

I would much rather it [prostitution] was legalised. I would rather work in a brothel and pay tax and have it all above board. Prostitution isn't going to disappear - men are always going to want sex so why not do it properly and get the whole thing organized. If it was legalized then we wouldn't have to stand on the street and have so much ridicule. I don't like street work; I hate having to stand here looking like a tart

(Harriet)

Some women, predominantly in the younger age group, expressed the belief that brothels would not only make the prostitution business safer, but also 'fairer':

I would rather work in a brothel - I wouldn't like having to pay tax but it would be safer. It would protect us against violence and diseases and AIDS; I wouldn't have to stand on the street - the men would just keep coming to the brothel and I would get my fair share of customers. I know I wouldn't be able to choose my own customers but that wouldn't matter cos' the money would be regular and men wouldn't dare turn nasty in a brothel because there would always be other people - like bouncers - around to protect us and sort out any trouble.

(Chloe)

Everyone would get their fair share of customers. I get fed up with all the fighting down here [on the patch]. Brothels would solve a lot of the problems - providing they are run properly. I don't think most people would work in them though because it would mean having to pay tax.

(Molly)

It would stop the violence - not only from customers but also from the other women. It would stop all the fighting, no-one would be able to drive anyone else off the patch - fighting wouldn't be allowed in a brothel.

(Charlotte)

...I think it should be legalised - anything would be better than having to stand out on the street. I'd work in a brothel, it would be cleaner and safer. I wouldn't like having to pay tax and I wouldn't like having to work a definite number of hours night after night. Also, if brothels were set up, would I have to accept any customer who walked through the door without having a say in it? At the moment I can choose who I go with and how often I work. I set my own prices and my terms - you know, things that I won't do - and I get to keep all the money. There would be a lot of drawbacks to brothels, but at least they would be cleaner and safer.

(Trudie)

5 women said they were undecided about whether they would work in a brothel or whether they would like to see prostitution legalised and brothels established. For some, it was an issue that they had simply never considered before, for others the fact that there were both advantages and disadvantages to the idea of brothels meant that the issue was not clear cut. One woman voiced an opinion that was expressed by several of the women:

...I suppose brothels would be safer so from that angle I would say 'yes' I would prefer to work in a brothel. But would we have to work all the time and go with anyone we were told to? I like being able to decide on my clients and I like working when I want to. How would they be run? I wouldn't mind having to pay tax, but I think that the wrong people would get involved in running them and we would end up a lot worse off and that wouldn't be fair.

(Vicky)

In the view of the police, it was thought that the establishment of brothels would have little or no effect on the level of street prostitution, nor was it believed that the majority of women would work in them:

People have said that if you put prostitutes in brothels it would cut down on all other sexual offences committed outside on the street, but I don't think it would. You would still get the people who need the little buzz from actually picking a girl up from the street, rather than going somewhere where it was very clinically done. Brothels wouldn't cut out street prostitution.

(DET officer)

I don't think prostitutes would work in brothels - while they're selling their bodies on the streets they're not paying tax - it's an easy way of making money for them. Most of them are not incredibly intelligent - that's not their fault - but they aren't, so prostitution is an easy way to make money.

(DET officer)

The argument that the revenue to the state from prostitution would be considerable is 'optimistic' - given that most prostitutes do not (and would not) work in them. Moreover, in order to compensate for Tax, National Insurance, 17.5% VAT, brothel keepers fees and medical checks, the fees to the customer would have to rise considerably. Given that the client may not wish to meet the increased financial burden of paying for sexual services in a 'comfortable and manageable setting', it is doubtful that street prostitution would be eradicated; clients would not pay above the rate on the street so street prostitution would be seen to be more profitable. Prostitutes in brothels would be pauperised. Most of the women in this study expressed deep resentment about the idea of 'having to pay the brothel keeper' (who was almost inevitably destined to be a man), and about losing their independence. In reality, legalization would put an industry largely organized by women into the control of men. If women were allowed to set themselves up in their own business premises, how would such businesses be funded? Would they be provided with a cash incentive - the Enterprise Allowance Scheme, the Small Business Grant? How would the tax payer react to that? The biggest difficulty of course is where would brothels be located? The NIMBY (Not in My Backyard) factor is potentially so explosive that any city council or local authority contemplating such a proposal would undoubtedly be faced with long and acrimonious consultation procedures with outraged local residents. The argument that brothels or 'toleration zones' could be sited in non residential areas or locations where there are no business concerns, overlooks the fact that there are few areas in, or around, most major towns and cities which are devoid of residential and commercial interests that would actually meet the

criteria and the subsequent approval of all concerned. 5

Perhaps the biggest argument against legalizing prostitution is that brothels are yet another form of stigmatization - registered women would be branded for life, women working in them would be marginalized and alienated further from the community. Moreover, it has to be acknowledged that a brothel system would completely divide the prostitute community - those women pretty enough (and young enough) to attract a regular steady business would be welcomed through brothel doors with open arms; those less attractive (and older) women would not be regarded as economically viable and so would have to continue working on the street. How are they to be policed? Are the women inside brothels to be completely immune from the law whilst those forced to continue working on the streets would be subject to continual police harassment and the penalties of the court? If that would be the effect of legalizing prostitution then it would be both hypocritical and contradictory - tantamount to saying that those prostitutes in brothels are morally and legally 'acceptable', whilst those who do not work in the system are judged unacceptable and thus condemned. 6

In the end, the legalization argument may be irrelevant and unrealistic. On the basis of this and other studies (Matthews, 1986b), it is clear that most prostitutes would not work in brothels - the loss of autonomy (particularly financial independence) and the threat of inferior working conditions suggests that state organized and regulated prostitution is neither a viable nor a reasonable 'alternative strategy'.

Although it is not the central aim of this thesis to propose an 'alternative strategy', the experience of this research brought home the practical appreciation that realistic alternatives need to be constructed to deal with the problems of prostitution as they affect everyone involved in the phenomena - prostitutes, punters, the police and the public. It seems clear that any 'alternative' strategy needs to embrace a two-fold realistic approach that would aim: (1) to reform existing prostitution legislation to make it more effective both as a deterrent and as a sanction and (2) to realise that prostitute women do need services specifically designed to meet their needs and only by appreciating this fact will any reasonable progress in obviating the worst aspects of prostitution on the streets ever be realized.

Reforming the existing prostitution laws would undoubtedly be both complex and controversial; if reform is seen to be too 'soft' it leads to

accusations that the state is giving its tacit 'approval' to prostitution; if legislation is tightened it is regarded as being punitive, hypocritical and discriminatory - particularly against women. Most commentators have agreed that the word 'common' should be removed from the legislation to remove the stigma created by the present law (ECOP, 1984:9). The inclusion of the word 'common' is discriminatory and derisive; removing it would be useful and would satisfy those indignant at its continued inclusion but essentially such a move would merely be tinkering about with words. 7 What is needed is a more comprehensive overhaul of the existing legislation most particularly in the areas of the cautioning system, and those laws which relate to pimping, procuring and living off immoral earnings - all of which are difficult to prove on the part of the police and which, as a consequence, can act to deter women from bringing the weight of the law to bear on those who may be exploiting them. Without going into specific detail, it is possible that women would benefit if the current laws on procuring, pimping and living off immoral earnings were abolished and replaced by laws which made it easier to charge anyone (male or female) who forces an individual into sexual activity with the appropriate offence - this could include blackmail, rape, grievous/actual bodily harm. Benjamin & Masters (1964) identify two fundamental precepts for the reform of prostitution laws namely:

- ...(a) sexual acts or activities accomplished without violence, constraint or fraud should find no place in our penal codes.
- (b) sexual acts or activities accomplished *with* violence should be punished according to the type of violence, constraint or fraud committed, and the sexual element should not be considered a relenting or aggravating circumstance.

(Benjamin & Masters, 1964:366)

The offence of 'soliciting for the purposes of prostitution' is an area where reforms are more difficult, but not impossible, to formulate. For example, those women whose overt soliciting causes a nuisance or persistently offends public sensitivities (and these do need to be taken into account) could be charged under more general public order offences - 'Breach of the Peace', 'Using Threatening and Abusive Behaviour', 'Criminal Damage' (for property defiled by used condoms, used hypodermic needles etc) are just some of the possibilities that could be considered. The effect of such legislation would be not only to remove the iniquity of the prostitution laws (they would apply to nuisance caused by prostitutes *and* kerbcrawlers) but it is conceivable that

ultimately sanctions of this nature would be seen as far more punitive than current legislation and could have a more general deterrent effect.

This research has demonstrated that in the eyes of both prostitutes and the police, the cautioning system as it currently operated was both ineffective and inadequate either for deterring women from starting or continuing in the business, or as a sufficient sanction discouraging further transgressions against the law. On the contrary, such was the contempt with which the cautioning procedure was held that prostitution was seen as an easy 'penalty free' option. The effect of this was that prostitutes were convinced that because prostitution offences were not rigorously enforced they could commit the offence of soliciting as often as they liked and never be penalised. In turn, this had the effect of 'locking' women into prostitution; prostitution was a deviant and sometimes dangerous lifestyle but it was also extremely lucrative so why abandon it? Furthermore, the laxity with which the law was applied encouraged the women to 'take liberties' (move off the designated patch, leave used condoms in the streets, do 'the business' in residents' gardens) and it was these aspects that caused such outrage amongst local residents affected by the prostitution on the streets. The implications of this are that the cautioning system either has to be abandoned altogether as an inefficient and administrative waste of police time or, it has to be thoroughly overhauled and tightened up to make it more restrictive in its impact. On the part of the police officers involved in the policing of prostitution offences there was a general agreement that co-operation between police forces had to be improved and that the cautioning system should be made standard throughout the whole country otherwise prostitutes and persistent kerbcrawlers took advantage of the system:

The problem is that cautions are only registered on the local computer. If we lock up prostitutes from other areas then we do make a point of ringing the local force and asking if they already have cautions for prostitution. Other forces don't bother to make the effort to ring us though, so they get away with it.

(DET officer)⁸

The English Collective of Prostitutes (ECOP) argue that the cautioning system is an unacceptable way of labelling women who have no convictions; they want the cautioning system replaced by more practical measures:

...to help women who are forced into prostitution by lack of housing, jobs and/or other financial difficulties. ...The police should refer women to agencies willing and able to provide immediate help.

(ECOP, 1984:9)

From my own observations of the cautioning process, police offers of referral to other agencies for help and advice were always swiftly and usually aggressively rebutted by the women.

The ECOP argue that no penalty can work as a deterrent against prostitutes since prostitution is both a 'victimless crime' and a 'crime of poverty'; in this case:

...the best deterrent would be to give economic alternatives ... increased supplementary benefits, child benefits, pensions, grants and other women's wages.

(ECOP, 1984:10)

The argument that prostitution is a 'crime of poverty' and that increased social and economic alternatives would deter women (a) from starting or (b) from continuing in the prostitution business rests on the central, though unproved, argument that it is purely and simply economic marginalization that drives women into prostitution in the first place. 9 This study has shown that poverty is not *the sole* motivating cause for *embarking* on a life of prostitution - although financial gain was a significant factor encouraging women to remain in the business. Moreover, if the economic marginalization argument was completely valid then we could rest on the assumption that once prostitute women have alleviated their immediate dire financial straits they would quickly abandon their association with prostitution. There is no direct evidence to prove that this is the case, as several of the prostitutes in this study suggested money was their 'most serious addiction' and something they had found impossible to give up.

Most people are not aware of the realities of the sex industry. The squalid portrait of the life of the prostitute has left the public with the worst of images. Feminists must take some responsibility for this. Prostitutes cannot be pigeon-holed. As one prostitute put it:

...this world isn't rosy and it isn't black - it's people on the outside who make it out to be blacker than it is. They don't try to understand, they've got their little preconceived notions, and they certainly don't want to change them; it would be too disturbing.

(Jaget, 1980: 160)

The role of feminists in the prostitution debate has been particularly interesting. The rise of the women's movement changed the focus on prostitution; whilst some feminists argue that prostitutes are mainly victims of restricted economic opportunities for women, others argue that they are

symbolic of women as 'sex objects'. The radical feminist position is that prostitution is a structure borne from patriarchy - devised for meeting men's needs inside and outside marriage. As such, feminists argue that when women are liberated and in charge of their own lives, prostitution will wither away. It hasn't happened. Those feminists in the 1970s who saw the 'cause' of prostitution as a matter of liberating their enslaved 'sisters' were largely rebuffed by prostitutes who did not welcome what they saw as another set of 'do-gooders' interfering in their right to trade.

In many ways, the problem of prostitution is the problem of feminism - feminists argue that by performing as paid sex objects, prostitutes are perpetrating the ultimate insult on themselves and all women. Yet - and herein lies the problem for feminists - one of the central tenets of feminism is a woman's right to choose, to make her own decisions about what to do with her own life and her own body, even if that includes selling it. At times, it has been difficult to fathom quite why feminists have been so condemnatory of prostitutes. In many ways prostitutes are the quintessential feminists - they have financial independence, sexual choice, control over what they do with their own body, and probably more freedom than most other women.

As an 'institutionalized occupation' (James, 1976), prostitution has proved to be remarkably persistent, and the prostitute herself, although continually pilloried and penalized has shown herself to be astonishingly resilient. It would appear that prostitution is the longest running and most intractable social phenomenon/problem in history. Does it deserve its reputation? It would seem that as long as prostitution offends a few people's ideas of what is acceptable and decent, prostitution will always be seen as a problem about which 'something ought to be done' and will probably continue to occupy the minds of self appointed 'moral entrepreneurs', the media, politicians and feminist activists. Prostitution is not something that will just 'go away'. Some would argue that prostitution is a matter of public health and, as such, is a issue of proper concern for society. However, it is both hypocritical and fallacious to condemn the prostitute as both symptom and scapegoat for what is, fundamentally, a problem encompassing wider social issues.

¹ Some philosophers (Ericsson, 1980; Jaggar, 1991) argue that what is needed is a philosophical theory of prostitution - stating exactly what prostitution is, what is wrong with it, and what should be done about it. Yet none have attempted such a discourse, instead most concentrate on comparing the relative merits of existing theories.

² The English Collective of Prostitutes (ECOP) never use the term decriminalization on the grounds that it is too vague, imprecise and open to different interpretations - potentially accommodating some other form of state intervention (ECOP, 1987:6). Early advocates of decriminalization called themselves the abolitionists (Josephine Butler) - abolition referred to the abolition of regulation NOT the abolition of prostitution.

³ When the prostitutes in this study were asked if they thought prostitution should be decriminalized there was (perhaps not surprisingly) a resounding one hundred percent 'yes!' However, it soon transpired that they assumed that the police would continue to perform the same role and duties as under the present arrangements, that is the women still expected the police to patrol the district to 'look after' them and chase up 'funny punters' for them.

⁴ There is no sound moral, ideological or political argument for brothels from either a feminist or socialist perspective since it would validate the use of women's bodies as commodities. From a capitalist perspective, the state control of prostitution runs contrary to the laissez-faire free-market philosophy and emphasis on individual entrepreneurship and enterprise.

Proponents of legalized brothels would argue that the effect of anti-prostitution legislation in post war Europe (which effectively closed down brothels and ended the registration and supervision of prostitutes) had the overall effect of producing more prostitutes (presumably judged by the visible increase in the number of streetwalkers); increased the number of pimps, increased the rates of VD (when French brothels closed in 1946 it was estimated that there was an 87% rise in the VD rate, and a rise of 385% between 1959-1964 Benjamin & Masters, 1964:425; Sandford, 1975:216). Advocates could also cite statistics showing an increase in crimes against customers by prostitutes, an increase in the number of clandestine brothels and an increase in the number of prostitutes murdered (Benjamin & Masters, 1964:421; Sandford, 1975:217). Despite this, it does not appear that French prostitutes would want brothels re-opened, indeed in 1975 a 'National Hookers Strike' was held in protest against such a possibility.

⁵ In some (probably most) cities in the UK brothels, in the guise of saunas and massage parlours, flourish. Many operate on the fringes of the law. Their advocates argue that formally licensing such establishments would provide a well-managed, safe, hygienic, legal environment for prostitution. Some local authorities and city councils (notably Edinburgh) have attempted to adopt such a policy but have met fierce resistance from local residents averse to having such establishments in their neighbourhood (The Guardian, 2 March 1995; The Guardian, 5 May 1995).

⁶ Similar arguments can be levelled at the idea of 'toleration zones' indeed, the creation of 'approved areas' for prostitution could create greater problems albeit of a different nature, for example, defining the boundaries of toleration zones (assuming that everyone could agree on a suitable location) would be difficult - would people working inside the zone be immune from prosecution? Are crimes committed by prostitutes against clients inside the tolerated zone subject to legal sanction? How would such areas be policed? Would the police have any role? Would

a toleration area simply act as a picking up point? Bearing in mind that it is often the result of the 'business' transaction that causes most affront to the public (used condoms on the street etc) how far would a toleration area have to stretch?

⁷ Perhaps if removing the word 'common' from the legislation is too much for some legislators to swallow, they would consider *adding it* to the kerbcrawling legislation so that men could be similarly included in its scope.

⁸ Potentially, prostitutes could amass two cautions in every city in England and Wales (kerbcrawlers one caution) and never be convicted of the offence. Whilst the argument for registering multiple cautions on the police national computer could be dismissed on grounds of cost and administration, to at least make the law more equitable, kerbcrawlers and prostitutes should be subject to the same number of cautions prior to being convicted of the offence.

⁹ This is perhaps one of the most interesting and least investigated questions of all - not why women turn to prostitution, but why so few women do. Davis (1965) maintains that this revolves around the loss of social standing; the loss of character involved in being known as a 'common prostitute' or being called derogatory names (whore, slag, tart) may be a decisive factor in rejecting prostitution (Carlen, 1988:33).

Red Light, Blue Light

Prostitutes, Punters and The Police in a Northern City

APPENDIX

- A. *Prostitution in a Northern City:
A Local History Review*
- B. *Questionnaire: Police*
- C. *Questionnaire: Prostitutes*
- D. *Glossary of Terms: A Guide To 'Patch Talk'*
- E. *'Sad, Bad and (Sometimes) Dangerous To Know'
The Case Studies of Forty Prostitutes*

This section is not a comprehensive history of prostitution in the 'Northern City', rather it offers a broad view into the prostitution scene in the city at various periods in history. It provides an insight into the scale of prostitution in the city, the shifting geographical location of the red light district and it briefly examines some of the factors most commonly associated with, or contributing to, prostitution - most particularly poverty, drink and disease.

Prostitution in the Northern City - Pre 1750.

From an early period, it would appear that prostitution, brothels and bawds became concentrated in one section of the city. Early Bench Books reveal that in the early 15th century, prostitutes were allowed to rent a piece of land against the River (Humber) called the 'Foreland' and the adjacent three arches under the walls for £3 6s 8d a year (Gillet & MacMahon, 1989: 60). It should not be assumed from this that the Bench was tolerant of prostitutes. The Bench showed its disapproval of immoral conduct either by fining prostitutes or by expelling them from the city. In 1563, the Bench decreed that:

From this present 18th day of December [1563] no manner of person or persons within this town be so hardy as to commit any whoredom, fornication or adultery nor use nor exercise himself in excessive drinking, riot, dispending his or their time in idleness, wantonness, lightness, scolding or maliciously blaspheming the name of God ... upon pain that everyone offending be punished and made an example of to warn others, whether it be by cart, tumbrel, cuckstool, stocks, pillory or otherwise by imprisonment.

(cited Gillet et al, 1989:120-21)

An example of the sort of crime - and the sort of punishment - that was fairly typical of the mid 16th century period can be revealed through the case in 1565 of an ingenious couple of blackmailers, husband and wife team Isabel and Thomas West. With the agreement of her husband, Isabel would 'entertain' young men; when the client was assured that her husband was absent and both were in bed, the husband would appear with a dagger and demand money. On one occasion, the couple collected £3 4s from a London merchant. When they were finally apprehended, they were both carted round the town with papers on their heads declaring their offences, and were then permanently banished from the city (Bench Book 4: 55 cited Gillet et al,

1989:121).

Underpinning the stern puritanical attitude was the strong conviction that public morals would improve if ale was weaker and less was drunk. In 1574 there were 29 ale houses in the city, by 1630 this had risen to 42 (Gillet et al, 1989:122). Alehouses had a bad reputation for unlawful games such as bowls, dice, cards and backgammon (all prohibited in the annual proclamation of laws), and with '...filthy jests and ribauld songs'.

Prostitution as 'The Social Evil'.

Concern about the influence of alcohol, and particularly the association of spirits with prostitution and criminal behaviour and anti-social activity in general dominated the discourse of both medical men and moral reformers. At the beginning of the 18th century, Dr. John Alderson deplored contemporary drinking habits claiming that:

The general prevalence of nervous diseases and paralytic disorders are due to too much sexual indulgence and the use of wine and spirits to perpetuate the enjoyment. The result - ruined constitutions. All classes suffer, but mostly the mechanics and labourers.

(Foster, 1984: 120)

Alderson gave figures, based on his own observation, of the consumption of drink in the city; in 1764, 51, 128 gallons of brandy, 2, 134 gallons of Gin and 1,007 tuns of wine was consumed. By 1792 this had risen to 102,148 gallons of brandy, 188,104 gallons of gin, 11,259 gallons of rum and 1,738 tuns of wine (Foster, 1984: 120). Given that the recorded population of the city in 1792 was 22,286 (comprising 10,573 males and 11,713 females), this does seem a remarkable consumption rate.

In 1830, the Beer Act was intended to control the hours during which beer could be consumed. In some establishments singing and dancing rooms were set aside and undoubtedly frequented by prostitutes. Disorderly conduct, dancing and music warranted an average fine of about 20s and appeared to have been seen as just an occupational hazard of the landlord. In 1845, police returns showed that in 2,139 convictions, 1,604 were in some way connected with drink. A possible contributing factor to this problem was the practice of paying wages in public houses and paying workers on a Saturday night thus facilitating long drinking sessions on a Sunday which almost inevitably resulting in fighting - in some cases near riot situations.

In 1853 it was estimated that £190,000 a year was spent on drink in

the town. Temperance reformers claimed that the city had more beer shops than any other town of similar size (In 1845 the police calculated that there was 1 public house or beer shop for every 20 houses). In 1853 there were 418 licenced houses, 308 public rooms (with licences) and 110 beer shops. Foster (1984) suggests that women used little shops to buy small quantities of spirits and would prostitute themselves for this (Foster, 1984:123)

It was amongst the poorest classes that the causal chain of drink, poverty, starvation conditions, consumption and venereal disease was at its strongest. Drink was, in essence, the greatest enemy of the working class, keeping them in an almost perpetual state of poverty and degradation (Foster, 1984:124). The connection between drink, poverty and disease with the social evil of prostitution was of profound concern and often cited by leading moral reformers and religious figures in the city. In this respect it has to be said that poverty was often mistaken, or seen to be commensurate with, immorality.

Provision For the Poor

Provision for the poor matched the growth of the town; the city had several important almshouses and charitable institutions. However, the Bench took what measures it could to prevent the migration of the poor into the town from nearby rural areas. Chances of keeping alive in the city were notoriously better than in the country.

The principal agent for relieving the poor was the Workhouse known as 'Charity Hall'. Established in 1698, by 1815 it had 450 inmates. All paupers in receipt of parochial relief had to wear a badge bearing a large roman 'P' together with the first letter of the name of their Parish cut either in red or blue cloth upon the shoulder of the right sleeve of the uppermost garment in an open and visible manner. The practice of wearing the 'badge of pauperism' was abandoned in 1857.

One of the major problems of the workhouse was that disease was liable to, and did, spread:

From the haunts of the prostitutes and other disorderly persons, great numbers of idle and diseased wretches are constantly coming to the workhouse for pecuniary relief.

(Thompson, 1800: 20 cited in Sugden, 1972).

At least one other workhouse in the city and one in a neighbouring district had 'foul wards' for paupers with venereal disease. Victims of venereal

disease were excluded from the infirmary - largely because these diseases were regarded as punishment for sin. In March 1811, Dr John Alderson asked the committee of the city's General Infirmary to set aside two wards - 'lock' or 'Magdalen' wards - in the infirmary for females suffering from VD. Applicants would have to be recommended by the committee for the management of the female penitentiary and would be for:

...the cure of those who are not only miserable to themselves, but the cause of misery to others.

(Alderson, 1811:5)

He promised that there would be no contact between the 'girls in the attic' and those kept in the rest of the hospital; all the doors would be kept locked so that the 'respectable' patients would not be exposed to any danger. In the end, this plan aroused huge opposition from subscribers to the infirmary.

The Female Penitentiary

The penitentiary was, in effect, an asylum for repentent females of a certain description. Established in 1811, the object of the penitentiary was to:

...receive and employ, and ultimately to restore to society such women, as having followed vicious courses, are desirous of obtaining the means of reformation.

(Rules and Regulations, 1811: 3)

Conditions of entry and the ensuing rules and regulations of the penitentiary were rigorously applied. Every person had to apply to the committee and had to spend two months on probation before being fully admitted. Pregnant women (and diseased women) were not allowed. Once admitted, the women were provided with a plain neat dress, and at all times had to keep themselves clean and neat, duly employed (usually domestic duties and needlework), they had to behave in an orderly and religious manner and constantly attend divine service. Morning and evening prayers had to be attended by all inmates. In the summer months, the penitents had to rise at 6am (in winter 7am) and they had to be in bed by 10pm. Meals and prayers were held at 8am, 1pm and 7.30pm. Penitents were not allowed out of the house except on urgent and extraordinary occasions and then not without the special permission of the matron. Near relations (parents) were allowed to visit twice a week for 2 hours, but only at the discretion of, and in the presence of the matron. No other persons were allowed to visit and no correspondence was allowed unless it was inspected by the matron beforehand. A Penitent could only be

discharged from the house if she was taken under the protection of friends and relations who could provide for her or if a domestic service job became available; service jobs out of town were preferred.

Subsequent reports of the establishment seem to suggest that some females were simply beyond redemption:

...at first, (the inmates) feel the necessary restrictions of an institution after the uncontrolled and often wicked lives they have been leading, and a very high spirited girl often gives a great deal of trouble.

(Report, 1924: 3)

...it is a sorrowful fact that some (of the inmates) are quite unable to keep straight, and admit frankly that they are best in a home.

(Report, 1925:4)

In the years 1837 - 1927 (inclusive) 1786 women were admitted to the penitentiary. Of these:

618	were placed in service
421	were restored to friends
293	left at their own request
136	were dismissed
96	left surreptitiously
1	was sent to prison
1	was sent to the asylum
109	were sent to hospital
71	were placed in 'other' homes
10	died
2	were retained as servants.

The 'Problem of Prostitution'

In 1808 the Society for the Supression of Vice was established in the city. Its aims were to combat the increased immorality in the town and to prosecute all keepers of brothels. The most enthusiastic patrons of the brothels were undoubtedly soldiers and sailors. The Garrison in the Citadel (in the parish of Drypool) caused particular consternation to the local residents; soldiers were rumoured to regularly take 'loose' women back to their quarters.

In general, houses of ill fame were to be found in all parts of the town; Paragon Street was regarded as a parade for prostitutes, the number of streetwalkers advertising their charms increasing as the day wore on. The areas with most brothels were in the old town - Leadenhall Square (off Lowgate) and Manor Street. Leadenhall square was conveniently close to the old Harbour and Queens Dock. Prostitutes could be found living in the big

houses in and around Dock Street; they would sit on the steps leading up to the front door, ready and waiting to accost the sailors as they left their ships. As the new Princes dock was made, brothels sprang up along Tan-House (now Waterhouse) Lane (Foster, 1984:137). The most superior brothels were located in George Street and were patronised by foreign sea captains and mates. ¹

The majority of prostitutes were streetwalkers, who frequently accosted seamen and yokels. The most usual form of crime among prostitutes was stealing money from sailors; robbery in brothels (sometimes with violence) was also very common. Prostitutes, those living off them, and thieves, were all classified together. According to a police report of 1839, one person in sixty four was known to be of bad character in the city. This compared to a ratio of 1:87 in London; 1:45 in Liverpool; 1:31 in Bristol and 1:27 in Newcastle (Foster 1984:138).

The police returns of 1842 showed 129 brothels and 431 prostitutes. More detailed criminal returns of 1843 show that the city had 144 brothels - this represents an increase of 15 in one year. These 144 brothels were divided into three classes. 17 were in Class I - these were well conducted superior establishments catering mainly for the Gentry; 55 were in Class II - these were well conducted houses catering mainly for the middle class; and 77 were in Class III - these were largely disorderly houses frequented in the main by the lower orders and criminals. There were 45 Houses of Accomodation (although these were not strictly brothels they were again divided into classes; 18 in Class I; 18 in Class II and 9 in Class III). There were 549 prostitutes, an increase of 118 on the previous year. Of these 549 prostitutes, 109 were in Class I; 172 were of Class II and 268 were in Class III. Of the total number of prostitutes, 134 were aged between 15 - 20; 237 were aged between 20-25; 122 were aged between 25-30 and 56 were over 30. Of the 41 prostitutes convicted by magistrates, only 2 could read and write 'well'; 21 imperfectly and 18 could neither read nor write (Reed: 1846:13). The police returns of 1846 showed 656 prostitutes working in 164 brothels. It was calculated that the total living on prostitution in the city was 820 (656 prostitutes + 164 brothel keepers). Each brothel received an average of 40 clients a week, so in one week 164 brothels catered for some 6560 clients a week. An average streetwalker received 1s per customer, so 656 prostitutes earned some £328 a week; added to this, each

prostitute was estimated to rob her client of at least 1s 6d a week equalling £492 per week, and each visitor spent about 2s on drink totalling £656 a week. This suggested that in the city, £1476 was made through vice per week; an annual total of £76,352 (Reed, 1846:14). [In the same period moral reformers and medical figures investigating prostitution in other cities estimated that £8,000,000 was spent annually on prostitution in London (£6,400,000 of which was pocketed by brothel keepers); £200,000 a year was spent in Edinburgh and £514,800 in Glasgow].

The Good Samaritan Society for the redemption of female character was formed in 1846. Composed chiefly of members from the Wesleyan Methodist society, the society claimed to have had considerable success in 'rescuing' the fallen women of the city - they claimed to have rescued at least 30 women from Leadenhall square in the first year of its operation. It is clear that at the same time as trying to arouse sympathy for the 'truly unfortunate beings' (Reed, 1846:7), of more profound concern to organizations aimed at rescuing and redeeming prostitutes, was the effect that they had on the youth of the city and more specifically their sons who, it was felt, were totally incapable of resisting the temptation offered by the women on the street :

'...the harlot lieth in wait as for a prey, and increaseth the transgressors among men.

(Reed, 1846:8)

Moreover, it was felt that prostitution ate away at the very fabric of society:

...prostitution sweeps before it all moral principle, destroys all religious sensibility, gives birth to cursing and swearing and filthiness of conversation, it is the hot bed of theft and fraud, embezzlement, lying and forgery, the destruction of domestic happiness and general debasement of national character.

(Reed, 1846: 9)

Those working for the eradication of prostitution expressed concern at the laxity with which the laws were applied to prostitutes. Local reformers were particularly appalled that a law passed in the reign of Queen Elizabeth I which commanded all magistrates to apprehend all prostitutes found walking the street between 6pm on a Saturday night and 6am on Monday morning, was never carried out. This led to the claim that those who failed to administer the law were '...aiders and abettors of principles debasing to a nation' (Reed, 1846:11).

It was suggested that Leadenhall Square (off Lowgate) legally

constituted a nuisance which should be demolished. The residents argued that the police were totally incapable of controlling the violence which, as has already been mentioned, frequently reached the dimensions of a riot. 2 In 1851, there were 90 convictions of disorderly prostitutes. The residents of Lowgate petitioned the magistrates about the hordes of prostitutes living in the district.

In 1859 , 245 brothels and 52 houses of accomodation were known to the police. Five years later in 1864, the number of brothels had risen only by 3 to 248. 11 were in Class I; 107 in Class II and 130 in Class III. 672 prostitutes were known to the police; 113 of these were under the age of 20; 263 were aged between 20-25; 115 were between 25-30 and 181 were over 30.

Tables A1 - 4 provide statistical details of the number of prostitutes estimated to be working in the city, the number (and sort) of brothels and accomodation houses in operation, and the ages of the women working as prostitutes.

Table A.1: Number of Brothels and Prostitutes (sample period 1879-1887)

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Houses in which prostitutes are kept</u>	<u>Inc. Dec.</u>	<u>No of Houses to which prostitutes resort</u>	<u>Inc Dec</u>	<u>No. of prostitutes in the city</u>	<u>Inc Dec.</u>
1879	249		23		653	
1880	173	-76	27	+ 4	685	+ 32
1881	187	+14	17	- 10	428	-257
1882	173	-14	16	- 1	361	- 67
1883	210	+37	31	+ 15	469	+108
1884'	152	-58	24	- 7	320	-149
1885*	74	-78	41	+ 17	138	-182
1886	107	+33	33	- 8	205	+ 67
1887	64	-43	12	- 21	100	-105

(* Introduction of Criminal Law Amendment Act.

Source: Watch Committe reports on Police establishment and criminal statistics).

Table A.2: Total Number of Persons Proceeded against/dealt with Summarily,

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Number (m+ f) proceeded against and dealt with Summarily in the city (inc+/dec-)</u>	<u>Total Number of Females (inc+/dec-)</u>	<u>Number of these known to be, or classed as prostitutes (inc+ /dec-)</u>
1874	4445	953	112
1875	4175 - 270	962 + 9	113 + 1
1876	4839 + 664	992 + 30	108 - 5
1877	5027 + 188	889 - 103	136 + 28
1878	6100 +1073	1017 + 128	177 + 41
1879	7064 + 964	1491 + 474	216 + 39
1880	6347 - 717	1265 - 226	177 - 39
1881	7084 + 737	1514 + 249	138 - 39
1882	6934 - 150	1673 + 159	227 + 89
1883	7960 +1026	1966 + 293	258 + 31
1884	7426 - 534	2061 + 95	295 + 37
1885	7087 - 339	2147 + 86	273 - 22
1886	7043 - 44	2197 + 50	317 + 44
1887	7458 + 415	2247 + 50	293 - 24
1888	8084 + 626	2174 - 73	282 - 11
1889	7782 - 302	2202 + 28	276 - 6
1890	8086 + 304	2281 + 79	279 + 3
1891	8525 + 439	2196 - 85	267 - 12
1892	7535 - 990	1973 - 223	253 - 14
1893	7039 - 496	1793 - 180	257 + 4
1894	7085 + 46	1843 + 50	164 - 93
1895	7452 + 367	2094 + 25	182 + 18
1896	8700 +1248	2521 + 427	201 + 19
1897	9261 + 561	2493 - 28	164 - 37

Source: Watch Committee reports on the Police establishment and criminal returns.

Despite the high number of prostitutes in the city and the maritime and military connections of the city - it housed both a Garrison and was a busy sea port - the city did not come under the auspices of the Contagious Diseases Acts (1864, 1866 & 1869). Despite its exclusion from the CD Acts, it does not appear from the statistics and criminal returns, that the city became a 'haven' for large numbers of prostitutes fleeing from the iniquity of the acts as they were enforced in other Garrison towns and sea ports in other parts of the country.

In 1884 , at the height of the 'social purity' movement, and when concerns were being expressed nationally over child prostitution, a brothel keeper in the city (William Parkin of Trundle Street) was alleged to be running an 'infant school for prostitutes' by employing 30 girls all aged about 12, many of whom had been abducted from their homes. (As early as

1859, there was a recognized two-way trade in young women between the city and Hamburg - and on to St. Petersburg) The brothel keeper was fined £100 for selling intoxicating liquors without a licence. This was the only charge that could be brought against brothel keepers as the city had no byelaws for the regulation of brothels (Foster, 1984:142). The lack of adequate laws no doubt hindered the police. However, this did not prevent the suspicion that the police were neglecting their duty to suppress vice. In 1885, a leading city moralist seemed to suggest that the police turned a blind eye to certain activities:

...What about the gilded butterflies who openly traffic in champagne and are known to the police ? ... Is there one law for a courtesan in silk and furs and another for one in rags ? ... Vice is rampant in this town ... why do not the police visit those houses at which courtesans assemble day and night and report the landlord to the magistrates ? It cannot be for want of knowledge, the fact is notorious to everyone, and even if justice is blind the police have eyes and only want instructions (cited Gillet et al 1989:382).³

Table A. 3: Number of Prostitute Convictions and Result.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Number of prostitutes Proceeded against</u>	<u>Discharged</u>	<u>Total Number Convicted</u>	<u>Result Prison</u>	<u>Fined</u>
1883	138	5	133	23	110
1887	117	13	104	6	98
1888	30	2	28	-	28
1889	68	3	65	1	64
1890	87	-	87	1	86
1891	73	1	72	-	72
1892	77	3	74	1	73
1893*	51	-	51	-	51
1894	21	2	19	-	19
1895	5	2	3	-	3
1896	23	1	22	-	22
1897	26	1	25	-	25
1898	13	1	12	-	12
1899	20	-	20	-	20
1900	73	1	72	-	72
1910	120	2	117+	12	105
1920	53	1	52	-	52
1930	11	-	-	-	10+

* Prostitutes charged under Vagrancy Acts until 1893 then classed as 'prostitutes soliciting and behaving in a riotous and indecent manner.
+ 1 person placed on probation

Source: Watch Committee reports on the Police Establishment and criminal Statistics.

Table A. 4 : Ages of Prostitutes (convicted after apprehension/offences tried Summarily)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Age categories</u>					
	<u>Under 21</u>	<u>21-30</u>	<u>30-40</u>	<u>40-50</u>	<u>50-60</u>	<u>60+</u>
1893	9	30	10	2	-	-
1894	2	11	5	1	-	-
1895	-	-	1	2	-	-
1896	2	6	6	6	-	-
1897	3	8	11	3	-	-
1898	1	5	6	-	-	-
1899	-	8	9	2	1	-
1900	2	31	24	12	2	1
1910	7	24	51	24	10	-
1920	1	13	33	4	1	-

Source: Watch Committee reports on the Police Establishment & Criminal Statistics.

In 1885, the Criminal law Amendment Act introduced the new offence of keeping a brothel and also a range of stringent penalties for the offence. In the city, the police knew of only 150 brothels but they were pressed by local councillors to utilise the law particularly as it had raised the aged of consent from 13 to 16 and was thus aimed primarily at curtailing juvenile prostitution. This had dire consequences for the then Chief Constable who, after being discovered with a juvenile prostitute on his knee at house with a 'poor' reputation, had to resign and emigrate to Australia (Gillet & MacMahon, 1989:381). In an attempt to challenge the new law the owner of one house, in Class I, (in Cambridge Street) described it not as a brothel but as a 'gay house' where gentlemen could go; the establishment was not to be confused with 'those cribs in Pease Street'.

Table A. 5: Living On Immoral Earnings.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number proceeded</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Result</u>	
	<u>Against</u>		<u>Convicted</u>	<u>Prison</u>
1899	9	9	9	-
1900	12	10	10	-
1910	7	6	6	-
1920	-	-	-	-

All those proceeded against and convicted were males.

Source: Watch Committee reports on the Police establishment & Criminal Statistics.

Table A.6: Convictions Against Brothel Keeping (Post Criminal Law Amendment Act 1885)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total proceeded Against</u>	<u>Sex</u>		<u>Number Convicted</u>	<u>Result</u>	
		<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>		<u>Prison</u>	<u>Fined</u>
1887	11	2	9	11	-	11
1888						
1889	13	7	6	5	3	2
1890	2	1	1	2	-	2
1891	8	5	3	6	1	5
1892	5	1	4	4	1	3
1893	15	2	13	14	5	9
1894	12	7	5	12	-	12
1895	5	1	4	5	-	5
1896	10	4	6	9	2	7
1897	6	3	3	6	2	4
1898	7	-	7	7	-	7
1899	7	1	6	6	3	3
1900	2	-	2	2	-	2
1910	8	1	7	8	1	7
1920	6	1	5	6	2	3*
1930	5	1	4	5	-	5

* Recognizances (Source: Watch Committee reports).

Prostitution in the 'Northern City' -1900 to the Present Day.

Foster (1984) suggests that one problem probably peculiar to the city was the 'quasi slave' conditions which burgeoned in the fishing industry; boys were apprenticed to fishermen and had to endure extremely difficult conditions. Between trips, apprentices were turned loose and often lodged with prostitutes, who undoubtedly gave them shelter, kindness and very possibly venereal disease (Foster, 1984:148-9). It is difficult to gauge the incidence of VD. In 1900, syphilis claimed the life of 14 people though 12 of these were children under the age of 1. No deaths from any other Venereal disease were reported; figures from the VD clinic (Mill street) provide some indication of probable new cases of VD which occurred each year. 4 In 1921, 968 new cases of VD were reported of which 532 were new cases of syphilis in men (HMO, 1925:96). By 1930, 1392 new cases of VD had been reported but only 294 were syphilis (HMO, 1931:112) and by 1939 only 92 new cases of syphilis in men were reported (HMO, 1943:74). In 1971 of 1643 new patients with VD only 11 were new victims of syphilis, although 19 cases of congenital syphilis were being treated (HMO, 1972: 31).

Many of the areas frequented by prostitutes in the 18th and 19th century are still the regular haunts of prostitutes, although the number of brothels (known to the police) has dramatically declined. In 1964, the

Annual report of the Chief Constable commented that:

...prostitution is not the serious problem one might expect. The Street Offences Act 1959 has accomplished the object of clearing the streets of this type of nuisance.

(Annual Report, 1964:74)

Table A. 7: Statistics relating to Soliciting and Brothel Keeping 1963 - 1972

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of prostitutes cautioned</u>	<u>Number of prostitutes convicted</u>	<u>Number of brothels raided</u>	<u>Brothel Keepers convicted</u>	
1963	-	-	2	2	
1964	21	-	-	-	
1965	6	-	-	-	
1966	16	2	-	-	
1967	20	2	-	-	
1968	31	4(*a)	3(*b)	-	*a) one women on 2 occasions
1969	26	3	4	-	
1970	18	1	-	0	*b) on of the brothels on 3 occasions.
1971	11	3	3	3	
1972	27	4	1	1	

In the early 1990s, the prostitutes working in the city attempted to set up a new red light district away from the established area ('The Lane') to nearby streets. However, this sparked off angry protests from businesses in the area who feared that their business could be ruined because the area would become a 'no-go' area; after only a couple of nights of prostitutes operating in the area, business owners complained that the area had become like a race track with cars cruising round non stop and female employees being pestered by kerbcrawlers. In January 1991, with the imminent opening of the £65 million upmarket shopping centre, the police attempted to persuade the women to abandon 'The Lane' and move onto a new patch - a largely non residential area adjacent to the patch; the women refused to move because they feared they would lose trade. 5 Ironically, in more recent years, despite the efforts of the police to contain and control prostitution within a designated triangular section in the central part of the city, the competitive nature of the prostitution business (both economical and territorial) has led prostitutes to periodically venture out of the 'tolerated zone' into adjacent areas - incursions that have caused much consternation of local residents. 6

To summarize, this brief historical review of prostitution in the 'Northern City' has indicated that the 'social evil' of prostitution and its assumed connection/association with poverty, disease, drink, criminal

behaviour and anti-social activity has consistently caused profound concern to Church leaders, moral reformers, medical men, local politicians and the public. Yet, despite the vast and varied economic, environmental and social changes experienced by the city and its people, and despite the general intolerance of immoral conduct and the rigorous attempts to repress and regulate prostitution and rehabilitate prostitutes, throughout its history, the prostitutes of the 'Northern City' have shown themselves to be remarkably adaptable to many of the wider changes, and relatively impervious to control.

¹ Throughout the thesis, care has been taken not to reveal directly the exact location of the 'Northern City', however, the street names mentioned in this Appendix have not been altered. The passage of time has meant that many of the locations mentioned either no longer exist, or now have different names.

² Gillet & MacMahon (1989) suggest that the duties of the police were so difficult that sober constables were hard to obtain. Constables were frequently charged with being helpless with drink in the early hours of the morning. It was said that policemen habitually drank a pint of bitter prior to going on duty though first sprinkling it with ginger to make it appear like ginger ale (Gillet & MacMahon, 1989:381).

³ Foster (1984) claims that the Watch Committee reports make it clear that some police officers were bribed by prostitutes and brothel keepers; also that the police found it convenient to have brothels where known criminals might be found and brothel keepers on whom pressure might be put to give information (Foster 1984:143).

⁴ Figures obtained from the Annual Reports of the Health of the City 1900. Given the secrecy and embarrassment surrounding venereal disease, some caution has to be attached these figures.

⁵ Sources: Local History Library (HDM 4 January 1991:1).

⁶ Chapter Three, Section E provides a more detailed description and discussion of the 'Research Setting'. Chapter Five provides a more detailed analysis of the territorial and organizational structure of prostitution in the city.

The questions were designed to elicit information relating to the *personal history* of the individual police officers (age, previous employment history, length of service and experience within the service); the *attitudes and opinions* of individual police officers relating to *prostitution and the law* and attitudes and opinions towards *prostitutes and kerbcrawlers*.

Personal History

1. Age
2. What employment/career did you follow prior to joining the police?
3. How long have you been in the police force ?
4. What other areas of the service have you worked in ?
5. How long have you been working in this department?
6. Did you specifically request to work in this department?
7. Why ? What aspects of the work appealed to you ?
8. Do you think you need any 'special' qualities to deal with prostitutes or sexual offences/offenders in general ? If so, what particular qualities are these ?

Prostitution and the Police

9. What is the avowed policy or aim of the police towards prostitution and kerbcrawling ? How do you see your role ?
10. Does the policing of prostitution/kerbcrawling assume a high priority ?
11. Are you satisfied with the amount of attention and time you are able to devote to policing the red light district ?
12. Do you devote equal time to dealing with prostitutes and kerbcrawlers ?
13. In your opinion, which constitutes the 'biggest nuisance' ?

Prostitution: The Police and the Public

14. Do you receive many complaints from the public about the activities of prostitutes and kerbcrawlers ?
15. How are complaints handled/treated ? Are they always taken seriously ?
16. What do the public complain about ?

Prostitution and the Law.

17. In your opinion, is the law, as it currently stands, an effective way of dealing with prostitutes and kerbcrawlers ?
18. In your opinion, does the cautioning system act as a deterrent ?
19. What are the advantages (if any) of the system ?
20. In your opinion, are there aspects of the law that could be changed to make it more efficient and effective ?
21. What are your opinions about (a) decriminalizing prostitution and (b) legalizing prostitution ?

Attitudes, Opinions and Individual Experiences

22. Do you have any particular opinions about the women who work as prostitutes ?
23. In your opinion, why do you think the women work ?
24. Do you have any particular opinions about the men who resort to prostitutes ?
25. In your opinion, why do you think they resort to prostitutes ?
26. Do you have any sympathy for either prostitutes or kerbcrawlers ?
27. In your opinion, are the prostitutes 'useful' to you in terms of the 'information' they provide ? Is the information they provide accurate and vital to the police especially relating to drugs and other crimes ?

General Questions.

28. Are attacks/assaults on prostitutes treated seriously ? Do you think that ALL assaults are actually reported ?
29. Are attacks/assaults on punters taken seriously ? Do many clients of prostitutes complain about being 'ripped off' ?
30. What is the funniest/least plausible excuse you have been given by a kerbcrawler?
31. Have you ever been assaulted/attacked by a prostitute ?

A. General Background: Entry and Introduction to Prostitution.

These questions were directed at ascertaining *how* the individual became actively involved in the prostitution scene - from the first time prostitution was *considered* as a possible option, to involvement becoming a *reality* - either as an occasional resort or as the major organizing principle of their life (like a full-time occupation).

1. How long have you been working (as a prostitute); when did you start working ?
2. Why did you start working ?
3. Was the decision to start working a difficult one ?
4. Are any of your friends working ?
5. Are any other members of your family involved in prostitution ?
[This question - aimed at examining family continuities in prostitution - enabled other questions to be followed up relating to family background].
 - a. Do your family know that you work ?
 - b. Do you have a regular partner ?
 - c. (If so) what was (is) their/his/her reaction/attitude to what you do ?

B. Working Patterns: Mode of Operation.

These questions aimed at establishing a picture of the day to day reality of working as a prostitute; how 'business' is negotiated and conducted; the routine organization of working.

6. How regularly do you work ?
7. How much do you charge (for various services) ?
8. How much money do you normally make on a 'typical' evening (or week) ?
9. What is your usual method of operation ?
 - a. Do you only work on the street ?
 - b. Do you work during the daytime ?
10. Where do you take your clients (where do you normally do the business) ?
 - a. Do you take your clients home ?
 - b. Do you have the use of a room ?
 - c. Do you only do the business in the car ?
11. Have you ever worked in places other than Hull ?

C. Money

12. What does most of your money get spent on ?
13. Do you manage to save anything ?
14. Do you keep all the money you make yourself ?

D. The Patch: Friendship, Competition and Safety

15. Do you always work from the same spot on the patch ?
 - a. Why is that ?
16. Do you work alone or with a friend ?
17. How 'friendly' is the patch; do you get on with all the other women ?
 - a. (If not) why not ?
18. Is the patch very 'competitive' ?

E. The Clients

19. On average, how many clients do you see a night / a week ?
20. Do you have any 'regulars' ?
21. What do you think of your clients ?
 - a. Do you like any of them; do you ever (have you ever) become 'involved' with them ?
 - b. Do your clients tell you much about themselves ?
22. Do you ever turn customers away ?
 - a. Why ?
23. Do you turn down more customers than you accept ?

F. Condoms, Aids and Violence

24. Do you always insist that your client uses a condom ?
25. Do men ever request sex without a condom ?
26. Are you ever offered more money not to have sex without a condom ?
27. Do you accept ?

28. Have you ever been assaulted/attacked by a client ?
29. What happened ?
- 30a. Did you report the matter to the police ?
 - b. Did the police take the matter seriously ?
 - c. Was your complaint acted upon ?
 - d. How do you think you were treated ?
- or
- 31a. If ever you were assaulted/attacked, would you report the matter to the police ?
 - b. Are you confident (do you believe) that the police would take the matter seriously ?
 - c. Do you think that you would be treated fairly ?

G. The Police

32. Have you ever been in trouble with the police for anything else (other than prostitution) ?
 - a. Was that before or after you started working ?
 - b. How did you get involved with that ?
 - c. How old were you ?
 - d. What sentence did you get ?
33. How often have you been arrested by the police for working ?

34. Have you ever been charged (taken to court) for working ?
35. What sentence did you receive ?
36. Does receiving a caution 'bother' you; does it make you think twice about working ?
37. What would stop you working; is there anything that would stop you working ?
38. Do you regard what you do as a crime ?
39. Do you think it is right (fair) that prostitution (soliciting) is an offence ?
40. Would you work in a brothel; would you prefer it if you could work in a brothel ?
 - a. If so, why ?
 - b. If not, why ?

H. General Attitudes to Prostitution.

41. Is there anything about prostitution that you actually enjoy/like ?
42. What is the very worst aspect of the work ?
 - a. Would you like to give it up ? Do you think you will work for long (much longer) ?
 - b. Could you give it up ? Would you find it easy to give up ?

Drugs

Questions relating to drug use were not applicable to all respondents. To those women with a drug history, the questions would sometimes follow on from Q2,12 or 32. Another way of approaching this rather 'sensitive' area would be to ask 'do you have any other vices (like booze or drugs) ?'

43. How/when did you first become involved with drugs ?
44. What did you first use ?
45. What do you use now ?
46. How much do you spend now on drugs (per day) ?
47. Do (can) you normally make enough by working to cover the cost of your drugs ?
48. Have you (or are you) received help from any drugs organization/agency to help you stop taking drugs ?
- 49a. Once you have kicked your habit, do you think you will still continue to work as a prostitute ? If so, why?
 - b. Although you have stopped using drugs, you still work, why is that ?

Family Background

Questions relating to family background, if not revealed in Q5, would be included towards the end of the interview - usually as a precaution against such a sensitive area provoking hostility and thus prematurely terminating the interview.

In general, the questions were aimed at establishing the family 'stability' of childhood/adolescence; periods spent in care etc:

50. The marital status of the parents - married, divorced, single parent ?
51. Are you living with your parents; how old were you when you left home; why was that ?

A Guide to 'Patch' Talk - Prostitute and Police Lingo.

<i>'Business'</i>	The sexual service
<i>'Call Girls'</i>	Regarded as the aristocrats of prostitution, the term emerged in the USA in the 1920s. Its development was largely facilitated by the invention of the telephone and the move toward individual entrepreneurship caused by the demise in brothels and the red light districts. Several studies suggested that the rise of the call girl could be analysed as a response to advanced economic development and new styles of conducting American business (C.Wright Mills 1963; Henriques 1968). As such, it is 'manipulated' entertainment - a method of pacifying prospective (business) clients. The hiring of call girls is regarded as the fastest and most cost effective way for a firm to establish a 'relationship' with a client (Adler & Simon 1979:207). At this level of prostitution, some of the more obvious risks are minimized; they are never out on the street so police harassment is virtually non-existent; pimps have no power. In terms of clients, the call girl can exercise a high(er) degree of selectivity so is potentially less susceptible to violence from clients and sexually transmitted diseases - though there is little direct evidence that this is the case,
<i>CDActs</i>	The Contagious Diseases Acts.
<i>'Clients/Customers'</i>	Men (punters) with whom the women do the business.
<i>'CPS'</i>	Central Police Station
<i>'A Dear Do'</i>	Expensive.
<i>DET</i>	Divisional Enquiry Team (police)
<i>'Down the Road'</i>	Prison
<i>'Dutch Courage'</i>	Courage induced by alcohol.

'Falling down water'	Alcohol.
'Funny Punters'	Usually referred to men (punters) who requested 'kinky' sex or who otherwise behaved strangely either when requesting business or during business.
'Gang'	'A band of persons associating for some (usually criminal) purpose'.(Oxford English Dict).
	A group of young girls were frequently observed on the patch and indeed they did generally work together and commit various other crimes (shoplifting) together as a group. In this sense, it appeared that the girls were not just an unstructured group of youths hanging about in the district, but were embarked on a more systematic and structured way of life.
'The Gear'	<p>Drugs. The drugs most commonly used on the patch were:</p> <p><i>Cannabis resin (dope)</i> @ £4 per gram £60-100 per ounce</p> <p><i>Amphetamines (speed/whizz)</i> @ £15 per gram</p> <p><i>Heroin (smack)</i> @ £15-30 per gram £10 wraps.</p> <p><i>LSD</i> @ £5 a tab (rarely used by the women)</p> <p><i>Temgesics</i> @ £5 a tablet (crushed - heroin substitute.</p> <p><i>Temezepam</i> @ 50 pence - £1 a tablet</p> <p><i>Solvents (glue/evostick/aerosols)</i> .</p>
'The Girls'	The prostitutes.
GoD	Gatekeeper of Department.
'In flagrante delicto'	Actually being caught in the act (of doing business).
'Kinky Sex'	Unusual or perverse sexual practices. On the patch this referred specifically to anal sex.
'Local Gossip'	<p>Gossip/news concerning incidents or people on the patch. Usually revolving around:</p> <p>(a) attacks/incidents that had occurred.</p> <p>(b) 'funny punters' that had been observed going round the patch.</p> <p>(c) 'strangers' on the patch. The sudden appearance of strangers/newcomers set off a maelstrom of rumour and speculation. Strangers included new</p>

prostitutes, new police officers, media people and researchers.

(Media people - newspaper reporters etc - were treated with suspicion and mistrust. Researchers were something of a novelty; at first assumed to be closely akin to media people).

'A Moose'	Term (derogatory) used by some police officers to describe/classify the girls appearance - whether ugly, good looking.
'Occasionals'	Women who occasionally resorted to prostitution - usually for a specific reason or season (eg Christmas). Referred to in some studies as <i>'casuals'</i>
'On The Game'	A long established (pre AD 1150) euphemism for women who work as prostitutes.
'The Patch'	The Red Light District - sometimes referred to as <i>'The Lane'</i> .
'Proper'	The meaning that the girls would attach to conventional or <i>'respectable'</i> social standards, behaviour or situations.
'Punters'	Men who drive (or walk) around the patch looking for a women who will do business.
'Regulars'	<i>'Career'</i> prostitutes - women who viewed prostitution as a career - a fulltime occupation and way of life. Women who worked every night of the week (or most nights) every week of the year. Referred to in some studies as <i>'habituals'</i>
'Semi Regulars'	Women who worked as prostitutes 1-3 nights per week most weeks of the year. These girls did not view prostitution as their career.
'The Social'	Social Security and/or Social worker: <i>'On the social'</i> money from social security benefits, income support etc. <i>'From the social'</i> an official from the social security; also referred to social workers.

<i>'Stick your neck in'</i>	A term used by some police officers - 'friendly' advice to the girls not to chat up punters or 'tap' in front of the police.
<i>'Strangers'</i>	See 'local gossip'.
<i>'Streetwalkers'</i>	Women who predominantly work from the streets. As the form of prostitution with the highest visibility it is undoubtedly the least desirable mode of operation. Streetwalkers command lower fees and because of their high visibility they are more exposed to the police and thus more easily harassed and arrested (Benjamin & Masters, 1864:124; Heyl, 1968:200). They are also more vulnerable to male domination and victimization from pimps and dangerous clients. Research has suggested that the social and economic background of streetwalkers is relatively unambiguous with most women coming from working class and the 'lumpenproletariat' (Hoigard & Finstad, 1992:15). A comprehensive typology of prostitutes 'types' are provided by Benjamin & Masters (1964:126-154) and Sheehy (1973).
<i>'A Tap'</i>	A prostitute being approached for business by a punter
<i>'A Tap and an Acceptance'</i>	A prostitute accepting business with a punter.
<i>'A Tap and a Refusal'</i>	A prostitute declining business with a punter.
<i>U/E</i>	Unemployed
<i>'The Vice'</i>	The term used by the prostitutes for the police team - specifically those police patrolling the patch.
<i>'Working'</i>	The term used for (and by) the women working as prostitutes.

Appendix E. 'Sad, Bad and (sometimes) Dangerous To Know'
The Case Studies of 40 Prostitutes

The following case studies are based on interviews obtained from forty women working as prostitutes 'on the patch'. The accounts that appear outline the background and circumstances of the women - their recollections of their personal life history. All the women have been given pseudonyms. These have been chosen at random. The order in which the case studies appear is purely alphabetical - the aim simply to facilitate ease for the reader. No other significance should be attached to the ordering.

Alexis

Aged 25 years 6 months. White. Divorced. 3 children. Bi-Sexual.

Family Background: Unsettled. (parents divorced)

Length of Time Working in Prostitution: 5 years

Criminal Record: Criminal Damage, ABH, GBH, Affray, Shoplifting.

Interviewed: Central Police Station

Alexis started working as a prostitute when she was in her late teens and regarded it as her career; She had briefly worked as a prostitute in London and Leeds. Alexis had three children and (at the time of interview) was pregnant with the fourth; in the past twelve months she had suffered two miscarriages. She had a boyfriend (the father of her current pregnancy) but lived with her girlfriend 'Charlotte'. Her boyfriend was aware that she worked; he frequently accompanied her on to the patch to keep her company while she was waiting for business. Alexis had attempted suicide on several occasions. She conceded that she had a vicious temper which had got her into trouble on several occasions. She claimed that she would never be able to give up prostitution simply because it was the only thing she was good at.

Amy

Aged 18 years 10 months. White. Single. 1 child. Heterosexual.

Family Background: Settled

Length of Time in Prostitution: 2 years

Criminal Record: Nil. (other than cautions for prostitution)

Interviewed: Street

Since leaving school at the age of 16, Amy had worked in a bakery and a shoe shop (YTS) but these jobs were only temporary and had not lead to full time employment. Her family were aware that she worked. Amy was not currently involved in a relationship; she had a boyfriend but he 'did a runner' when she discovered she was pregnant. She decided to keep the baby because she thought she would be able to care for it with the money she made from working as a prostitute. Amy worked throughout her pregnancy, indeed she claimed to have made more money than ever before because men would pay her for the service and then slip her a bit extra - 'for the baby'.

Belinda

Aged 39 years 8 months. White. Single. 2 children. Heterosexual.

Family Background: Settled

Length Of Time in Prostitution: 18 years

*Criminal Record: ABH, Burglary, Robbery, Theft, Shoplifting, Drugs
Drunk and Disorderly, Criminal Damage*

Interviewed: Street.

Recent financial and domestic problems had brought Belinda back onto the streets again - she normally worked from home, and preferred to work during the day - this was for reasons of safety - she thought street work was not financially rewarding and was too risky. Belinda said that she came from a 'good home'; she described her early childhood and home life as very happy and settled; no-one in the

family had ever worked in prostitution or had a criminal record. She herself had been involved in a number of criminal activities since her late teens - mainly she said she had been 'led astray' by boyfriends whom she was merely 'trying to please'. A mother of two, Belinda was determined that she would tell her children about her work in a way that was both 'honest and tactful' - she did not want them to think badly of her because she claimed that they were her sole motivation for working.

Beryl

Aged 55 years. White. Divorced. 5 children. Heterosexual.

Family Background: Settled

Length of Time in Prostitution: 10 years

Criminal Record: Nil. (cautions for prostitution)

Interviewed: Street, and Central Police Station.

Divorced when she was in her late twenties, Beryl claimed that (following her divorce) those children that she had received custody of had 'turned out alright' whereas those that had gone to her husband had 'gone bad'. Beryl had had several serious relationships since her divorce, including one that had lasted eleven years, but she currently lived alone. All of her children were aware that she worked as a prostitute, indeed it had been one of her daughters who had introduced her to the business. Ironically, it transpired that Beryl had started working at roughly the same time as her good friend 'Rose' - but they hadn't got the nerve to admit to each other that they had started working until they bumped into each other on the patch one night. Beryl found street work 'cold, scary and too tiring' - she preferred working from home, and she didn't 'give a bummer about the neighbours'. Beryl described herself as a drug addict - a 'slave to Temezepam' which she had taken for ten years to try and cure her insomnia. Beryl was convinced that her experiences as a young girl in the Second World War had made her neurotic because after all '...being locked in a cupboard and having to wear a gas mask while bombs were dropping would give anyone sleepless nights'.

Carly

Aged 24 years. White. Divorced. 1 child. Heterosexual.

Family Background: Settled

Length of Time in Prostitution: 3 years

Criminal Record: Theft, Drugs.

Interviewed: Street.

Divorced with a young child, Carly lived with the father of the child, but not very happily - she said she would be 'glad to see the back of him'. He was frequently in trouble with the police. Carly herself had been in trouble with the police for drugs and motoring offences. She had left school when she was 16. Her attendance had been poor; she had trouble reading and writing and couldn't see much point attending when she couldn't understand what was going on. Carly had previously been employed as a waitress, a barmaid and a care assistant in an old peoples home. She had wanted to be a ballet dancer, but things 'hadn't quite worked out'.

Charlotte

Aged 19 years 9 months. White. Single. 1 child. Lesbian.

Family Background: Unsettled (parents divorced)

Length of Time in Prostitution: Several months (at time of interview)

*Criminal Record: ABH, Criminal Damage, Threatening and Abusive Behaviour
Theft.*

Interviewed: Central Police Station

As a young child Charlotte was physically and sexually abused by her father. Her mother divorced him and subsequently remarried but her new stepfather also repeatedly sexually abused her. She was taken into care. Charlotte had a child, but 'it' had also been taken into care and she had no contact at all with 'it'. Charlotte

had attempted suicide on three occasions. Charlotte had not attended school regularly and she had no formal qualifications. She would have liked work as a nurse or carer, but she believed that no-one would employ her because she suffered from severe epilepsy and had frequent attacks. Charlotte had been in trouble with the police on several occasions; she hated working as a prostitute and only turned to it out of desperation - she had an expensive drug habit to finance.

Chloe

Aged 18 years 7 months. White. Single. No children. Heterosexual.

Family Life: Unsettled

Length of Time in Prostitution: 5 years

Criminal Record: Shoplifting, Burglary, Theft, Criminal Damage, ABH, Threatening and abusive behaviour, Drugs.

Interviewed: Street.

Chloe started working as a prostitute when she was 13 years old. She had not attended school regularly, had no formal qualifications and had never had paid employment. She considered prostitution to be her career, the only thing she could do - along with shoplifting, burglary, and fighting. Chloe started using drugs (solvents) when she was 13 and quickly moved onto amphetamines and heroin - though her main use was amphetamines. She hoped to give up all drugs because she believed they had contributed to a miscarriage she had suffered earlier in the year. She had found the whole episode very traumatic; she had not even realised she was pregnant - just assumed that it was the drugs that were affecting her system. When she started bleeding, her boyfriend said 'you're pregnant!', and Chloe had said 'don't be so bloody daft' but the next thing she knew she was in hospital 'having a miscarriage all over the place'. At the time of the interview, Chloe was pregnant again. She 'supposed' that her boyfriend was the father of the child, and she 'supposed' that she would stop working when she was about seven months pregnant, but she was 'sure' that she would resume working when the baby was one year old. In the meantime, she hoped that her boyfriend would get some money for them - he was currently unemployed but Chloe wanted them to be 'like a proper family'. Chloe believed that prostitution was a good way to get money - she did not like the actual sex bit - and she couldn't seem to get any regular customers. She 'supposed' that was because she robbed all her customers - she made more money that way. She claimed that no-one in the whole world liked her - not the police, other prostitutes, or customers. Chloe conceded that she had a bad reputation and everyone always picked on her and blamed her for everything. Everyone said that she gave prostitutes a bad name.....

Cindy

Aged 21 years 4 months. White. Single. No children. Heterosexual.

Family Background: Orphan

Length of Time in Prostitution: 20 months

Criminal Record: Theft, Shoplifting, Deception, Arson, Threatening and Abusive behaviour, Drunk and Disorderly, Obstructing the Police.

Interviewed: Street and Central Police Station.

Brought up in care, Cindy had no family that she was aware of. Since leaving school she had been unable to get full time employment despite having done numerous YTS schemes. Cindy had been committing criminal offences she was 15 - some minor, and some 'really serious stuff as well'. She had served a six month prison sentence and thought prison was 'really brilliant'; she had 'really enjoyed it'. Cindy lived with a friend (also a prostitute); she had a regular boyfriend - he had been a punter - but this relationship ended when Cindy realised that he simply wanted all her money. Cindy believed that she was better off without a boyfriend while she was working because they caused too much hassle and wanted to take all the money.

Claudia

Aged 24 years 8 months. White. Single. No children. Heterosexual.

Family Background: Settled

Length of Time in Prostitution: 6 years

Criminal Record: Theft, Burglary, Shoplifting, Criminal Damage, ABH, Deception, Handling, Drugs.

Interviewed: Street.

Claudia left school at the age of 16 with no formal qualifications. She had not had, and 'did not intend to get, a proper job'. Claudia came from what she described as '...a good nice middle class family, who live in a nice area and sent her to a nice school'. She did not think she had been 'born bad', she just preferred to be with exciting people who led exciting lives. She had been committing various criminal offences since she was 14 years old. She believed that most of her problems stemmed from her involvement with drugs which also started when she was in her early teens. She was sent to prison for the first time when she was 21 and (at the time of the interview) fully expected to be 'sent down the road again' - this time because she had not complied with a community service order. This non compliance was, according to Claudia, a matter of principle. She simply '...had absolutely no intention of digging some old biddies garden for her'. She was hoping that going to prison would enable her to get away from things for a while and have a good rest. (Three days after the interview, Claudia was sentenced to 8 months in prison).

Fiona

Aged 33 years 9 months. White. Single. Divorced. 3 children. Heterosexual.

Family Background: Unsettled (parents divorced)

Length of Time in Prostitution: Several Years (intermittent involvement)

Criminal Record: Burglary, Handling, Assaulting a Police Officer, Motoring offences.

Interviewed: Central Police Station

Fiona was taken into care when she was 11 years old. She remained there until she was 16. While she was in care, she embarked on a prolific (and profitable) career in burglary. She first turned to prostitution when she was 17 and worked on a regular basis for several years until her marriage. Divorced with 3 children, Fiona had only recently resumed working as a prostitute. She had vowed never to work again, but recent difficult circumstances, both personal, domestic and financial, had 'forced' her out onto the streets again. She had just been sacked from her job, and claimed that the £150 a week she received from 'the social' simply wasn't enough. The only clear option - as she saw it - was going back on the game, or suicide. Fiona had been at the centre of accusations that she had physically abused her children. It was an allegation she totally refuted - Fiona thought that the school (who had reported the bruises on her children) were interfering and should 'mind their own business', and that the Social Services were picking on her because of her past record. Fiona was currently on probation for several offences; one reason for resuming in prostitution was that she knew that it wouldn't go on her record and that her probation officer wouldn't find out about it.

Gwen

Aged 54 years. White. Divorced. No children. Heterosexual.

Family background: -

Length of Time in Prostitution: Several Years (intermittent involvement)

Criminal Record: Nil (cautions for prostitution)

Interviewed: Street.

Gwen had worked 'on and off' as a prostitute for most of her adult life. She had worked in a number of cities around the country. She had tried on several occasions to give it up and 'become respectable' but a broken marriage and financial difficulties had made her 'officially both husbandless and penniless' so she had resumed working in the business. It had been several years since Gwen had

worked on the street and she confided that she was finding it very difficult - mainly because some of the other women were very young and aggressive - there wasn't the 'camaraderie of the old days'. Gwen was hoping to build up a regular clientele again so that she could work mainly at home.

Harriet

Aged 26 years 4 months. White. Single. 1 child. Lesbian.

Family Background: Unsettled (parents divorced)

Length of Time in Prostitution: 3 years

Criminal Record: Theft, Motoring Offences

Interviewed: Street.

Harriet had been 'in and around' the business for most of her life; her mother, sister and cousin 'Sasha' all worked as prostitutes. Harriet had been working as a prostitute for several years, mainly because she was 'single, gay and a parent'. Her mother and sister had taught her all the tricks of the trade and her initiation into the business had been well organized. When she was in London, Harriet worked through an agency and by advertising; she never worked on the street. She catered for both sexes and provided a wide range of services such as lesbian parties, bondage and sado-masochism. In London, her prices started at £80 for half an hour - it was the 'extras' that earned more money - she could earn up to £1000 a day. In the northern city, she had to work on the street; she had tried to get the other girls interested in starting an agency but none of them were keen. Harriet was one of the few women to concede that she liked the work and she would find it difficult to give up. She did not want to work as a prostitute for ever but she wished it could be organized properly so that women didn't have to stand on the street 'like tarts'.

Holly

Aged 18 years 4 months. White. Single. No children. Heterosexual.

Family Background: Settled

Length of Time in Prostitution: 1 year

*Criminal Record: Handling, Theft, Threatening and Abusive behaviour,
Causing Harrassment, Alarm and Distress, Burglary,
Motoring Offences.*

Interviewed: Street.

By her own admission, Holly had been 'a right tearaway' when she had been younger. Her parents, social workers and the police had all tried (and initially failed) to 'handle or understand' her. Holly became involved with a gang* of other girls when she was 13 years old and spent the next few years continually involved in shoplifting and burglaries. Eventually all her friends started working on the patch so she decided to try it; she hadn't been too keen at first but all her friends had 'egged' her on and told her what to do - eventually she 'got used to it' and she worked quite regularly. Holly claimed to work for 'ordinary money, not drug money' - and just for something to do.

Imogen

Aged 24 years. White. Single. No children. Heterosexual

Family Background: Unsettled (parents divorced)

Length of Time in Prostitution: Several Months (at time of interview)

Criminal Record: Shoplifting.

Interviewed: Street, and Central Police Station.

When Imogen was 16 she was involved in a near fatal car accident. The injuries she sustained had left her in a coma in intensive care for 2 months. Massive reconstructive surgery of her face and skull, including complicated skin grafts and the ensuing rehabilitation programme of speech therapy and physiotherapy had taken well over a year to complete. The accident had shattered her education; she had never had full time paid employment; she had done voluntary work in the

community with the physically and mentally handicapped. Despite her outward 'joie de vivre', one legacy of her accident was a tendency to lapse into severe depressions. Her remedy for this was, she admitted, 'speed and sex'. Imogen loved the amount of money that could be made from prostitution - she usually made about £100 a night. Imogen had been taking drugs - amphetamines - for 'quite a while' - she thought they might stop her getting depressed. Imogen insisted that she was not an addict - she just took drugs when she needed them.

Isobel

Aged 21 years 6 months. White. Single. 1 child. Heterosexual

Family Background: Settled

Length of Time in Prostitution: 8 Months

Criminal Record: Handling, Criminal Damage.

Interviewed: Street.

Isobel had only been working as a prostitute for several months. She had never had full time employment. A single mother of a 2 year old child, she had no contact with the father of the child. Her family were not aware that she had started working. Isobel had been in trouble with the police - she started working as a prostitute because some of her friends were working on the patch and told her that the police 'never did anything to prostitutes so it wouldn't go on to her record'. Isobel intended to work for as long as possible because she believed that she would now find it difficult to give up the money.

Jasmine

Aged 21 years 7 months. Asian. Single. 1 child. Heterosexual

Family Background: Unsettled

Length of Time in Prostitution: 3 nights (at time of first interview)

Criminal Record: GBH, Shoplifting, Deception, Prostitution.

Interviewed: Central Police Station

At the time of the first interview, Jasmine had only been working for 3 nights. Her parents were divorced. Her mother had remarried but Jasmine refused to have anything to do with her stepfather because she 'hated' him. Both her mother and elder sister had worked as prostitutes. Since leaving school, Jasmine had held one full time job as a cleaner in a local factory but had given it up after a year because she found the work boring and the money poor. She had found it difficult to get a better job because she had a criminal record and no-one would employ her. Jasmine did not know how long she would work as a prostitute, but (after 3 nights) she had earned £270 and she couldn't see how else she could get that kind of money without getting into serious trouble. She had not liked having to stand out on the street because it was cold and some of her clients had been 'smelly and repulsive' and she hated 'having to do the sex'. [Several weeks after the first interview, Jasmine appeared to be thoroughly settled into the world of prostitution - she worked every night; had acquired quite a few regulars and was earning about a £100 a night. She was not terribly keen on the police (the feeling was mutual, she was regarded as a 'real nuisance' who 'tried to be clever' with them all the time). Her family were still unaware that she was working, except her cousin who, under Jasmines influence had started working].

Jessica

Aged 24 years. White. Single. No children. Heterosexual.

Family Background: Settled

Length of Time in Prostitution: 4 years

Criminal Record: Shoplifting, Drugs. Assaulting a Police Officer.

Interviewed: Street.

Jessica left school at 16 with no formal qualifications. She did not want a 'proper' job - she hoped that she would be able to continue working in the prostitution business for many years. Jessica started working in order to finance her heroin

addiction. She started taking drugs when she was 19 - amphetamines at first and then heroin and cocaine. Jessica was wary of committing further shoplifting offences; she had been in prison and although she had not found the experience too traumatic she was irritated that she had been moved around a lot so had been unable to get settled and make friends. There were some drawbacks to prison - lost contacts and lost finances - but on the whole it had provided her with the opportunity to 'have a good rest'. Jessica could never envisage giving up prostitution - she had too many expenses - drugs, luxury items and holidays abroad at least three times a year. Jessica believed that her most serious addiction was to money.

Kylie

Aged 27 years 9 months. White. Single. 5 children. Heterosexual.

Family Background: Unsettled (parents divorced)

Length of Time in Prostitution: 8 years

Criminal Record: Burglary, Theft, ABH, GBH, Common Assault, Breach of the Peace, Possessing an Offensive Weapon, Causing Harrassment, Alarm and Distress, Handling, Drugs, Obstructing the Police.

Interviewed: Street.

Single with 5 children, Kylie lived with a boyfriend. He was unemployed and, like Kylie, was very well known to the police. Since her early teens, Kylie had been involved in theft, burglary and 'fighting' (GBH), she had also been involved with drugs. Kylie had been to prison twice. She did not believe in paying for anything and was constantly in trouble for non payment of fines (not prostitution). Her father was aware that she worked, he didn't mind, according to Kylie he had reasoned that if she didn't earn at least some money by working as a prostitute he wouldn't have any money of his own left. Kylie reckoned that her father '...must have spent hundreds' on her over the years.

Laura

Aged 26 years 9 months. White. Single. 1 child. Heterosexual.

Family Background: Settled

Length of Time in Prostitution: 2 years

Criminal Record: Nil (cautions for prostitution)

Interviewed: Street ++

Laura left school when she was 16. Despite not having any formal qualifications, she had always managed to find plenty of work - usually selling jobs or demonstrating jobs - clothes, jewellery. She had also worked as a waitress and barmaid. Her immediate family were not aware that she worked. Following the break up of the long term relationship with her boyfriend, Laura was introduced to the business by her cousin 'Jessica'. Since she had been working Laura had managed to save a lot of money - she liked to holiday abroad twice a year but mainly she worked to provide for her daughter. Laura claimed that since starting in prostitution she had found it impossible to form a regular relationship with anyone; she had lost all trust in men; all she wanted was to make as much money as possible out of them.

Lynette

Aged 32 years 3 months, White. Single. 4 children. Heterosexual.

Family bckground: -

Length of Time in Prostitution: Several Days (at time of first interview)

Criminal Record: Nil (cautions for prostitution)

Interviewed: Central Police Station

At the time of the interview Lynette had been working as a prostitute for 4 days. She lived with her boyfriend (currently unemployed) and their 4 children. Her boyfriend was unaware that she had started working as a prostitute; he believed that she had got a babysitting job - so far this had explained her nightly absences

and the sudden appearance of extra cash. Lynette said she had started working because she needed money 'urgently' and that she didn't 'get enough from the social'. She hated the idea of working and had tried to pretend to herself that it wasn't really her doing it. Her friend had worked on the patch and had told her that prostitution was 'easy money'. So far Lynette said she hadn't found it particularly easy at all.

Marian

Aged 39 years. White. Single. 3 children. Heterosexual.

Family Background: Settled

Length of Time in Prostitution: 10 years

Criminal record: Theft, Deception, Breach of the Peace.

Interviewed: Street.

A single mother of 3 children, two of her sisters, including Monica, worked in the business. Marian had never had full time employment. When she was in her early twenties, Marian had been in trouble with the police for what she described as 'petty things' but claimed that no-one in her family was 'really criminal'. Despite having a number of sisters working as prostitutes, Marian claimed that they never discussed their work when they were together - the subject was 'strictly taboo'.

Marilyn.

Aged 26 years. White. Single. No children. Bi-Sexual.

Family background: Unsettled (parents divorced)

Length of Time in Prostitution: 10 years

Criminal Record: Theft, Shoplifting, Handling, Drunk and Disorderly.

Interviewed: Street.

Marilyn started working as a prostitute when she was 16 years old. She had an older sister (also a prostitute) and a younger brother. In her early childhood, Marilyn was repeatedly sexually abused by her father. This resulted in her being taken into care. When she was in care she was continuously moved from one foster home to another - she was never settled. When she was 16, Marilyn went to live with her older sister in Scotland who was already working as a prostitute. After she was raped by one of her sisters clients Marilyn decided that if she was going to spend her life being abused and raped then she 'might as well start charging for it'. Since then she had worked in Scotland, London, Birmingham, and Leeds. She had been prosecuted on numerous occasions - usually receiving a fine, but this did not deter her from working. Marilyn had previously worked as a barmaid, waitress and care assistant - but she had had difficulty getting employment because of her criminal record. Marilyn had no contact with her parents. Her sister now worked in the northern city (as a prostitute) but they hated each other so much that they ended up fighting if they met on the patch. Her younger brother was aware that she works - he was a burglar; she helped him sometimes.

Martina

Aged 19 years 9 months. Black. Single. No children. Heterosexual.

Family Background: Orphan

Length of Time in Prostitution: 2 years

Criminal Record: Shoplifting, ABH, Criminal Damage.

Interviewed: Street

Brought up in care, Martina had 'no idea' who her parents were. She had attempted suicide on several occasions. Martina left school when she was 16; she had done clerical work in offices and had worked as an office cleaner. Martina had been in trouble with the police and she had 'dabbled' with drugs - speed and heroin - but because of the expense she mainly stuck to cannabis if she was feeling depressed. Martina started working as a prostitute when she was 17. She was living in the childrens home at the time and was about to be thrown out. Martina thought that most of the girls from the childrens home had been down 'The Lane' at one point.

She had a boyfriend; he was unemployed and he was aware that she worked. Martina claimed that they had 'stupendous rows' - just that day he had called her 'a nigger and a whore' which she said 'was true' but he 'was wrong' to remind her.

Megan

Aged 18 years. White. Single. 1 child. Heterosexual.

Family Background: Unsettled (parents divorced)

Length of Time in Prostitution: 4 years

Criminal Record: Shoplifting.

Interviewed: Street.

Megan started working when she was 14 years old. Following a family argument, her mother threw her out of home. She went to live with her cousin 'Trudie' who was working as a prostitute. Trudie had showed her 'the ropes'. Megan had been a virgin when she first went onto the patch, since then she had 'learned a lot'. Megan had a 2 year old child. She did not have a regular boyfriend and she had not re-established contact with her family. She had never had full time employment; though she conceded that she didn't particularly want a 'proper' job because she had no qualifications and could only get 'rubbish jobs which didn't pay so well'. She had been taken to court for shoplifting on several occasions but she had only received cautions and Megan reckoned that was the same as being not guilty.

Molly

Aged 19 years. White. Single. No children. Heterosexual.

Family Background: Unsettled (parents divorced)

Length of Time in Prostitution: 2 years

Criminal Record: Theft.

Interviewed: Street.

Molly started working as a prostitute when she was 16 years old. Following a 'difficult period' at home her mother had kicked her out. She went to live in a hostel and as most of her friends at the hostel were working as prostitutes she decided that she might as well earn some money as well. Her mother found out because when she was first cautioned she was just 16. Molly had no involvement with drugs but she had been charged with shoplifting on a couple of occasions - an experience which she found both 'embarrassing and humiliating'. She would much rather just be cautioned for prostitution

Monica

Aged 33 years 4 months. White. Single. 3 children. Heterosexual.

Family Background: Settled

Length of Time in Prostitution: 12 years

Criminal Record: Theft, Harboursing an Escaped prisoner.

Interviewed: Street.

Monica started working as a prostitute when she was 21 years old. Two sisters (including Marian) and a sister in law all worked in the business. For most of the 12 years that she had been in the business she had worked mainly from home. For several years she had a 'nice arrangement' with one of her customers -he used to give her £100 and visit her 3 times a week. Complaints from the neighbours brought the relationship to an end. Monica had never had full time employment; she had devoted herself to bringing up her 3 children. She lived 'in sin' with the father of the children but they did not get on well - they just stayed together for the sake of the children. She tried to leave home once - she went to stay with one of her sisters - but the children sent her presents and notes asking her to go back so she had ended up '...living with a man I do not love and having sex with men I do not know'.

Natalie

Aged 25 years. White. Married. 3 children. Heterosexual.

Family Background: -

Length of Time in Prostitution: 6 months
Criminal record: ABH, Shoplifting, Drugs, Handling.
Interviewed: Street.

Married with 3 children, both Natalie and her husband were unemployed. She had been working as a prostitute for just a few months but in that time had managed to build up a regular clientele. Her husband was aware that she had gone on the game. Both Natalie and her husband were heavily involved in the drug scene but she claimed that the main motivation for working was just to earn money for 'normal, everyday things'.

Olivia

Aged 17 years 4 months. White. Single. No children. Lesbian.
Family Background: Unsettled (parents divorced)
Length of Time in Prostitution: 8 months
Criminal Record: Shoplifting, Threatening and Abusive Behaviour.
Interviewed: Central Police Station.

In recent years, Olivia's home life had become increasingly unsettled. Although she lived with her mother, their relationship was volatile and acrimonious. Olivia felt that her mother was to blame for most of her current problems. She left school when she was 16. Although she was expected to do well in her GCSEs, she decided that there 'wasn't much point' staying on at school or taking exams. Olivia claimed that following a row with her mother (which resulted in her being thrown out of home) she started living with a girl who was working as a prostitute. It was through her association with this woman, and other friends that she became involved with drugs. She had started on solvents (glue) but then went on to speed and then heroin. At the time of the first interview, she was a registered heroin addict spending about £80 - £100 per day on her habit. Olivia was adamant that it was only after she had been working as a prostitute for a while that she started taking drugs - all her friends were 'using' so she wanted to as well. She was keen to get off heroin and she hoped that because the police had arrested her she would get some 'proper' help. However, Olivia firmly believed that even if she resolved her heroin addiction, she would still work as a prostitute because the money was too good to give up.

[Seven months after the first interview, Olivia's circumstances appeared to have changed quite dramatically. She was living at home with her mother but she appeared happy and settled. She had been placed on a drug rehabilitation programme and was confident about beating her addiction. Although still unemployed, she had applied for several jobs and was hoping to secure work in the future. She had not worked as a prostitute for several months and claimed to no longer associate with her 'friends' on the patch].

Phoebe

Aged 19 years 9 month. White. Single. 1 child. Heterosexual.
Family Background: -
Length of Time in Prostitution: 3 months
Criminal Record: Nil (cautions for prostitution)
Interviewed: Street.

Phoebe had a 2 year old child and planned to marry her boyfriend in the near future. Her boyfriend was unemployed; he was not aware that she had started to work as a prostitute, neither were her parents. Phoebe had never been in trouble with the police and had no involvement with drugs. Since leaving school, she had worked as a catering assistant and a shoe shop assistant. The YTS had not impressed her so when she refused to do another one because the money was so poor, her social security had been stopped. Phoebe conceded that she didn't know whether or not she would give up prostitution when she got married simply because the money was so good. She had managed to save a lot so far and conceded that she didn't think she would find it easy to give up.

Pippa

Aged 21 years 10 months. White. Single. 1 child. Heterosexual.

Family Background: Settled

Length of Time in Prostitution: Several months

Criminal Record: Handling, Drugs.

Interviewed: Street.

At the time of the first interview, Pippa had been working as a prostitute for 2 months. Her boyfriend had recently died from a drugs related problem. Pippa had started working for financial reasons - when her boyfriend was alive she had relied on him for money; she would never have considered working when he was alive - he would never have allowed it. Pippa reasoned that it was better to make £200 a night working on the patch and 'giving men what they wanted' rather than struggle and go without or resort to other things, such as stealing, in order to get some money.

[Within a few months of starting in prostitution, Pippa was working every night. She had also developed a serious heroin/cocaine/speed addiction. During the course of the year she was also the victim of a serious sexual assault].

Polly

Aged 25 years. White. Divorced. 3 children. Heterosexual.

Family Background: Settled

Length of Time in Prostitution: 3 nights (at time of interview)

Criminal Record: Theft, Shoplifting, Burglary.

Interviewed: Street.

Polly was a divorced mother of 3 children. At the time of the interview, Polly had been working as a prostitute for just 3 nights and in that time she had only had 2 customers. She had a friend working on the patch, and thought it would be an easy way to make some money which she claimed she desperately needed for her children. Following her arrest by the police she tearfully vowed that she would never, ever come out on the patch again because she had found the whole experience of being cautioned very humiliating and frightening.

[Within a few weeks, Polly was working on the patch on a regular basis].

Poppy

Aged 16 years 10 months. White. Single. No children. Heterosexual.

Family background: Unsettled (parents divorced)

Length of Time in Prostitution: 3 years

Criminal Record: Theft

Interviewed: Central Police Station.

Poppy had spent 3 years in the care of the social services; this was largely because of her constant truancy and associated activities (drugs, crime, prostitution). Her parents were divorced; she lived with her regular boyfriend. Poppy started working as a prostitute when she was 13. With her friends, 'Chloe' and 'Holly' she used to hang around sniffing glue and picking up lorry drivers as they drove to and from the docks. As far as Poppy could remember, prostitution and drugs 'sort of happened at the same time' - she had to do one to get money for the other. She had started with glue sniffing but then moved onto speed and heroin. At the time of the first interview she was spending about £40 a day on drugs. She claimed that most of her days were spent drinking beer and hanging out with her friends. She was trying to cut down on drugs because she wanted to get married and her boyfriend didn't like her using them.

[Four months after the first interview, Poppy was a heroin addict. A rather perverse logic convinced her that if she took heroin she wouldn't have to shoot up so often; with speed she was injecting upto 7 times a day, with heroin she only had to inject 3 times a day. To Poppy it made perfect sense to move to heroin; it made her feel good even though it was a 'dear do', she was spending about a £100 a day.

Poppy appeared to be in a poor state. She had got married, but her husband 'had changed' and he had suddenly become violent. She had left him and gone to a 'safe place'. Her parents and other members of the family knew what was happening to her and they knew what she was doing - drugs and prostitution - but, according to Poppy they had, like everyone else, 'washed their hands' of her].

Raquel

Aged 30 years. White. Single. No children. Heterosexual.

Family Background: -

Length of Time in Prostitution: 11 years

Criminal Record: Deception, Theft, Handling, Prostitution.

Interviewed: Central Police Station.

Raquel started working in London, but had since worked all over the country. Single, with no children, Raquel had a boyfriend with whom she lived and who was aware that she worked as a prostitute. Until recently, Raquel had a serious drug problem (heroin and amphetamines) but she claimed to have kicked her habit. Most of the 'other things' she had been involved with had been to support her drug habit. Extremely hostile to the police (and researchers), Raquel believed that it was unfair that women should be prosecuted for prostitution. Although Raquel suggested that the local police (in the northern city) were not as rigorous as other police forces in their enforcement of the law, she believed that they (the police) acted unfairly towards prostitutes by continually harassing, arresting and fining them.

Rose

Aged 59 years 9 months. White. Divorced. 5 children. Heterosexual

Family background: Orphan

Length of Time in Prostitution: 10 years

Criminal Record: Theft.

Interviewed: Street.

At nearly 60 years of age, Rose was the oldest women working on the patch. Rose was brought up in care. She did not want to talk about her childhood. Married young, she had raised 5 children; she had also suffered 4 miscarriages and had one termination. Following her divorce, she started to work as a prostitute. Her motive was simply financial - she was too old to get a job, she didn't get enough from 'the social' and she wanted nice things. All her children knew that she worked, she thought she would tell them before someone else did. She was not proud of what she did and she vowed that if any of her daughters announced that they were going on the game, they would 'have to get over my dead body first'. Several years ago, Rose was the victim of a serious assault. Although the police had, in her opinion, been very good to her at the time and the man responsible was in prison, she was very concerned about what would happen when he was released. The incident had left Rose very wary of punters.

Sasha

Aged 30 years. White. Divorced (twice). 3 children. Heterosexual.

Family Background: Settled

Length of Time in Prostitution: 2 years

*Criminal Record: Theft, Wounding, Possessing an offensive weapon,
Criminal Damage.*

Interviewed: Street.

Sasha had been married (and divorced) twice; she had three children - none of whom lived with her. Sasha had been working as a prostitute for 2 years. Her cousin 'Harriet' worked and although Sasha had vowed that she would never start working, her circumstances had been 'difficult' and she had needed some money. Sasha had previously been in trouble with the police for a number of serious offences and she had a suspended prison sentence hanging over her. She had been told that she wouldn't 'get done' for prostitution. Nevertheless, it had taken her a

long time to make the decision to start working and to pluck up the courage to accept her first customer - in the end she had just drunk a bottle of wine for some 'dutch courage'. Sasha did not know if her family were aware that she had started working - she did not have a lot of contact with her parents. Sasha said she had come from a 'good' home; her mother had brought her up 'to be clean' so she would be 'horrified' if she found out. Sasha thought she would like to get married again in the future - she had liked being married, she just hadn't liked her husbands.

Sophie

Aged 18 years 7 months. White. Single. No children. Lesbian.

Family Background: Unsettled (parents divorced)

Length of Time in Prostitution: 18 months

Criminal Record: Shoplifting, Theft, ABH.

Interviewed: Central Police Station.

Sophie came from what she herself described as a 'broken home' and her relationship with her family was extremely acrimonious. Her parents were aware of her involvement in crime, drugs and prostitution. She had left school when she was 16. Attending school had not been high on her list of priorities and she had left with no formal qualifications. Apart from a brief YTS Sophie had never had full time employment. From her early teens Sophie had drifted in and out of various criminal activities. She started shoplifting at the age of 14 and had been arrested and charged with this on numerous occasions. On the last occasion she received a custodial sentence. Her experience in the detention centre was not one she was keen to repeat; shoplifting was therefore deemed to be 'too risky'. Sophie claimed not to have had any involvement in crime for over a year. Sophie became involved with drugs when she was 15. Solvent abuse had quickly developed into heroin addiction and shortly after she was 16 she started working as a prostitute in order to finance her habit. Sophie claimed to have been introduced to all these activities by her friends and other contacts mainly from the drug world. Following a course of methadone treatment, Sophie claimed to have beaten her addiction to heroin. She had a stable relationship with her girlfriend who also worked as a prostitute. Despite no longer needing to finance an expensive drug habit, Sophie still continued to work as a prostitute on an occasional basis.

Tanya

Aged 19 years 3 months. White. Single. 1 child. Heterosexual.

Family Background: Settled

Length of Time in Prostitution: 3 years

Criminal Record: Theft.

Interviewed: Street.

A single mother of a four year old child, Tanya started working as a prostitute when she was 16; she started working for 'financial reasons' - her boyfriend thought it would be the best way to get money for them both - so he had 'helped' her to get started in the business. Although she was no longer involved with that relationship she continued to work regularly in the business. Tanya had never had full time employment. Her parents were not aware that she worked; she believed that they would be 'upset' if they discovered what she was doing. They had been supportive when she had become pregnant and they frequently helped out financially with the maintenance of their grandchild. Tanya had wanted some independence and continuing to work on the street was the only way she could think of getting it. Tanya intended to stop working before her child grew old enough to realise what she was doing so; she planned only a few more years in the business. She would like to get a 'proper' boyfriend and settle down but she found it difficult having a boyfriend and working as well; it was also difficult trying to get a serious boyfriend who didn't mind that she had a child.

Tessa

Aged 25 years. White. Single. 2 children. Heterosexual.

Family Background: -

Length of Time in Prostitution: 1 year

Criminal record: Nil (cautions for prostitution)

Interviewed: Central Police Station.

Single with 2 small children Tessa was a former heroin addict still receiving treatment; she began working in order to finance her drug habit. Her current boyfriend knew that she worked. When he first found out what Tessa was involved in, he had ended their relationship, but they soon resumed their relationship. He was unemployed - he had never had a job - and because things were difficult financially, he had decided to 'let' Tessa work occasionally. Since leaving school Tessa had not had a job. She attributed this to her dyslexia. Because she was unable to read or write she was unable to fill out application forms or read the paper for jobs so she was unable to get a job. She did not want to learn to read or write or otherwise seek help for her problem because that would mean she would have to go to college on a night and she couldn't spare the time. Tessa firmly believed that people who were dyslexic should get more money from the social.

Trudie

Aged 23 years. White. Single. 2 children. Heterosexual.

Family Background: Unsettled (parents divorced)

Length of Time in Prostitution: 6 years

Criminal Record: ABH, Criminal Damage, Theft, Kidnapping.

Interviewed: Street

Trudie was repeatedly sexually abused by her father. She was taken into care at an early age. She started working as a prostitute when she was 'thrown out of care' - aged 17. One of the girls she had been in care with had started working on the patch and told her it was the easiest way to make money. She was also told that she wouldn't 'get done' for it - she had been in trouble before for 'fighting' (ABH), criminal damage and for theft. She had no formal qualifications from school; she had not attended regularly. She had previously had employment as a waitress and as a care assistant and she had done a college course on 'child care'. Trudie had 2 children. Single, she had a regular boyfriend; he was aware that she had worked in the past but she had promised him that she had given it up especially since she was pregnant. None of her pregnancies had been planned and Trudie did not want any more children - she wanted to be sterilized then she wouldn't have to bother about getting pregnant in the future.

[A few weeks after the first interview, Trudie suffered a miscarriage. Four days later she resumed working in the patch].

Vicky

Aged 31 years. White. Single. No children. Heterosexual.

Family Background: Settled

Length of Time in Prostitution: 16 months

Criminal Record: Drugs.

Interviewed: Central Police Station.

Vicky had left school at the age of 16 but had since attended various courses at college in order to gain some qualifications; she had worked as a book-keeper and had done general office work, typing and clerical duties. Currently unemployed she wanted to go into full time education so that she could '...do something positive' with her life. Vicky had been involved with the drug scene (though was not keen to discuss this aspect of her life in detail). Vicky's family were not aware that she worked, she was 'very close' to them and she knew they would be 'hurt and upset' if they found out. She did not have a regular partner - she didn't think she would get married at all because she couldn't imagine anyone wanting to marry her if they found out what she did.

Red Light, Blue Light

Prostitutes, Punters and The Police in a Northern City

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