

Time is Money: The Commodification of the Indoor Sex Industry

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Abstract

Time is central to the organisation and experience of work and yet, to date, there is very little research on the temporal organisation of the sex industry. This thesis redresses this, drawing on qualitative longitudinal data with nine independent, indoor sex workers in Northern England. Participants produced time maps of their work trajectories, which were verbally and visually elaborated upon in repeated interviews over one to three years. A feminist-figurational approach prioritised time both theoretically and methodologically, providing insight into the dynamic contexts and experiences of the sex industry. Participants' trajectories revealed varying levels of vulnerability through time resulting from intersecting personal and structural contexts, which shaped work decisions. Subsequently, I provide a relational account of commodification processes in the sex industry, whereby a temporal experience is commodified through the negotiations between sex worker and client. These interactions are a site of struggle, which is indicative of the sometimes-contradictory nature of work time and leisure time, but nevertheless signify increasing interdependence within civilising sex worker-client relationships. This necessitates greater self-regulation to manage expectations and behaviours, and both sex workers and clients enact forms of temporal control and resistance. Analyses of these interactions reveal a complex and dynamic account of fluctuating and asymmetrical power chances. Through exploring the culture of indoor sex work through a temporal lens, this account of power develops existing theorisations which recognises sex work as work.

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List of Abbreviations

| | |
|-------|--|
| AW | Adultwork |
| BAME | Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Groups |
| BDSM | Bondage and Discipline, Dominance and Submission, Sadism and Masochism |
| CV | Curriculum Vitae |
| GFE | Girlfriend Experience |
| MARAC | Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference |
| MILF | Mum I'd Like to Fuck |
| PSE | Porn Star Experience |
| SWERF | Sex Worker Exclusionary Radical Feminism |

1. Introduction: Time in the Sex Industry

Most escort advertising websites take care to inform potential clients that all payments are for the escort's time and companionship only, elaborating that any other activities that occur within the allotted time are at the discretion of consenting adults. Yet the lists of specific acts offered on individual escort's profiles divulge the sexual nature of the encounter. Of course, the legal status of prostitution in the UK compels advertising sites and escorts to organise their work in this way, since inciting prostitution for gain is illegal (Sexual Offences Act 2003). The internet has become the key mode of organising sex work (Sanders et al 2018) and, in providing this mediatory role, an emphasis on the sale of time rather than specific services acts to negate responsibility. The incitement of prostitution is illegal, but the sale of time is not. In this way, time is framed as a container of sexual, intimate and emotional services. A unit of time is given a price, but the practices undertaken within this time are of greater significance to sex workers and their clients.

In apportioning economic value to time, though, the meaning of that time is altered, particularly considering the growing emphasis of productivity and efficiency through time in a capitalist economy. In addition to seeking maximum yield, time also acts to bound labour and leisure in the sex industry (Bernstein 2007). Time is used as a form of regulation, therefore, which requires management by those involved (Elias 1992). Power asymmetries are both shaped and produced through such temporal practices (Sharma 2014) which has specific implications for sex industry relationships where power and agency are contested. Exploring these practices in recognition of dynamic processes and experiences *through* time contributes to a greater understanding of the sex industry. Temporal practices are vital, therefore, and necessarily shape experiences of the sex industry but, despite this, researchers are yet to give temporal understandings sufficient attention.

This is especially pertinent given calls for complex and nuanced understandings of the cultures of work in a contested sex industry (Agustín 2005; Phoenix 1995). This thesis contributes to a growing body of work which responds to such calls (see for example: Bernstein 2007; Brents and Sanders 2010; Carbonero and Gómez Garrido 2017; Pitcher 2014; Sanders 2005a; Sanders et al 2018) by exploring sex work through a temporal lens, which is otherwise lacking. Work is practiced temporally and an understanding of these practices and processes reveals significant findings in

relation to the organisation of sex work and the relationships between sex workers and their clients. In this introductory chapter I situate this thesis within existing research areas of the sex industry [1.1], highlighting my contribution to existing knowledge and debates in the sex industry, before giving an overview of the theoretical approach and methodology used to do so [1.2]. I then briefly outline the main themes and findings arising through the research [1.3]. Lastly, I offer a chapter overview [1.4] and outline the direction of the thesis in addressing the issues raised, from which to guide the reader through the thesis.

1.1 The Context of the Research

1.1.1 Theoretical Definitions of Sex Work

The extent to which prostitution represents work or exploitation has been subject to much attention. These debates have often been presented in a binary of choice-exploitation, broadly speaking, with radical feminists claiming that the 'prostitute' is always exploited through the sale of the body or self to a male client (Barry 1995; Farley 2004; Jeffreys 1997; Pateman 1988), in contrast to liberal feminist research which represents sex work as an economic choice involving the sale of bodily and emotional labour (Cohen et al 2013; Sanders 2005a; Scoular 2004). Others have challenged such binary understandings, demonstrating the breadth of experiences in a diverse sex industry (Connelly 2016; Maher 2000; Weitzer 2012). Through an empirically driven account of work practices and asymmetrical power relations, I problematise existing theories which offer an account of sex work on a continuum of choice-exploitation. Here, I consider how choice-exploitation is not a continuum which represents choice and exploitation as opposite poles, in that a worker can either exercise choice or be exploited. Work and exploitation are practiced and experienced in varying degrees *simultaneously*. All work is exploitative to certain extents (Weeks 2011), and both enjoyment and exploitation can be found through work (van der Veen 2001).

While these theoretical understandings are discussed in greater detail in the following chapter [2.4]; it is worthy of note that the point of contention within such debates is the definition of *what* is commodified within the sex industry exchange.

There are some valuable investigations into the complexity of the work undertaken in the sex industry, which illustrate a combination of sexual, bodily and emotional labour (Cohen et al 2013). Some Marxist accounts of the commodification processes undertaken by sex workers (O'Connell Davidson 1998; van der Veen 2001) also usefully distinguish between the sale of labour and service commodities. Yet, despite the largest sector of the UK sex industry – escorting – selling units of time as opposed to specific services, thorough empirical investigation into the temporal nature of commodification processes in the industry is somewhat lacking. Time undergoes commodification in the practice of commercial sex, and this thesis develops an understanding of *how* this process is undertaken through, and alongside, sexual, bodily, and emotional labour, which contributes to theorisations of sex work.

1.1.2 Temporal Work

Time is central to the organisation and experiences of work (Adam 1990; Marx 1976): it acts to define and bound labour and is increasingly commodified through the practices of work and consumption. In the UK escorting industry, quantified time units form the basis of exchange, with fractions or multiples of an hour attributed monetary value, while the activity of that time is negotiated by those engaged in the exchange. Despite this, there has been very little research on the temporal organisation of the sex industry, with the exception of an overview of seasonal sex work and temporal understandings in the UK, US and Australia (Brewis and Linstead 1998); an analysis of sex workers' strategies to attract clientele according to the temporal organisation of the maritime trade in South Africa (Trotter 2009); an exploration of Vietnamese street sex workers' present and future planning (Lainez 2018); and a somewhat controversial account of encounter duration and cost setting in the Netherlands (van Gelder and Kaplan 1992). Bernstein (2007) also provides an invaluable historical account of paradigmatic shifts in the sex industry over time, which accentuates the primacy of temporally bound commodified authenticity in contemporary sex work. To date, however, there are no detailed explanations of the temporal practices and processes of commodifying time in the industry. This thesis is offered to address the gap in knowledge surrounding temporal understandings of sex work.

There is value in exploring temporal experiences in the sex industry further, especially given time's centrality in the economy and its relevance for relations of power (Adam 1990; Elias 1992; Marx 1976; Schwartz 1974; Sharma 2014). Power manifests unevenly and fluidly in the practices of time and temporalities, which are enacted, negotiated, and resisted by individuals in their interactions with each other and shaped by broader contexts and individual concerns (Archer 2007). By exploring these practices and processes, this thesis offers an insight into how time is used, managed and negotiated within the asymmetrical and fluctuating interdependent relationships between sex workers and clients and, in doing so, challenges current debates surrounding choice and constraint in the sex industry. A temporal approach which prioritises process, change and continuity thus offers the opportunity to expose and explore dynamic power relationships.

1.1.3 Dynamic Processes

The approach advocated in this research recognises the dynamic contextual processes, which shape, and are shaped by, asymmetrical interdependencies. In doing so, I offer evidence to demonstrate the influence of capitalist, patriarchal and civilising processes in society generally, and in the sex industry specifically. I argue that these processes occur simultaneously and have had a profound role in the indoor sex industry.

I draw on Marx's (1976) relational account of commodification, which recognises the centrality of time to economic relations and the detrimental impact of capitalist practices to workers. My understanding of the influence of dynamic capitalist processes on the sex industry is further supported by Bernstein (2007), who tracks dynamic consumptive practices over time to explain changing desires from procreative sex and then companionate sex through to the desire for bounded authenticity in recent postindustrial developments. I build on this through relating the work of Elias (2000) to frame the civilising of sex industry relationships, which requires greater levels of self-regulation and shapes the way bounded authenticity is practiced. In Elias' thesis of the civilising process (2000), he documents how state formation influences behaviour and regulation in society. He tracks how moves towards centralised power coordinate longer chains of mutual dependence between those in an increasingly differentiated and individualised society. The possibilities for

increasingly lengthening chains of interdependency relies on peoples' self-regulation of impulses. This acts to reduce violence and risk, but also dampens pleasure, which could have specific implications in a sex industry reliant on the incitement of pleasure.

Importantly, time is required to regulate behaviour in these conditions. The development of clock time enabled social life to be timed and synchronised, which is seen as fundamental to globalising and civilising societies to regulate the growing population and complexity of interconnections (Elias 1992). Time is heavily implicated at work, therefore, and this is evident in how the sex industry is organised around the sale of time. Time acts to bound the commodity and both sex workers and clients benefit from the boundaries of commodified sex and intimacy (Bernstein 2007; Prasad 1999). The sex industry exchange is necessarily and crucially regulated through time and, yet, there are no empirical studies to date which explore the role of time in commodifying and regulating the encounter.

1.2 The Research

This research was initially designed in response to growing numbers of sex working women seeking financial advice from a sex work support charity where I acted as a volunteer, following significant changes to the welfare system post-2010. The research was thus instigated to explore the economic experiences of sex workers during a time of change. Early conversations with participants, however, revealed some important findings that altered the direction and focus of the research. Participants' accounts revealed the centrality of commodified time to their working practices and which shaped their experiences of economic conditions. This necessitated a focus on time at work; its role in the sex work commodity and relations. Further, participants seemed to define their relationships with clients according to the self-regulation of temporal controls. This led to research questions which explored the temporal nature of commodity relations in the indoor sex industry. The direction of the research and the formulation of research questions changed over time therefore, led by a dialogue between theory and practice.

With these issues in mind, this research was designed to address the temporal nature of sex work, which reveals further insights into the relationships undertaken in the

sex industry. This thesis explores the nuanced experiences and working decisions of female indoor sex workers, made in ongoing consideration of broader structural and personal concerns (Archer 2007). Their experiences are analysed with the objective of defining processes of commodification in the industry to contribute to understandings of sex industry relationships. Taking account of the divergent contexts and concerns of sex workers, clients and other involved individuals, using theories of commodity relations, I attempt to distinguish between the role of time and labour in the production and consumption of the sex work commodity. In doing so, the thesis contributes to existing theorisations of the culture of sex work, and further problematises ideas around the language and experience of 'choice', 'empowerment' and 'exploitation' in the sex industry. In the following discussion, I detail the theoretical approach, research questions and methodology employed to address these questions, before moving on to a brief discussion of the key themes and findings.

1.2.1 Theoretical Approach

In a sex industry plagued with theoretical debate surrounding its definition as work or exploitation, it is necessary to outline my own position, which has been further shaped by participants' narratives through the course of study. Sex workers make decisions and negotiate practices through their work, and while there are levels of exploitation it is important to note that exploitative practices occur in all forms of work (Weeks 2011). In recognition of sex workers' agency and the contextual influences, my own perspective within these debates stems from critical feminist standpoints (O'Neill 2001), which prioritise the narratives of sex workers while also engaging with the full range of structural and personal contexts which shape their lives.

I did not subscribe to this approach fully, however. I drew on a number of theories which uniquely shape the research, although some reconciliation was needed in order to do so. The research is greatly informed by the figurational approach proffered by Elias (2000), which encouraged an understanding of dynamic contexts and interdependencies. I felt that Archer's theory of reflexivity (2007) complemented the figurational account of the shifting nature of social structures as a result of human action, as she details how decisions are made and actions are taken in consideration

of the individual's personal and structural concerns, which, in turn, contributes to broader contexts. This combination also accounted for how and why individuals make different decisions when faced with similar circumstances, which was pertinent to understanding the trajectories of participants. This benefitted the feminist aims of the research: to listen to, and better understand, the lives of a group of sex working women. Marxist analyses were also greatly informative to my understanding of economic relations, as I go on to detail, although in combining Marxist theory with others, I rejected the primacy Marx gives to economic relations; instead exploring the range of processes where power is enacted. This combination of theories, which is termed a feminist-figurational approach (Liston 2007, 2018; Mansfield 2008), seeks answers to feminist issues through the exploration of a broad set of relations, which was instrumental in understanding pluralities of existence within dynamic interdependencies, whereby relations of power can be explored. This approach gives original insights to theoretical debates which pervade the industry.

Nevertheless, the incorporation of feminist and figurational approaches required some navigating, which I address in more detail later [4.2]. Primarily, my approach was to explore feminist concerns surrounding the sex industry through a figurational lens. I thus proposed that a feminist-informed figurational approach addresses feminist issues through the exploration of a broad set of relations, which, in turn, informs feminist engagement and action.

1.2.2 Rationale and Research Questions

The research aims and questions underpinning this thesis were guided by the interests and issues raised during early conversations with participants. As I have indicated, sex work is predicated upon the sale of quantified time units, and all participants were concerned with the management of this time. During these conversations, participants seemed to define their relationships with clients according to the self-regulation of temporal controls, which necessitated a focus on time at work; its role in the sex work commodity and relations. Ideas stemming from conversations were brought into dialogue with social theories and further tested through subsequent conversations with participants. The research questions accordingly explored the temporal nature of commodity relations in the indoor sex industry:

- What shapes sex workers' experiences of 'vulnerability' and 'flourishing' through time and how does this influence working decisions?
- What processes of commodification are undertaken within the sex industry and how is this negotiated by those involved?
- How are temporal practices implicated and experienced in the regulation of sex industry relationships and encounters?

The research questions prioritise the exploration of sex work through a temporal lens. The first question is temporally focused in that it demands the examination of pasts, presents and futures of research participants to gain an understanding of their economic experiences. As such, time is used methodologically as well as conceptually, which I will address in more detail in the following section. The second question requires the exploration of time according to its essential role in commodity relations (Marx 1976), and how commodity relations are temporally defined and managed. Time and temporalities are commodified through these processes, which are used to produce the sexual encounter. Finally, the third question directly questions the temporal practices undertaken to regulate the encounter and the behaviour of others in these increasingly interdependent relationships (Elias 1992). The thesis explores how time is perceived, managed and negotiated within the sex work encounter; detailing how time is used to achieve particular temporal experiences. The practice of time underpins the research, and this is reinforced and enhanced through the use of a temporal methodology.

1.2.3 Methodology

The theoretical and methodological focus on time worked in synthesis to enhance understandings of temporal experiences at work. This facilitated an exploration of participants' pasts, presents and futures to understand trajectories in the context of their structural and personal concerns. Consequently, a qualitative longitudinal research design (Neale 2019) was employed which allowed in-depth accounts over a period of time and provided the opportunity to witness change. Nine participants were met and interviewed periodically between November 2014 and July 2018, although the duration of research engagement depended on a number of factors, including the participant's preferences and circumstances and the date of entry into

the research, which limited the duration they were able to engage. Periodically meeting the same participants was especially beneficial in building an account of how change is experienced, instigated and resisted, as well as understanding their concerns and decisions through a longer-term perspective.

The production of participatory time maps formed the basis of the interview process, which complemented and enriched understandings of participants' pasts, presents and futures. Participants were asked to illustrate on paper their work histories and experiences from 2007 onwards. These visual representations of time facilitated participants to access memories and to focus on moments in time, make connections and project the future. This method produced rich data which was analysed using the casing methodology proposed by Emmel (2013). These cases provided a rich insight into the temporal organisation of sex work and allowed participants' accounts to be mapped against dynamic broader contexts.

1.3 Findings and Key Contributions

The thesis is temporally focused, therefore, both theoretically, methodologically and conceptually, which gave rise to some important findings and contributions. As I have touched upon, this thesis makes a number of contributions theoretically, both generally and in the areas of work and employment, the sociology of time, and in sex work debates. For clarity, these are highlighted here, before I go on to outline the structure of the thesis.

1.3.1 Theoretical and Methodological Contribution

My combination of figurational sociology, feminism and Marxism provides a new perspective from which to understand practices of work, time and power. Combining such theories is often cited as problematic because Marx claims that relations of production are paramount and all other phenomena is to be understood through this, whereas Elias contends there can be numerous figurations, of which economic relations form part. In this thesis I subscribe to the theoretical pluralism of Elias' figurations combined with a Marxist understanding of economy and inequalities.

Despite these differences both perspectives offer a processual and relational account of society and are complementary in many ways.

Further, feminists critique a figurational approach for excluding gender in its analyses, but this thesis is an exemplar of how it is possible to be motivated by feminist concerns, consider gender without giving this context sole primacy, and use research findings to further feminist action. This thesis explores gendered experiences and contexts, but also considers a breadth of other contexts which shape the experiences of a group of female sex workers. Considering alternative contexts did not preclude gender: indeed, I make a number of claims as to how participants' gender shapes, and is shaped by, working experiences, practices and broader contexts. A feminist-figurational approach, together with a Marxist understanding of economy, allowed an understanding of sex workers' experiences of work, which accounted for the broad spectrum of influences shaping their lives as well as an understanding of how their decisions and practices contributed to such contextual influences. This approach was especially significant for understanding sex industry relations, which I explain further shortly.

1.3.2 Contribution to the Sociology of Work and Employment

I also offer an account of participants' trajectories, which are mapped against broader social, cultural and economic conditions and discussed in relation to definitions of vulnerability and flourishing (Emmel 2017). I use the term vulnerability to account for the range of personal, corporeal, societal and economic conditions that can influence individuals' experiences of material shortages and access to support over time, and impact their ability to address present needs and plan for the future (Emmel and Hughes 2014). This definition of vulnerability recognises individuals' agency in addressing and mitigating vulnerability to achieve a flourishing future whereby material shortages are addressed, and support is available. Exploring participants' economic choices in the context of structural and personal concerns (Archer 2007) recognises levels of choice and exploitation in the context of work more generally, but also accounts for the varying responses to circumstances by those working in the sex industry. This approach allows the debate to shift from a discussion of whether sex work is chosen or exploitative (Connelly 2016; Maher 2000; Weitzer 2012), but recognise the choice, exploitation, pleasure and difficulties

simultaneously experienced through it (van der Veen 2001; Weeks 2011). Further, it enables the study of specific conditions within work and the changing contexts and conditions for those working in the sex industry.

Using this, the thesis interrogates the relationship and intersections between mainstream labour markets and the sex industry, documenting a range of structural and personal concerns which influences women's trajectories in the sex industry. Poor alternatives in the mainstream labour market, the ease of setting up a sex work business through online technologies, and cultural shifts has encouraged entry into the sex industry, which has led to increased competition and changing working practices and conditions. The evidence shared documents sex workers' lived experiences of these changes and contributes to ongoing investigations into working conditions in the sex industry.

Correspondingly, and in light of the understanding that technologies reflect and contribute to human intentions (Wajcman 2015), the online organisation of sex work has led to an expectation of instant and constant availability, driven by clients and reflecting broader consumer cultures. This is resisted by sex workers in many ways, however. Online communications provide a method of screening clients, for example, and to slow down and speed up interactions, which necessarily shapes the whole sex work encounter and relationship. Temporalities of organising sex work online are divergent according to the preferences of individuals, and the negotiations of those involved. The ongoing demand for in-person services despite a burgeoning online-only market also reveals that sex work is an area of work where offline services are still sought. The organisation of work online shapes, and is shaped by, these relationships.

Organising work online introduced a third party to such work relations; that of website hosts. In this thesis I offer an account of how this inclusion contributes to and alters power relations in the sex industry through acting as a centralised point of control where expectations are communicated and negotiated. Online hosts also practice power too by shaping online content and processes, and by allowing or denying sex workers the ability to advertise, which not only impacts sex workers' incomes but also shapes relationships with clients. That participants primarily felt

website hosts favoured the needs of clients raises important questions for the organisation of the sex industry.

1.3.3 Contribution to the Sociology of Time

I also offer a definition of the sex work commodity [chapter 6], which accounts for a nuanced understanding of commodity relations (Marx 1976) through distinctions between the commodification of time, labour and service. I demonstrate how time is commodified through the practices and negotiations of sex workers and their clients. A unit of time is offered in exchange for monetary value, but time is commodified further by way of offering varying experiences produced through temporal practices within that duration of time, according to the needs and demands negotiated by sex workers and clients.

The sex work experience is, crucially, temporally bound, which acts to protect the sex worker and client from emotional and economic risks. This highlights how in commodifying time, time is also used as a form of regulation by the sex worker and client, often defining the other as good or bad according to temporal self-control. Power dynamics are revealed in the temporal punishments and rewards practiced by sex workers and clients, such as giving extra time, reducing time or both making the other wait. To this end, this thesis offers an understanding of the temporal organisation of sex work and how time is implicated in sex work commodity relations between sex workers and clients. Time is key, therefore, in managing these relationships.

1.3.4 Contribution to Understandings of Sex Industry Relationships

As mentioned, accounts of the temporal organisation of the sex industry are limited, and this thesis offers a broad exploration of how practices and experiences of time and temporalities shape sex work. This is important, given the centrality of time to economic relations (Elias 1992; Marx 1973) and how time is a site of power. The account I offer of the relationship between sex worker and client; the processes of commodification undertaken through their interactions; and the temporal controls internalised and imposed upon each other, demonstrates that neither hold more

power over the other. The interrogation of these processes reveals power to be dynamic and asymmetrical; constantly negotiated and renegotiated through their interactions, which problematise accounts of the sex worker-client relationship whereby one holds more power over the other, through the act of payment or varying degrees of economic need, for example.

The experiences sold and purchased in the indoor sex industry increasingly rely on the cooperative relationship between sex worker and client; the client must proactively contribute to the experience for it to be successful. This is reflective of increasing levels of interdependence within a broader process of civilising (Elias 2000), which is significant for our understandings of fluctuating power asymmetries and chances negotiated through these relationships. The thesis explores these relationships and the power enacted through them, drawing on evidence related to economic vulnerability and commodity relations to provide a comprehensive account of sex workers' experiences in their broader contexts. The structure of the thesis is outlined below in order to guide the reader towards these conclusions.

1.4 Thesis Outline

In chapter two, I define independent escorting and attempt to position this market within its dynamic economic, cultural and socio-legal contexts. These contexts shape, and are produced through, the working practices of sex workers and their relationships with clients. Understanding these contexts is thus a vital precondition to this research. This is developed further in chapter three, where I review the limited literature around time and the sex industry. More broadly, I use this chapter to define time and the temporal characteristics of work, which, I argue, provides a useful analytical position to analyse the relationships between sex workers and their clients. I then review the scant literature on temporal understandings of the sex industry to situate this research in broader evidence.

Chapter four reflexively addresses the direction of the research and sets out the rationale and research objectives, my theoretical approach, methodology, sample and recruitment methods, and discusses ethical considerations. In particular, I propose the incorporation of a feminist-figurational approach as the theoretical and methodological prioritisation of time was invaluable in developing understandings of

the temporal practices of work. I detail the qualitative longitudinal methods I employed to research time through time in this way, which aids an understanding of women's trajectories and working decisions.

I then engage in the analysis of data and discuss the key arguments made through the research. Chapter five is intentionally data-led. I sought a space in the thesis that – while offering cross-sectional and longitudinal analysis in relation to experiences of vulnerability – communicated participants' narratives. The participants of this research were insightful and knowledgeable, and I felt, in many ways, that I owed it to them to highlight their stories. That said, their narratives also demonstrate the centrality of time in accounts of vulnerability (Emmel and Hughes 2014), and the chapter is subsequently arranged in a way that addresses participants' pasts, presents and futures, highlighting their ability to navigate and moderate vulnerability through sex work. This chapter is intended to situate participants within commodity relations to understand their access to agency and reflexivity in their interactions with clients.

Building on this, chapter six defines processes of commodification undertaken by independent escorts and their clients. The key proposal made in this chapter is the definition of the commodity as a temporally bound experience; produced through the interactions of sex workers and clients in negotiation of their personal and structural concerns. I offer an account of how the commodification of time acts to produce such experiences. In defining the commodity as such, I reject theoretical accounts which claim sex work is inherently exploitative through the sale of the body, and I distinguish between the commodification and sale of time, labour and service.

These co-productive but uneven relationships are symptomatic of increasing co-dependency within a civilising society. Chapter seven explores evidence related to the independent escorting market undergoing a process of civilising, as proposed by Elias (2000). It discusses cases from the data in relation to increasing differentiation of roles, the moderation of impulsive behaviours, and moves towards centralisation of power and synchronisation. These features of civilising are unevenly experienced, which reflects the uneven nature of a civilising process. These conditions have specific implications for the sex industry, however, especially because it relies on the elicitation and manipulation of emotions to enact sex and intimacy. There are

contradictions, therefore, between the moderating needs of civilising and the emotional needs of the sex work commodity.

This heightens the need for tacit and informalised regulation, which is defined and outlined in chapter eight. Here I discuss the way regulation is practiced and resisted by sex workers and clients in attempts to communicate expectations of behaviour. In particular, I demonstrate the centrality of temporal regulation and how time is variably used by sex worker and client to reward and punish the behaviour of the other. The motivations and functions of regulation reveal both the complementary and competing concerns of sex workers and clients and, in the negotiation of these, I identify fluctuating power dynamics. Key to my critique of existing theorisations of the sex industry are the temporal boundaries placed around the commodification of sex and intimacy, and the demonstration of power as unevenly enacted through temporal practices negotiated between sex workers and clients. I subsequently illustrate a nuanced understanding of fluctuating power within sex industry relationships.

I conclude that the uneven nature of civilising provides a valuable context to understand sex industry relationships. Sex workers and clients experience greater levels of co-dependence in that they seek to co-produce a temporally bound experience. This shared aim and the shared need to be productive through time could potentially be interpreted as an equalising force in the power relationships between sex worker and client. There are, however, some key challenges to this interdependency. Primarily, sex workers and clients both act within the contexts of their own structural and personal concerns (Archer 2007), which are sometimes incongruent. I argue that this is underpinned by the competing interests of work time and leisure time, and further problematised through consumptive leisure practices. We seek productivity in both work and leisure but for the worker this represents a need to bound labour time and seek profit, and for the consumer this represents achieving value for money through hedonistic consumption (Campbell 1987).

The complexity of these dynamics speaks to a theoretical debate returned to throughout the thesis in relation to levels of choice, empowerment and exploitation in the sex industry. It problematises perspectives and policies that are shaped through viewing those working in the industry as either empowered agents *or*

exploited victims. This has important implications for how the sex industry is viewed and managed. There is a need to move beyond these debates and explore the cultural contexts of sex work, and the nuanced experiences of sex workers beyond descriptive accounts. Indeed, an approach that moves beyond binary understandings of exploitation versus choice reveals far more about the practice of commercial sex (Agustín 2005). It is thus necessary to not only look at the exchange between client and sex worker, but the broader conditions of work and wage production, and through the course of this thesis I map experiences in sex work against broader working conditions in order to do so. Ultimately, this thesis explores commodification processes and their relationship with practices of time and power in local and broader contexts. The thesis begins, therefore, by contextualising the indoor sex industry.

2. Contextualising Indoor Sex Work

This chapter situates the research by providing an overview of the broader contexts surrounding the organisation of work in the sex industry, specifically focusing on independent indoor sex workers. Arguably this is a relatively 'empowered' sector of the industry in that indoor workers typically have less chaotic lifestyles (Cusick 2006) and experience less violence to those working in outdoor markets (Sanders and Campbell 2007), which may mean indoor workers have specific economic experiences which differ to those working in other markets. Yet it is because of this perceived 'empowerment', in addition to the covert nature of these markets, that indoor sex work is still under-researched in comparison to street markets and rendered invisible in policy (Sanders and Campbell 2007). This thesis contributes to a growing body of research to redress this, highlighting how economic, cultural and socio-legal contexts shape experiences of vulnerability in the indoor sex industry.

This chapter somewhat prioritises economic contexts, given the focus of the study, and I detail broader labour market conditions, consumptive practices and technological advances in discussion of their relevance for the sex industry [2.2]. These conditions, and reactions to them, are potentially applicable for other businesses given the evidence to demonstrate the economic mainstreaming of certain sex industry businesses (Brents and Sanders 2010; Hubbard et al 2008; Sanders and Hardy 2012). The experiences of female independent sex workers potentially have relevance to the economic experiences of women more broadly, therefore.

This economic mainstreaming also hints at growing cultural acceptance of the sex industry (Brents and Sanders 2010) – to an extent. In my review of cultural [2.3] and theoretical [2.4] understandings of sex work I identify how abolitionist perspectives that view all prostitution as exploitation disproportionately influence the policy landscape (Kantola and Squires 2004), which reinforces the definition of sex workers as deviant and immoral in legal and popular discourse [2.5]. To challenge the stigma this creates, I argue that sex work should be decriminalised and be treated as work in legal and political spheres.

It is thus necessary to acknowledge the complexity of experiences of work, including exploitation, choice, labour and enjoyment. An undercurrent of this chapter, and the thesis, is a demonstration of the ways in which sex is commodified and practiced as

work by sex workers and clients. This chapter introduces this relationship and the broad spectrum of motivations for engagement in the industry, which foregrounds an exploration of the asymmetrical interdependencies which arise from such motivations. The interdependencies which arise through negotiations for particular sexual experiences challenge existing understandings of power in the sex worker-client relationship and problematise binaries of choice and exploitation.

2.1 Defining the Sex Industry

Prostitution is often defined as the sale of sex or sexualised acts in exchange for money, goods, or favours in kind (Harcourt and Donovan 2005). In terms of the commodity sold, this definition suggests that it is the sex and sexualised acts which act as the commodity. While this definition is widely used among sex work scholars, Phoenix (1995) contends that this is too simplistic and omits a range of economic relations within the exchange; suggesting that we should consider the place of work, mode of client contact, employee status, exchange practice, formal relationships with others, the level and mode of protection, and other distinguishing features when defining the myriad sectors and sub-sectors of the sex industry. In consideration of these circumstances, indoor, independent sex workers (or escorts), arguably hold a relatively privileged position in comparison to workers in some other sex industry markets (O'Connell Davidson 1998). There is a need to define the markets of the industry, explore the literature which reveals the conditions within them and contextually position the indoor, independent market.

2.1.1 Sex Industry Markets

Commercial sex is diverse, therefore, and I use the term markets to differentiate between the spaces, services and organisation of different forms of sex work. Typologies of these markets (Harcourt and Donovan 2005; Sanders 2005a) agree a broad distinction between direct and indirect services, which can be categorised further into several markets, outlined in table 2.1. The markets are distinct in the services offered, the clientele and the regulations imposed upon it, although the boundaries between markets are more fluid than represented in this table, as changes in one market influences others; workers move between them; and spatial

shifts occur following policy changes, for example. The dashed borders seen in the table between each market demonstrate this fluidity.

| Direct sex work | | Indirect sex work | |
|--|--|--------------------------|---|
| Street-based | Sexual contact sold in public mixed-use spaces | Erotic dance/lap-dancing | Non-contact sexualised dance and company sold in managed premises |
| Brothels/saunas | Sexual contact sold in managed premises | Retail | Sexualised products are sold in restricted premises or virtual spaces |
| Pop-up brothels/Touring | Sexual contact sold in temporary locations facilitated through online communications | Virtual Experiences | Simulated non-contact sex acts sold through telecommunication technologies e.g. webcamming, premium phone lines |
| Escorts (out-calls) <i>Independent /Agency</i> | Sexual contact sold in locations according to client demand. | | |
| Escorts (in-calls) <i>Independent /Agency</i> | Sexual contact sold in private, independently rented, sole-use premises | | |
| Escorts (home-based) <i>Independent /Agency</i> | Sexual contact sold in private, mixed-use premises | | |
| Auxiliary services, such as advertising and online communication with clients. | | | |

Table 2.1: Categorisation of Sex Industry Markets

Further distinctions can be made between the locations of female, male or transgender sex work, the latter two of which fall outside of the remit of this research. Male and transgender markets fit into the broad typology offered within the table, and while there are many continuities in where prostitution occurs and how it is organised (Harcourt and Donovan 2005), there are also differences in policy responses and the cultural and gendered experiences of those who sell and buy sex in these markets. It is worth mentioning how the focus of this study maps against a diverse industry, as the prevalence of research on female sex workers working with male clients reinforces heteronormative representations of an industry which is, in reality, far more diverse (Smith and Laing 2012). Nevertheless, I felt that female sex

workers offering services to male clientele were of relevance given the topic of study because “men – not because of something inherent in male sexuality, but by virtue of the material conditions which have enabled a self-definition premised on autonomy and freedom – have been more inclined than women to adopt the new cultural model of sexuality” (Bernstein 2007:174). As such, studying these markets lead to greater insights into changing processes of commodification and consumption in the contemporary UK indoor sex industry.

2.1.2 Measuring the Sex Industry

The covert nature of these markets and the rapid growth of, and changes within, the industry renders it increasingly difficult to quantify those working within it, and those who attempt this quantification encounter difficulties because of the stigmatised and covert nature of the work. This leads to inflated statistics, which conflate those working in different markets of the sex industry (Cusick et al 2009). Indeed, questions have been raised regarding the purpose and motivations of those seeking to quantify those working in the industry (Global Network of Sex Work Projects 2015; Sanders et al 2018), as figures are often misquoted to exaggerate engagement in a ‘problematic’ industry and justify its regulation.

Until recently, much attention was given to street markets despite assertions that this form of sex work only accounts for a small minority of the UK total (Cusick et al 2009). Comparatively, indoor markets, which have recently received relatively greater academic attention (see Bernstein 2007; Brents and Hausbeck 2005; O’Connell Davidson 1998; Pitcher 2014, 2015; Sanders 2005a; Vanwesenbeeck 2005; Whittaker and Hart 1996, for example), are thought to be the largest sectors of the industry (Brooks-Gordon et al 2015; Scoular 2016). There is value, therefore, in researching these markets given their size. This research thus focuses on those working independently within indoor markets, which include escorts who work in privately rented premises alone or with others, work from their own homes, or offer out-calls to hotels or clients’ houses.

2.1.3 Internet Sex Work

The facilitating role of online technologies is of growing importance and has relevance for all markets of the sex industry, including new markets which are only possible through online technologies (Cunningham et al 2017; Sanders et al 2016; Sanders et al 2018), and particularly independent escorting. The internet has created shifts in the methods of advertising, communicating with clients, maintaining relationships, selling and purchasing sexual services, security and support (Bernstein 2007). By these means it affords greater safety in many respects as online profiles can clearly communicate behavioural expectations and clearly delineate what will and will not be offered as part of the service. Online communications also bring specific risks to privacy and safety, providing an additional concern for sex workers (Sanders et al 2018).

I specifically mention the internet in a section devoted to sex industry markets because it contributes so significantly to their organisation and definition. Online technologies have facilitated escorts' ability to work independently, for example, through providing an avenue for clients and sex workers to coordinate without the need for physical markers. This has enabled a shift towards independent working in a variety of spaces that would have been more difficult to achieve prior to the use of online communications. In the following chapter [3.2.1] I also discuss further how online technologies encourage instantaneous consumption, which somewhat shapes the expectations of sex workers and their clients [3.2.2]. The internet thus provides a crucial context through which sex work operates.

The internet has been built and developed in a way that addresses human needs and desires (Wajcman 2015). In doing so, these new technologies speak to the economic and cultural contexts which I go on to describe throughout the thesis. In providing instantaneous access and forms of communication for users across times and spaces, the internet has potentially been shaped by, and in turn contributes to, economic and cultural shifts in diversification, mainstreaming and consumption practices. As such, the influence of online communications has relevance throughout the ongoing discussion, which goes on to review independent escorting in relation to the economic, cultural and socio-legal contexts in which it occurs. These contexts are not independent of each other, and shifts in one necessitate shifts in the other, indicating

cultural changes more generally. As the primary focus of this thesis is an economic one, I begin by discussing the economic context in which sex work is undertaken.

2.2 The UK Sex Industry in Economic Context

2.2.1 Declining Labour Markets During 'Austerity'

This research was conducted within a context of imposed 'austerity', which Hall et al (2013) argue has acted as an entrenchment of capitalist inequalities. Significant evidence demonstrates the disproportionate effect of 'austerity' on women (Karamessini 2013; Rubery 2013), given that this group already disproportionately held low paid, part-time and insecure positions in the labour market. Despite this, very little space is given to women's voices on their experiences of economic conditions which limits our understanding of the role of gender in economic relations.

There is evidence of increasing numbers turning to sex work as a result of poor labour conditions and declining welfare provision (English Collective of Prostitutes 2017; Oppenheim 2019; Swerling 2013). Some have argued that poor economic conditions have been far-reaching, which may contribute to the increase in middle class women engaging in sex work (Bernstein 2007) and students following the rise in tuition fees (Roberts et al 2012; Sagar et al 2015). Conditions in mainstream economies impact the workings of the sex industry, therefore, as many women are taking on second jobs in the industry to boost their existing incomes within the context of higher living costs (Sanders et al 2016). This broader engagement potentially signifies greater cultural acceptance of the industry, but it still must be understood as an economic decision in context. There is thus a need to further explore women's trajectories both in and out of sex work under recent economic conditions.

Motivations to sex work and routes into the industry are complex and it is impossible to define sex workers as an homogenous group. Economic motivations are vital (Sanders et al 2016), however, as is the case for all paid labour, and are shaped by women's positions within the economy, where sex work may represent an opportunity within a lack of alternative options, a means of survival, or better

working conditions and greater financial reward. This problematises the dichotomy between choice and exploitation, which will be discussed further in relation to cultural and theoretical understandings of the sex industry.

2.2.2 Consumption and Diversification of Markets

While there is anecdotal evidence around falling levels of demand for sexual services during a period of declining economic conditions, research has shown how the industry has experienced broader shifts in patterns and modes of consumption (Bernstein 2007; Brents and Sanders 2010). Evidence shows that the sex industry has experienced a diversification of services, much like mainstream businesses have experienced diversification, which is said to result from a growing acceptance of commodification and market practices, and an emphasis on consumer choice and rights. Brents and Sanders observed that “consumption promotes a morality where personal choice is elevated to a moral right” (2010:46). In these contexts, clients can feel they have the power and right, as consumers, to choose specific commodities and feel entitled to immediate and satisfactory consumption. This mode of consumption encourages diversification of the industry through encouraging the primacy of individual choice.

Evidence of diversification challenges some earlier theses that the sex industry was increasingly standardised. Hausbeck and Brents (2010), in applying Ritzer’s (2010) McDonaldisation principles of growing efficiency, calculability, predictability, control and rationality of production and consumption, argue that clients expect the same ‘type’ of woman, services sold and experience, as has come to be expected with so many phenomena of consumption in contemporary society. While Ritzer claims that mass personalisation services are increasingly offered in consumption outlets, he posits that consumers expect predictability and wish to be familiar with the products and services they are purchasing.

Diversification and the growth and popularity of specialist services challenge this understanding. A range of simulated experiences can now be accessed in the sex industry, including services which aim to simulate conventional, romantic relationships, known as the girlfriend experience (GFE). These particular experiences demonstrate that commercial sex has become more individualised according to the

client's requests within the limitations of the workers' offer and time allocation, which produces a 'bounded authenticity' (Bernstein 2007). By this, Bernstein refers to a temporally and emotionally bounded service which mirrors a non-commercial relationship. Demand for services such as GFE is testament to the increased focus on specialisation and authenticity within commercial sex relationships. Through the sale and purchase of services such as GFE, clients are hoping to produce and receive specific interactions between sex worker and client. Interactions are potentially individualised, therefore, and not subject to the rationalising processes of McDonaldisation, rendering Ritzer's theory far too simplistic to describe the activities and experiences of commodity production and consumption in the sex industry. Sex workers and clients engage in and consume commodified sex according to their own motivations and requirements, and there is value in exploring these negotiations further to define and understand commodification and consumption processes in the sex industry.

Worthy of note is that the production and consumption of commodities occur synchronously, which provides a distinctive context for the work and leisure undertaken in the sex industry. Korczynski and Ott (2004) develop the notion of the myth of customer sovereignty to describe the ways in which relationships in service commodities – which require the simultaneous production and consumption of the commodity – are managed. Customer sovereignty is the myth that customers maintain control of the services offered and the ways in which they are offered; able to make endless demands of the workers to fulfil desires. This is mythical, however, because the worker only offers choice within a limited set of options and can guide the customer within the boundaries of the exchange, circumventing potential conflict through misaligning services and desires. The potential of customer sovereignty, however, is the belief among customers that they have the right to demand products and services according to their desires, which leads to increased pressure for workers.

Pettinger (2011) argues that Korczynski "only partially engages with the customer" (2011:226), however, in that he fails to explore the agency of customers in enacting the illusion of customer sovereignty. Instead, Pettinger suggests that sex workers' clients:

Understand the norms of customer sovereignty and apply these to their storytelling in order to make sense of their purchase...[Customers] read their hobby within other (gendered) consumer norms – about their rights and their legitimacy in extracting enchantment (2011:229).

Pettinger usefully challenges the binary between the rational and irrational; suggesting that clients do not suspend rationality in favour of enchantment through consumption. Clients can feel entitled to good service and make demands on the worker to produce this service, while also maintaining awareness of the performative aspects of the interaction. In contrast to Pettinger, I suggest that Korczynski's account does not ignore the agency of the consumer, as both knowing and suspending belief occurs simultaneously, not as opposites: "consumers may feel that they are sovereign and at the same time, know that they are not" (Korczynski 2013:30). While it has not been possible within this research, more research on clients' engagement in the industry would be useful to draw conclusions on this.

2.2.3 Consumer Motivations

In comparison to literature on sex workers there is relatively less attention paid to clients, although there are some useful contributions which help us to understand particular clients' experiences, attitudes, motivations and practices using clients' interactions on internet forums (Horswill and Weitzer 2016; Milrod and Weitzer 2012; Pettinger 2011). While internet research provides access to those using online forums to navigate and consume in the sex industry, there is research which engages with clients directly (see Bernstein 2007; Sanders 2008a; Monto 2004, for example). These studies have tended to draw on different samples, which demonstrates the breadth of engagement in the industry (Kinnell 2006), albeit also limiting possible comparisons.

Taken collectively, the literature suggests that there are a range of motivations for engaging in commercial sex. Men commonly report purchasing sex to build confidence or because a disability prevents them from enjoying sex in conventional settings (Sanders 2008b). For others, there is excitement in engaging in the sex industry due to the clandestine nature of the industry, but also because they are able to request particular sexual acts or roleplays that they would otherwise be unable to engage in. Other men engage in commercial sex for reasons of convenience because

they travel often, or they prefer the lack of emotional commitment required, the ease of sexual access (Monto 2004) or, alternatively, seek companionship and a long-term commercial relationship (Sanders 2008b).

Yet Bernstein critiques such accounts for “failing to explain client motives with historic specificity, or to link clients’ motives to social and economic institutions that might themselves structure the relations of gender dominance” (2007:117). Instead, she illustrates changing constructions of masculinity and a merging of public and private sexualities and market activities to demonstrate how clients wish to buy simulated relationships, or bounded authenticity. This challenges the idea that male clients are trying to purchase a *real* relationship. They prefer to purchase intimacy in commodity-form. As Prasad also describes, her sample “praise ‘market exchange’ of sex for lacking the ambiguity, status-dependence, and potential hypocrisy that they see in the ‘gift exchange’ of sex characteristic of romantic relationships” (1999:181).

In contrast to the pro-commodification perspectives held by the participants of Prasad’s and Bernstein’s research, however, Monto and Julka (2009) argue that potential clients who view sex and intimacy as a commodity are problematic. They posit that these views are inextricably linked to the dehumanisation of the sex worker, which subsequently leads to violence and abuse from clients. Nevertheless, their sample of 700 arrested clients of street sex workers revealed a low incidence of clients conceiving of sex workers as commodities, using attitudinal variables to measure such attitudes, such as sexual liberalism, preferences for sex outside of a conventional relationship, and tendencies towards sexually violent attitudes. Also, their results are possibly skewed as street prostitution holds greater stigma which can invite greater attention from those with more negative attitudes towards sex workers. Subsequently, I would assume that the rate would be lower among those who purchase sex from indoor workers, as incidence of violence is lower in this section of the industry (Sanders and Campbell 2007), which would suggest that clients are potentially less objectifying. That said, there are still clients who target sex workers as victims of abuse and violence because they expect less reprisal as a result of the stigmatised work and consequent low rates in reporting crime (Milrod and Weitzer 2012).

I am nonetheless doubtful that the variables indeed identify whether sexual services are conceived *as a commodity* and, instead, only questions the extent to which the commodification of sexual services correlates with violence. By definition, the act of purchasing commercial sex demonstrates that clients view sexual services as a commodity, but this commodification does not correlate to incidents of violence as it would require all clients to hold dehumanising views. Indeed, as Pawson (1996:310) writes, “attitudinal statements are normally regarded as irritating simplifications and only with some generosity can one reduce the richness of life’s experiences down to the pre-set categories”. As such, Monto and Julka’s claims are problematic and deterministic; failing to recognise how commodification in the sex industry is related to broader trends of consumption and commodification within a capitalist system.

While there is significant evidence to demonstrate the growing commodification of the industry, therefore, there are disputes around the effects and lived experiences of this commodification. Further research is needed to define what is being commodified within the sex industry, and how this commodification is undertaken, experienced, managed and resisted by those working in the industry. These experiences are complex and not necessarily defined as purely negative or positive as is proposed within certain cultural and theoretical understandings of sex work.

2.3 Cultural Understandings and Stigma

Culturally, there is evidence to suggest the growing acceptance of commercial sex (Bretns and Sanders 2010), although prostitution continues to be a contentious issue and is often posed as an unacceptable form of sexuality. This is reflected both in an ambiguous legal status whereby many of the behaviours surrounding sex work continue to be criminalised and in public discourse surrounding the prostitute body (Sanders 2005c; Shaver 1994). As such, “while massive global and social changes drive the mainstreaming of the sex industry, particularly in economic institutions, social ambivalences often find their way into the law and regulations affecting the industry” (Bretns and Sanders 2010:47). This has implications for the stigma experienced by sex workers.

Drawing on Goffman’s (1990) work, Weitzer defines stigma as:

An imputation of inferior status to those who have either a visible discrediting trait (e.g. a physical disability) or some perceived moral defect...but what is key is not the attribute itself: instead stigma is a product of a relationship between at least two actors, not something inherent in a type of behavior (2017:1).

The source of the stigma is thus attributed to the cultural perspectives on prostitution, whereby sex workers are stigmatised through their involvement in 'deviant' activities: popular and legal discourses define sex work as deviant and sex workers are demonised for their involvement in 'immorality'. The stigma imposed on sex workers as a result of their choice to work in the industry is evident in language, media bias, legal status, and working conditions.

While there may be relative acceptance of a broader range of sexualities, stigma continues to pervade the sex industry, albeit to various extents according to the visibility of the market and the ability of the sex worker to manage the stigma (Sanders 2005a). This has severe implications for the way sex workers live their lives, including the need to conceal their work and manage a duality between their personal lives and working lives (Bowen 2015).

Subsequently, there are calls to decriminalise sex work to ensure that sex workers are not posed as deviant and immoral within legal discourses (Sanders 2005c; Weitzer 2012). Sex work stigma is often the subject of activist and academic concerns, therefore, where it is argued that the redefining of sex work as work in law and cultural understandings will contribute to the reduction, and hopefully eradication, of stigma (Weitzer 2017). The effects of stigma significantly contribute to the vulnerability experienced by sex workers and subsequently forms a concern of sex workers in the context of their work. The cultural understandings that lead to stigma are shaped by theoretical and legal definitions of sex work, which necessitates a discussion of both.

2.4 Theoretical Understandings: Sex Work as Work or Exploitation

Differing theoretical perspectives are often presented in an essentialist way in a polarised debate between prostitution as exploitation, as argued within radical

feminist perspectives, or sex work as work, as presented by liberal feminists. Here, I summarise these perspectives, outlining the difficulties associated with binary understandings and instead argue for a more complex and nuanced understanding, which is necessary to understand the multifaceted experience of any form of work, including prostitution. The ways in which work, bodies, and labour undergo commodification is of particular relevance, as this process is at the heart of many objections to the sex industry.

2.4.1 Prostitution as Exploitation

Broadly speaking, radical feminist arguments state that those involved in prostitution are victims of patriarchal capitalism; forced to make their bodies readily available to men in a system which privileges male desire (Jeffreys 1997). Even those who claim to have chosen to work in the industry are victims yet to realise their exploitation, and radical feminists use the one-sided accounts of ‘survivors’ to reinforce these views (Scoular 2004). Choice and consent are impossible, therefore, as all prostitution is exploitative and can be viewed as violence against women (Barry 1995). Indeed, they propose that prostitution is harmful to *all* women because the commodification of female bodies reinforces the patriarchal, capitalist system (Barry 1995; Farley 2004).

Further analyses integrate a Marxist approach to argue that the commodification of the body is viewed as a damaging process whereby sex workers relinquish control and give full access to their bodies to male clients. MacKinnon argues, for example, that “sexuality is to feminism, what work is to Marxism: that which is most one’s own and yet that which is most taken away” (1982:515). This relinquishing of control over the body is akin to the employment contract, according to Pateman (1988), which positions the male client as employer of the ‘prostitute’ labourer. This enables men to purchase the use of female bodies and their sexual acts through the capitalist market and renders exploited women powerless in the exchange.

This view is problematic, however, because the sex worker maintains possession and control of her body. The ‘self’ is not offered for sale in this exchange and evidence detailing the accounts of sex workers demonstrate how limitations are placed on the bodily areas and services available to clients (Brewis and Linstead 2000). A radical

feminist perspective fails to acknowledge the control workers exercise in the organisation of their work and removes women's agency from understandings of prostitution (Scoular 2004).

Further, while the body does undergo commodification, this perspective reduces prostitution solely to the sale of the body; ignoring the breadth and nuance of commodification processes in the sex industry. Scoular argues that this overdetermines the power relations inherent in gendered sex industry relationships, and thus "fails to move outside the phallogentric imaginary...all women are reduced to prostitutes and prostitutes to their sex acts. Not only does this reify an image of the prostitute as sexual subordinate, it also sustains the myths and norms of the sex industry, of potent men and submissive women" (2004:345). Instead, it is useful to view the industry in recognition of its diversity and nuance.

2.4.2 *Sex Work as Work*

Liberal feminists often criticise radical perspectives for ignoring the lived experiences of sex workers and the complexities of working in the industry. In doing so, the sex work commodity is defined as the bounded emotional and bodily labour of the sex worker (Bernstein 2007; Cohen et al 2013), rather than the body or self in its entirety. These boundaries protect the labour and personhood of the sex worker, which demonstrates how commodification of a sexual act does not equal the sale of a being. That is not to say that liberal feminists fail to recognise the strain involved in emotional and bodily labour (Vanwesenbeeck 2005; Sanders 2005a), but this is viewed within the remit of work.

Some Marxist feminist analyses also defines sex work *as work* but argues that it should be analysed in light of the patriarchal capitalist system in which we operate. The nature of work is inherently exploitative in a system which privileges the wealthy at the expense of the working classes, but women are also further disadvantaged in a system which privileges men. Sex work is inherently exploitative insofar as paid labour always is (Weeks 2011). While recognising the far-ranging constraints on 'choice' within a patriarchal capitalist system, liberal and Marxist feminists acknowledge individuals' ability and right to choose to work in the industry (Chapkis 1997; Kesler 2002; O'Connell Davidson 1998; O'Neill 2001; Phoenix 2009).

Sex workers make rational decisions in response to the economic, social and cultural conditions which surround them, which is the case for workers in all forms of work. As such, there is great value in listening to sex workers' lived experiences to gain an understanding of their work and lives. This argument is levelled to radical feminists who tend to focus on the negative experiences of 'survivors' of the industry, and also to sex positive feminists who tend to gloss over negative experiences and inequalities in argument of sex workers' empowerment (O'Neill 2001). Sex worker accounts are indeed varied, and an approach which listens to the voices of those working in the industry allow the multitude of experiences to be examined:

There is a great need to examine prostitution from a critical feminist 'women-centred' position (a version/development of standpoint(s) feminism) that acknowledges the lived experiences of women working as 'prostitutes' within the context of sexual and social inequalities (O'Neill 2001:30).

Listening to a great majority of sex worker accounts securely places sex work within the realm of work, rather than as a deviant activity (Scoular 2004). That said, sex work arguably *is* different from other forms of work, because of the unprecedented risk of violence and danger (O'Connell Davidson 1998). While sex work is not inherently exploitative and violent in the ways proposed by radical feminists, sex workers are more vulnerable to violence as a result of the stigma associated with the work (Kinnell 2006; Sanders et al 2017). Recognition of sex work as work in legal, political and cultural discourses would contribute to the reduction or eradication of stigma (Weitzer 2017) but, further, this would afford sex workers the same working rights as those in other forms of work. Treatment of sex work as work would thus reduce the exploitative conditions of sex work.

2.4.3 Recognising the Complexities of Sex Work

Of course, while I have presented the theoretical perspectives as opposed to each other, there are a range of positions outside these broad camps, and it is possible to diverge across the feminist perspectives on different issues. Many have argued for theoretical understandings that recognise the complex relationship between agency and exploitation and which complicate the theoretical binary (Connelly 2016; Maher 2000; Shrage 1994; Weitzer 2012). While recognising the level of choice and agency

among those who have chosen sex work as work, research must therefore account for the complex role of agency and exploitation, power and resistance, and choice and victimhood within sex work as a form of paid labour, taking account of the dynamic contexts surrounding the activities (Bernstein 2007).

This approach offers a more nuanced understanding of the sex industry which allows interpretations to go beyond debates between choice and exploitation, to explore the cultural contexts of sex work and the ways in which it is enacted and negotiated by producers and consumers of the industry (O'Connell Davidson 1998). It also allows the consideration of work as an evitable 'social convention' more generally, and its exploitative and regulatory effects (Weeks 2011). Weeks (2011) argues that a focus on the exploitative process of wage labour itself reveals the broader capitalistic social relations. For this reason, it is important not only to look at the exchange between client and sex worker, but the broader conditions of work and wage production. Indeed, an approach that moves beyond binary understandings of exploitation versus choice reveals far more about the practice of commercial sex (Agustín 2005). This thesis thus takes an approach which explores the processes which define work, the contexts in which sex work occurs, and how these influence decisions and interactions in the sex industry.

The way we understand sex work contributes significantly to its organisation. Ultimately, cultural and theoretical perspectives shape, and are shaped by, the socio-legal context in which sex work operates, which I now go on to discuss. Through the historic dominance of abolitionist perspectives in socio-legal understandings (Kantola and Squires 2004), sex workers are consequently positioned as deviant and undeserving of support or as victims who lack the capacity and agency to escape their exploitative condition (Brown and Sanders 2017). This only serves to exacerbate vulnerability and exploitative conditions for sex workers.

2.5 The Socio-Legal Landscape of Indoor Escorting in England

To date, policy has been predominantly influenced by radical feminist understandings of prostitution (Kantola and Squires 2004), which has led to protectionist policies within a vulnerability narrative, viewing the client as oppressor and 'prostitute' as oppressed. Having discussed the economic, cultural and

theoretical contexts in which sex work occurs, it is also important to explore the legal context of indoor escorting because it holds significant influence over the decisions made by participants of this research. Here, I review the effects of policies specifically on the escorting market, where independent escorts work either alone or in groups in hotels and privately rented or owned premises, before discussing how sex work policy is implemented within a vulnerability agenda. The socio-legal landscape is shown to have a detrimental impact on the working conditions of these workers.

2.5.1 Overview of Policy Landscape

While the sale of sex between consenting adults is not illegal in any market of the sex industry, some markets are regulated to a greater extent than others according to the activities and behaviours surrounding the sale of sex. Street markets are often the most sanctioned on account of their visibility and occurrence in public spaces, for example, which is linked to the need to confine sexuality to private spaces and symbolically separate sexuality from the economy (Scoular 2004).

These values have influenced the indoor markets also, as policies exist to criminalise those who manage brothels (Sexual Offences Act 2003), which is defined as premises from which two or more sex workers work. This serves to displace prostitution to riskier spaces and provides barriers to accessing support for those working in the industry (Global Network of Sex Work Projects 2009). Benefitting from relative inconspicuousness, independent escorting operates legally, provided they work alone from a private space. When workers attempt to work together or share premises, however, the work space is redefined as a brothel and is subject to criminal sanction. This acts to impose greater risks to workers because there are safety benefits to working with others (Sanders and Campbell 2007).

In terms of safety, indoor sex markets are often promoted as best practice because the physical environment and organisational features allow the work to be conducted with minimum risk. The contexts and locations of indoor sex work allows strategies to deter these incidents through managing the relationship with the client, controlling the physical environment and working with others to ensure safety (Sanders and Campbell 2007). That said, there are issues that do sometimes emerge during the transaction, including robbery, non-negotiated sex acts, attempts to

remove condoms and offensive and disruptive behaviour, financial avoiders or bargainers (Sanders and Campbell 2007). Independent escorts do experience vulnerability in many ways through the course of their work, which is exacerbated through the legal context. Policy makers continue to govern the industry through a lens of vulnerability without recognising the effects of policy as a source of vulnerability; instead focusing on vulnerability as an individual failing.

2.5.2 Vulnerability

The discussion of sex workers' vulnerability often stems from moral judgements around exploitation, choice, work and victimhood (Brown and Sanders 2017), which often leads to paternalistic policy responses and attempts to 'responsibilise' sex workers for their own safety (Munro and Scoular 2012; Scoular and O'Neill 2007). While there have been recent moves to recognise the agency and range of experiences in the industry (Home Office 2011; House of Commons Home Affairs Committee 2016) this is yet to be reflected in any policy changes, especially for those working in indoor markets, which are often overlooked.

Of course, sex workers do experience levels of vulnerability, although this does not render them powerless or incapable, as policy definitions would suggest (Brown et al 2017). The vulnerability I refer to throughout the thesis accounts for the range of legal, societal, economic, and personal conditions which shape participants' experiences of material shortages, access to support, and ability to address present needs and plan for the future (Emmel and Hughes 2014). Rather than posing vulnerability in opposition to resilience, Emmel (2017) offers the concept of 'flourishing' as the opposite end of the spectrum of vulnerability, to illustrate how actors negotiate and mitigate vulnerability. The importance, therefore, lies in a definition of vulnerability that recognises the relationship between individual action and social, political, economic and environmental context. This allows exploration of the contexts which create vulnerability and the actions of sex workers to manage and negotiate these contexts in an attempt to flourish.

Sex workers' vulnerability can be further defined by exploring the inherent, situational and pathogenic vulnerability they are exposed to, as set out by Mackenzie et al (2014). While indoor workers are somewhat privileged in their comparatively

low exposure to risk, they still experience all forms of vulnerability. Inherent vulnerability stems from our corporeal state and includes that of physical harm (Mackenzie et al 2014). Through their work sex workers are exposed to greater risks of violence. In fact, between 45-75% of sex workers experience violence during work over their lifetime (Deering et al 2014:42), and 49% of internet sex workers worry about their safety (Sanders et al 2016). Situational vulnerability is determined by our personal, social, political, economic and environmental contexts: examples of situational vulnerability include experiences of stigma (Lowman 2000; Pheterson 1993), insecure incomes from poor economic conditions (Sanders and Hardy 2013) or even the risk of technological unemployment following the genesis of sex robots (Danaher 2014). Further, the criminalisation of two or more women working from the same location leads to pathogenic vulnerability, as working alone is far riskier. Policy therefore acts to exacerbate their vulnerability and is detrimental to the health and safety of independent, indoor sex workers.

Decriminalisation of sex work and sex work-related offences would linguistically and culturally redefine prostitution away from current understandings denoting deviance and immorality, which would subsequently have a significant impact on the stigmatised position of sex workers (Weitzer 2017). In turn, the decriminalisation of sex work would facilitate safer working practices and environments, ensuring that sex workers were able to access support (Brown and Sanders 2017; Donovan et al 2010; Harcourt et al 2010; Pitcher 2015; Sanders and Campbell 2014). The socio-legal context in which sex work operates is a significant factor in the recognition of sex work as work, therefore. The decriminalisation of sex work would ensure that sex work could be recognised as such and sex workers be afforded the rights of others in the labour market. This would act to reduce the vulnerability of sex workers by improving their health and safety, redefine their working activities and experiences of work, and further balance power in their interactions with clients.

2.6 Conclusion

As a necessary background to the accounts of participants, I have outlined the economic, cultural, theoretical and socio-legal contexts in which sex work occurs. These layered contexts reveal difficult working conditions, where sex workers are economically driven to work in the sex industry but, in doing so, must manage stigma

and the increased dangers of the work. Laws which prevent sex workers from working together also require them to manage the increased dangers as a result of their stigmatised position in environments which do not prioritise their health and safety. To challenge this, I have argued that sex work should be decriminalised and be treated as work in legal and political spheres.

I have shown that while there is some progress in recognising sex work as work, there are still significant barriers to doing so. I argue that central to these debates are the commodification processes involved in the sex industry: what is commodified in the exchange and the perceived effects of commodification. Those who argue that prostitution is inherently exploitative focus on the exchange of the body and self; while those who argue that sex work is work point to the exchange of services through body work and emotion work. These divergent perspectives unevenly reside and reveal themselves in the various contexts discussed in this chapter. Analyses which step away from the existing binary of understandings in sex work recognise the complexity of sex workers' lives and the contexts in which they exercise agency and make decisions. While I argue that sex work should be considered as work, it is important to recognise the varying degrees of choice, exploitation, labour and enjoyment which is present in all work.

The sex industry is increasingly mainstreamed and culturally accepted within the wider economy, suggesting that commodification processes are successful in a context of widespread commodification and hedonistic consumption practices. Theoretically – and subsequently legally – the sex industry is contested for the ill-effects of commodification of the sex workers' body and the harms this induces to the individual. Consequently, there is a need to define the sex work commodity and explore processes of commodification in the industry, which would hopefully progress the debate beyond a binary of choice or exploitation. As the indoor sex industry is predicated on the sale of units of time, the following chapter explores the role of time in commodification of the sex industry.

3. Time at Work: Implications for the Sex Industry

Time is the dimension through which we should understand change, continuity, simultaneity or asynchronies. Despite the impossibility of social change without the dimension of time, the social aspects of time have largely been ignored in sociological accounts (Adam 1990: Elias 1992). Social time recognises how time is defined historically through societies and cultures (Elias 1992) and explores the ways in which natural and social time interact to understand the temporality of social life:

We can grasp time in its complexity only if we seek the relations between time, temporality, tempo and timing, between clock time, chronology, social time and time-consciousness, between motion, process, change, continuity and the temporal modalities of past, present and future, between time as resource, as ordering principle and as becoming of the possible, or between any combination of these (Adam 1990:13).

The challenge for sociology is thus to build complex understandings of time into research.

Building on the contexts of the sex industry discussed in the previous chapter and the need to understand processes of commodification; this chapter develops our understanding of the commodification of time and the temporal experiences of work. Indoor escorts sell units of clock time, rather than specific services, which centralises time in the exchange and necessitates exploration of the management of time in sex industry relationships. This chapter firstly explores the centrality of time to economic function and power [3.1], highlighting how, through temporal practices, power fluctuates between actors. This foregrounds a discussion on definitions and experiences of work time within specific labour market conditions [3.2]. Lastly, I review research on time, timing and temporal experiences of the sex industry to situate this thesis within broader evidence around the sex industry [3.3].

3.1 Practices of Time and Power in Economic Activities

The quantification and subsequent commodification of time is significant for the way time is used and experienced by individuals. Time becomes an important site of power. In this section I track these developments, highlighting the centrality of time

to economic relations, as well as societal conditions more generally. To do so, I draw on the theories of Marx and Elias; both of whom cited time as central to the organisation of social life, albeit in sometimes converging ways. For this reason, I begin by outlining the convergences and contradictions of Marxist and Eliasian theories, before moving on to explore the implications of the commodification of time for interdependent economic relationships.

3.1.1 The Confluences and Contradictions of Marxist and Eliasian Theories

Both Marx and Elias recognised the centrality of time and timing to social life, and I draw on both theories to document the role of time in both a civilising and capitalist society. There are difficulties in synthesising the ideas of Marx and Elias, however, because of the sometimes-contradictory nature of the theories and their openly discussed disagreements (Powell 2013; Saramago 2015). For this reason, I preface my synthesis by outlining the basis with which I integrate the theories.

For Marx, relations of production determine the conditions of social life and power is understood within class struggle. Elias, on the other hand, was concerned with relations of force within a civilising society: of which, the mode of production could form a part. Elias (2012) was thus critical of focusing solely on economic relations:

Elias would not have sought to deny that Marx's theory of class formation deals with the generation of a particular form of social cohesion...What he would have denied is that such processes are to be universally understood solely intra-societally and in relation to modes of production. 'Economic' forms are socially structured and socially structuring but, Elias contended, they are not alone in that respect: other aspects of figurations which, especially in an age of increasing and increasingly rapid globalisation, have to be understood *inter*-societally and not simply *intra*-societally such as state-formation which is influenced, among other things, by war, the length and density of interdependency chains which have long since been spreading beyond national borders, and the relative cohesion and balance of power between groups, all of which are equally structured and structuring and no less 'real' (Dunning and Hughes 2013:65).

It is worthy of note that these theories are also often complementary: both provide relational and processual accounts of society which look to the practice and

interactions of individuals to define macro conditions. From this, I believe there is scope to integrate the theories to some extent (Powell 2013).

Importantly, while Marx claimed relations of production were essential in understanding society, Elias made no such claim about his own theses:

He never implies that the civilizing process is the only global figuration in contemporary society or that all other figurations emerge from it. So in Eliasian terms one could reasonably treat the capitalist mode of production as a figuration unto itself, and suppose that the capitalist mode of production and the civilizing process overlap or intersect, interacting with one another, without either reducing to the other. In this respect, Elias's conception of figurations allows at least in principle for a theoretical pluralism that Marx explicitly rules out (Powell 2013:99).

This pluralism reflects my own use of both theories. To bring this back to the discussion on time, Marx demonstrates how time is used to control the worker and to secure productivity. Eliasian theory corresponds to this, but also points out the ways time is used as regulation more generally outside of purely economic relations. My acceptance of this signifies a departure from the *primacy* of class relations: recognising alternative figurations while also upholding the great importance of relations of production. With this in mind, I now discuss these ideas on more details; addressing the role of temporal regulation and the implications of the commodification of time in a civilising *and* capitalist society.

3.1.2 Time, Regulation and Power

A process of civilising, as proposed by Elias (2000), accounts for the growing, complex interdependencies in an increasingly differentiated society, which necessitates self-regulation to societal expectations. The development of clock time enabled social life to be timed and synchronised, which is seen as fundamental to globalising and civilising societies to regulate the growing population and complexity of interconnections (Elias 1992). Yet this quantification of time portrays time as a thing that can be “used, allocated, controlled and exchanged” (Adam 1993:167), which raises the question of where this control is located and how it manifests in interactions between individuals. Both Marx (1973) and Elias (1992) agree that the powerful control timing, but this is increasingly communicated implicitly through

observing others and altering behaviour; relying on self-regulation (Elias 2000). Time and timing has subsequently been internalised in the sense that the individual takes responsibility for their own timing and time-use according to expectations of their interdependent relationships.

For Marx (1973), time becomes open to the control exerted through commodification processes by those who own the means of production. The quantification of time reduces workers' personal experience of labour time to a homogenised numeric value (Booth 1991), which contributes to the alienation of the worker; conflating the embodied labour with the quantified time value of that labour. Investigations into the commodification of time should thus explore how time is experienced and manipulated within economic relations, rather than focusing solely on the exchange value of commodified time (Booth 1991), as this reinforces capitalist quantification of time at the expense of workers' temporal experiences.

This is a particularly relevant discussion to explore further in relation to the sex industry, where debates continue around choice, exploitation and the sale of time, the body and self. The sale of quantifiable time, as advocated within a capitalist system, contributes significantly to the exploitation and alienation experienced in sex work, as well as work more generally. Analyses should, however, go beyond documenting the sale of time units in exchange for money as evidence for exploitation, and should instead look to the temporal experiences and negotiations of time between economic agents.

To develop this further, Sharma (2014) critiques macro understandings of temporality, such as those offered by Marx, in recognition of the multiplicity of temporalities experienced by individuals. To illustrate this, she argues that the Marxist focus on the quantification of work time has led to a broad acceptance of a time-space compression discourse (see Harvey 1989, for example), but this speedup is not universal. The experience of time-space compression is uneven according to work organisation, technology, and cultural practices; and failure to recognise it as such exacerbates inequitable temporal relations. In Marx's analysis of power enacted through time, therefore, "the protagonist is a generalized individual – an everyday subject – who is suddenly out of time" (Sharma 2014:7), which misses the diverse and intersecting conditions and experiences of temporalities.

Instead, Sharma proposes an understanding of *power-chronography*, which highlights how temporalities are lived and experienced differently and unevenly:

The temporal operates as a form of social power and a type of social difference... The social fabric is composed of a chronography of power, where individuals' and social groups' senses of time and possibility are shaped by a differential economy, limited or expanded by the ways and means that they find themselves in and out of time (2014:9).

Time and temporalities are practiced and experienced differently, therefore, according to contextual conditions, and it is in these practices that individuals negotiate power. While there are indeed trends in the way that power is enacted by particular groups of people in particular contexts, such as women in a patriarchal society, or classes in a capitalist one, this should not be understood as static or inevitable, but rather as a context in which fluctuating power is negotiated. This thesis explores the ways this power manifests within temporal practices occurring through economic relationships. As Sharma demonstrates, power-chronographies are one such way of exploring these power differentials.

In developing this approach, the work of Archer (2007) is useful in understanding how individuals reflexively act in the contexts of their lives and how this is shaped by, and shapes, broader social processes. Archer details how reflexive decisions are undertaken through the inner dialogue of individuals, in consideration of the breadth of their structural and personal concerns. Although Archer is not primarily concerned with power through temporal practices, her theory of reflexivity is relevant for understanding how agency is practiced in varying contexts and in negotiation of others. These contexts are produced through the actions of individuals and the relations they have with each other, and so processes such as capitalism or patriarchy certainly shape experiences but do not determine them. In my presenting society in this way, I also draw upon a figurational approach (Elias 2000) that understands power as processual and fluctuating; negotiated through sets of interdependent relationships.

Existing theoretical debates are problematised through this account of fluctuating power; where power is not a thing 'held' by an individual within systems that favours them, but a practice which is enabled or constrained in relation to the structural and

personal concerns of the individuals involved. Of course, those structural concerns do stem from broader systems, such as capitalism or patriarchy, but an understanding of power as a practice rather than a thing held or not, maintains scope for the practice of power in all interactions. Individuals are not rendered as 'powerless' in unfavourable systems. This approach to power recognises its dynamic nature in the interactions of individuals, which provides valuable insights into sex industry relationships.

3.1.3 Labour Time, Leisure Time, and Power

Having outlined my approach to understanding asymmetrical power balances within temporal practices, here I draw on the theories already discussed to explore the way time is used to negotiate power. Specifically, I look to the negotiation of time between those involved in processes of commodification in the sex industry, rather than labour process theory, to reflect the role of both clients and sex workers in commodification. Sex workers do engage in labour process, and I touch upon some of the ways they enact this labour in the ensuing chapters, but the focus of this thesis is primarily concerned with the relationships of commodification. Clients purchase an allocation of time within which to consume a service, and the sex worker labours within that time. Existing literature has tended to essentialise the power in this relationship in a way that suggests that power, as well as sex and intimacy, is traded in the exchange. I argue that relationships of power are far more complex, and the negotiations and commodification processes undertaken by sex worker and client, as a site of power, demand greater attention.

The commodification of time symbolically produces a divide between the time that is paid for and that which is not, with a higher value placed on time which is used productively and for financial exchange. In this way, "time spent at work was experienced as time allocated to the employer in exchange for a wage, while time spent in the private sphere was experienced as 'free'" (Everingham 2002:338). This has implications for how time is experienced by sex workers because, while they determine the time worked, the client purchases units of clock time and subsequently has been positioned as holding command over the content of that time (Monto 2004). Some have argued that the commodification of time produces a form of consumer authority where the consumer has increased powers over production and delivery of

commodities (Keat et al 2005) through the purchase of time. As such, the relationship between time as controlled or free is complex and worthy of investigation.

Conversely, others have pointed to the control of time exercised by sex workers during the transaction (Brewis and Linstead 1998; O'Connell Davidson 1998) in their ability to manage the activities within each transaction to maximise profit and fulfil the expectations of clients. Further, there is evidence demonstrating how sex work can be economically and personally liberating (Weitzer 2012), which challenges the view that sex workers are exploited through clients' rights as purchasers of time. Importantly, there is a need to define the economic relationship between sex worker and client, as positioning the client as employer or consumer restructures our understandings of their interactions. If the client acts as consumer, he may be viewed as possessing 'purchasing power', but there is room for resistance by the sex worker as provider of the service. In service industries, for example, Schwartz (1974) demonstrates how servers can create a waiting time for purchasers of the service, which is an expression of power. Through exploring the ways in which time is managed, negotiated, and experienced this research hopes to explore these power relations in greater depth.

Time, and control over time, is subsequently negotiated between the client and sex worker but with different, and potentially conflicting, intentions. The sex worker labours within an allocation of time and seeks to bound and protect her labour, while the client purchases leisure through time and seeks to fulfil his desires. Controlling time is thus related to the capitalist need for productivity (Marx 1973). Time is viewed as a resource that should not be 'wasted', as this "undermine[s] the efficiency with which [social] systems conduct their business" (Schwartz 1974). The capitalist values of productivity, efficiency, and profit promote the reduction of necessary labour time but also the maximisation of output (Marx 1973). These values are internalised and shape negotiations between sex workers and clients.

Guided by these values, a common practice in mainstream capitalist economies is to reduce the value of labour time at a cost to the worker. This has implications for experiences of time at work, which is relevant to this discussion as evidence shows that declining conditions in the mainstream labour market influences entry into

informal markets (Schneider and Enste 2016). This ensuing discussion thus explores how temporal conditions at work have changed as the need for productivity has intensified and highlighting the implications this has for relations of power.

3.2 Changing Times at Work

Time is inextricably linked to our experiences of work and how we shape our time at work; being used to define the separation between work and leisure, measure productivity, and regulate behaviour (Adam 1990). As Rubery et al (2005:89-90) describe:

It is hardly possible to pick up a newspaper or to turn on the radio without hearing something about the relationship between time and work: from the growth in 24-hour opening among food retailers to the expansion of part-time work, from the withdrawal of 'bonuses' for unsocial working to the pronouncements of the need to balance 'work' and 'life'.

These pronouncements indicate an ongoing shift in the temporal practices of work through the drive of capitalist values which encourage specific work and leisure cultures, such as speed, productivity and efficiency. This influences experiences of labour and leisure and is produced and reproduced through the ways we practice labour and leisure. In this section I review evidence related to these changes and, in particular, document the ways in which the internet, the economic climate and consumption practices influence temporal organisation and experiences of work in the sex industry.

3.2.1 Technological Change and Temporal Experiences of Work

The use of communication technologies has significant impact on our time at work (Wajcman 2015). The shrinking of time and space is a commonly reported perception: life with communication technologies mean that time and space can be circumvented and travelled through at a much faster pace (Harvey 1989). For instance, work is now organised on a global scale where it can be conducted simultaneously across space, both synchronising with other time zones, but also experiencing the asynchronicity which is achieved through desynchronised communication technologies, such as email. As a result, some have argued that:

The working experience becomes individualized, leaving people in a state of uncertainty about what others may be doing. So people check and recheck their emails in fear of what they may be missing. In this stretched-out present, individuals *seem* to act autonomously; at least they have little sense of being externally controlled (Brannen 2005:116).

This hints at the additional demands on our time as a result of these technologies, suggesting that work time is experienced as open-ended. This speaks to the increasing demand for productive time through a reduction of the value of labour time, as proposed by Marx (1973).

Space-time compression is not universally felt, however, as there are “multiple temporal landscapes” (Wajcman 2015:18) where for some, and in some contexts, time has not accelerated or in some cases it is slowing down:

It is not just a theoretical assumption that these are fast times. This notion has become rather common sense, if not a cultural fixation. In all this attention to time, however, the complexity of lived time is absent. It has not been addressed in speed theory, nor is it taken up in any substantial way by those who have critiqued speed theory for providing the digital age its ‘sacred canopy’. Recognition of differential lived time is also ignored in everyday discussions about life getting faster (Sharma 2014:6-7).

Sharma (2014) argues that the idea of universal speed-up is deterministic and egocentric, but, further, that ignorance of multiple temporalities exacerbates inequalities. She subsequently calls for recognition and exploration of differential lived time.

Wajcman (2015) further illustrates how technology has not automatically created an acceleration, but the ways in which we use technologies contribute to a feeling of time shortage. She calls this the time pressure paradox, whereby technology should increase the amount of time we have to spend at leisure, and we indeed do have more leisure time at our hands, but the action of using technology now consumes our free time and we subsequently feel *time-poor*. We increasingly use technology for both work and leisure and these times have become blurred. This should not be understood as a universal practice, however, but specifically experienced by certain groups and individuals (Sharma 2014) according to the contexts which shape temporal perspectives and understandings.

Whereas Elias (1992) focused on industrialised societies and their need to regulate the time for work and time for leisure, and Marxist understandings distinguish between free and contracted time (Everingham 2002; Marx 1976), the boundaries between these different functions of time are increasingly indistinct for many who work in 'Western', capitalist societies, which is reflected in the ways we produce and use technologies. Technologies facilitate these changes according to the motivations of the humans driving them. For many, this has resulted in changes to the rhythms and structure of the working day, which intensifies temporal experiences of work. This is important for the sex industry in which the internet plays such a pivotal role (Sanders et al 2018). There is, thus, a need to redefine conceptions of time that are considered 'contracted' or 'free'. This is an important context in defining sex industry relationships.

3.2.2 Technological Change and Time in Sex Work

Online communications have facilitated a shift in the timings the sex worker-client relationship. There is much wider access to sex workers and this contact can be set up more quickly (Sanders et al 2017), for example, but it can also be developed more slowly through asynchronous contact. This alters the nature of the relationship and highlights its temporal nature. This temporality is significant within the commercial sex exchange, particularly for clients who seek long-term commercial relationships with sex workers. When taken in consideration of the earlier point made about constant availability of commercial sex as facilitated by the internet, however, it is important that we reflect on the potential safety risks within the commercial sex transaction, as the division between leisure and working time become fragmented (Brewis and Linstead 1998). The need for constant 'availability' could place a strain upon the sex worker and, if she is working from her own home, the distinction between work and leisure time is also complicated by a lack of spatial separation.

The amount of working time in sex work is therefore potentially increasing or intensifying. The organisation of sex work means it is flexible in the times worked and how it adapts to demand; and modern technologies, particularly the internet and mobile telephones facilitate the immediate and constant availability of commercial sex (Brewis and Linstead 1998). Indeed, the flexibility of sex work to fit around

existing commitments and schedule is one of the reasons women are attracted to sex work (Sanders 2005a). Changes to the temporal conditions of work have implications for this flexibility, however, and a broader intensification of work more generally also potentially bears on the sex industry.

3.2.3 Economic Change and Temporal Conditions of Work

Economic conditions shape the way time is experienced by those in and out of the workforce. As Adam explains, “working to a deadline is different from stretching out a job during periods of low orders. Times of economic hardship are lived and experienced differently from the daily routines of ‘normality’ and relative economic prosperity” (1993:169). Time, then, will take on specific and varying meanings according to an individual’s position in the labour market, which is of increased importance given the significant economic change we continue to experience through the entrenchment of capitalist values.

Indeed, Standing (2011) suggests that increasing numbers are becoming vulnerable to precarious economic conditions. He posits that the ‘precariat’ signify a new class defined by insecure labour as a result of precarity, neoliberal policies and austerity. Standing suggests that precarity affects a range of individuals who would previously have been defined within working and middle-class groups, and it is this new ‘dangerous class’ who bear the brunt of insecure labour: working without temporal limits to secure income.

This only serves to describe the conditions that the working classes continually experience within a capitalist system, however, where many of the working classes have failed to experience economic improvement since the recessions and decline of industrial work in the 1970s (Emmel and Hughes 2010). While Standing claims that these conditions signify a new ‘dangerous class’, this obscures the fact that the working classes, women and those from ethnic minorities continue to disproportionately bear the brunt of capitalist inequalities. As di Bernardo usefully offers:

The concept of precarity disguises the essential nature of capitalism and its inescapable relation with precariousness as an aspect of the way capital functions and reproduces itself (di Bernardo 2016:8)

Labour conditions result from a capitalist system, therefore, and while recent advances of this system have exacerbated associated problems, this should be considered within an existing system which promotes and thrives from inequality. The recent financial crisis in 2007 and subsequent austerity project is seen as solidifying a rationale for poor labour conditions more widely, which represent an attempt to more drastically restore wealth to the elite at the expense of the working classes.

Correspondingly, changes to working time have subsequently led to increased vulnerability for those in (and out) of the workforce. Today's labour market is increasingly defined by casualisation, flexibilisation and zero-hour contracts, whereby a cheap workforce are positioned as disposable (Rubery et al 2016). Work is increasingly short-term and insecure, therefore, which leaves increasing numbers in a low pay, no pay cycle (Shildrick et al 2012), churning between short-term jobs. As productive time is valued more highly than unproductive time, those in insecure labour are personally devalued through their experiences of powerlessness through waiting (Adam 1990).

Conversely, those in work experience an increasing tempo of labour resulting from intensification: workers are pushed to produce more within less time to increase their efficiency and maximise profits (Everingham 2002). In the name of flexibility, employers have sought to control more of the worker's time by changing work contracts (Rubery et al 2005), which mirrors broader changes in labour conditions. Tuckman (2005), for instance, shows that contracts offering flexibility in the workplace following the feminisation of labour markets has led to greater control and self-regulation over labour time:

On the one side is the rhetoric of increased independence of employees to manage their own time in conjunction with other commitments, while on the other is the increased pressure for employees to be available for work beyond immediate contractual obligation (Tuckman 2005:48).

As a result, there is less temporal protection for the worker who is expected to offer constant availability.

Working in the sex industry potentially represents an improvement of labour conditions, therefore, as independent sex workers have greater control over working times and intensity (Sanders et al 2016). Alongside this, the facilitation of constant availability through technology (Wajcman 2015) must also be considered, as it may reduce the amount of control sex workers have over time. Further, broader moves towards flexibilised labour signify greater control for employers (Tuckman 2005), which could have implications for the sex worker-client relationship: if clients are theorised as employers through the purchase of labour time, as opposed to the purchase of services, they could feel greater rights over the sex worker's time (O'Connell Davidson). This forms one focus in my discussion of commodification processes in chapter five, but the impact of clients' demands for sexual services on temporal experiences of the sex industry is discussed here first, with particular reference to insecure work.

3.2.4 Consumer Demands on Work Time

Pressures on work time result from the capitalistic drive for productivity and efficiency and are instigated by employers and business owners as a requirement to meet demand (Rubery et al 2005). While there is demand, the workforce must work ever-increasingly to supply the demand; to fail to do so indicated inefficiency and a lost opportunity for profit. These conditions are potentially exacerbated by those who are self-employed, like independent sex workers, because of the unpredictability of income (Cohen et al 2019). Sex workers may feel pressure to gain an income while it is available. This relationship relies on the insecurity of the markets, where there may not always be a sufficient level of demand to provide adequate income, which is especially pertinent given the instability of markets in a period of economic decline.

To increase the reliability of demand and, thus, the reliability of profit, a capitalist society does not only need an endless workforce, but also the conditions to generate endless consumption. In addition to the disenchantment and rationalisation required for capitalism (Weber 2001), Campbell (1987) suggests that enchanted consumption was also historically generated through Calvinists' preoccupation with good taste and

ownership of desirable commodities. This prompted a consumer culture defined by hedonistic, immediate gratification and 'endless wanting'. Alongside this, consumers are also sold the notion of their moral right to choose (Brents and Sanders 2010) and the myth of customer sovereignty (Korczynski 2013), which has implications for the demands made of the worker's time. Consumer demands and expectations may differ somewhat to the motivations of the worker, and these negotiations are a significant site of power asymmetries in sex industry relationships.

3.3 Temporal Experiences in the Sex Industry

The discussion thus far has demonstrated how temporal practices are a significant site of power chances and I have contextualised this within capitalist labour conditions. In the sex industry, time undergoes commodification through the sale of clock time units, but also in the production and consumption of temporal experiences. Commodification processes are inevitably temporal, in that the process occurs through time, but time also undergoes commodification. Nevertheless, there is very little research surrounding the temporal organisation and experiences of the sex industry, with a few notable exceptions of varying relevance to this study (Bernstein 2007; Brewis and Linstead 1998; Lainez 2018; Trotter 2009; van Gelder and Kaplan 1992). In this section I detail studies which implicate temporal practices in the sex industry to highlight findings of potential significance, which acts to situate this thesis in the broader sex work literature.

3.3.1 Temporal Organisation in the Sex Industry

Bernstein's historical research (2007) defines the San Francisco sex industry in the post-industrial era and tracks changes from earlier forms of sexual commerce. For Bernstein, changes in the sex industry are intrinsically connected to capitalist processes, which leads to the distinction between early-modern sexual barter for rudimentary sexual satisfaction; modern-industrial prostitution based on emotionally-void sexual satisfaction; and post-industrial sexual commerce involving diversified and specialised encounters through bounded authenticity. Crucially, her compelling and comprehensive account stresses the importance of temporal boundaries for both sex workers and clients in practicing bounded authenticity.

In doing so, she suggests that the diversification and growth of the industry reflect the changing constitution of gender and sexuality, and what is considered public and private, which acts to challenge the perceived victimhood and deviance of sex workers. This signals a need for representations of the sex industry and sociological theories surrounding sex work to shift in recognition of the organisation of 'post-industrial' sex work:

In contrast to modern forms of sexual labor such as streetwalking, [middle-class, indoor] sex workers bring a constellation of subjective meanings and embodied practices to commercial sexual exchange that would not have been possible at earlier historical junctures. These new meanings and practices emanate from an explicit challenge to the symbolic dualisms that have characterized pragmatically modern forms of sexual labor: between private and public, home and work, 'good girls' and 'bad girls,' and between sexuality and the market. Deeply implicated in these cultural inversions, their sexual labor cannot be reduced to matters of socioeconomic deprivation, in the conventional sense of the term. And crucially...reconfigures earlier assumptions about the gendered double standard of sexuality, as it begins to shift the site of presumed sexual alienation from the body of the female prostitute to the body of the male client (Bernstein 2007:110-111).

Understandings of the sex industry should thus reflect the meanings and practices undertaken by sex workers and clients, which is shaped by a desire for bounded authenticity.

This historic approach which takes account of changing contexts is greatly informative and mirrors many of the findings presented in this thesis. That said, there are some key differences which I will note briefly here, although they are discussed in more detail in the succeeding chapters. Primarily, although I have found that the indoor sex industry in Northern England does mirror the paradigmatic shifts defined by Bernstein to certain extents, I don't believe we are quite at the stages of authenticity experienced by the indoor, middle-class sex workers in her US study. Bernstein proposes that the sex workers seek authenticity through work to an equal degree to clients seeking authenticity through consumption, but the evidence presented later [6.4.1] suggest that the participants of this study are more concerned in achieving the perception of authenticity for clients. For participants, therefore, their primary (although by no means their only) motivation was economic gain, but

of course we have experienced declining economic conditions since the publication of Bernstein's work, which may serve to prioritise financial remuneration. I do not contest Bernstein's thesis, therefore, but stating this serves to illustrate the uneven nature of such shifts in different localities. This research builds upon such theorisations with insights into the temporal practices undertaken by sex workers and clients in producing and regulating this bounded authenticity.

3.3.2 Temporal Experiences of the Sex Work Encounter

While Bernstein's work demonstrates the importance of temporal boundaries in achieving such authenticity, her aim was not to explore temporal practices. Yet a limited number of studies have briefly looked to temporal practices in the sex industry in certain ways. van Gelder and Kaplan (1992), for example, monitored street sex work activity in the Netherlands to gain a picture of the timing, duration and location of encounters and how this intersected with the cost of services and the alternative functions of the spaces used. Encounters taking place in spaces near schools were shorter, for instance, to reduce obtrusions, and encounters with clients who were travelling to work were also shorter to fit around existing schedules. They found that late evenings of weekdays were the busiest but also had the shortest encounters, which was ascribed to sex workers' attempts to work faster and return to a burgeoning client base to secure further income. Overall encounters were of short durations of around 10-15 minutes. In this sense, the experiences of street sex workers differ greatly to indoor sex workers where the extended durations require greater social and emotional engagement. While not engaging with in-depth perceptions and experiences of time in the sex work encounter, they did offer qualitative statements by way of some participants and clients commenting on the value of the time sold, with sex workers seeking to shorten their labour time as much as possible and clients seeking to maximise value by fully using the agreed duration. In relation to this, they describe tensions between sexuality and sociability whereby some clients hoped to achieve more sociability through conversation in addition to sexual satisfaction.

While these findings are of great relevance to the present study, the methodology used is problematic. The authors describe a research method of covert voyeurism in the various spaces used to conduct the sex work encounter, which allowed them to

time the durations and monitor the different services conducted within clients' vehicles. They justify this approach by criticising the inability of 'confessional' (interview) methods to achieve valid data concerning 'marginalised' and 'transgressional' activities. Notwithstanding the significant ethical problems posed through these methods, I contest that valid data is not possible through the narratives of sex workers. Quite conversely, sex workers' narratives should be prioritised in the study of sex work (O'Neill 2001). Had van Gelder and Kaplan engaged with these narratives to a greater extent, they may have achieved valid data in relation to how that time is practiced and experienced in the sex industry.

In relation to such temporal experiences, and as I touched upon previously [3.2.1], time is experienced differently as 'contracted' or 'free', although there are difficulties in distinguishing between these concepts given how the intensification of work has blurred these boundaries. If 'free' time represents leisure, the clients' time in the sex industry exchange is potentially viewed as 'free', while the contracted time of the sex worker is positioned as contracted labour. There are challenges to this theorising, however, not least because some have questioned the extent to which free time represents leisure (Rojek 2009). Definitions of leisure time have changed throughout the decades according to societal conditions (Aitchison 2010; Bramham 2006), but there is consensus that leisure represents more than freedom, or the residual time left after paid work (Gratton 2013). As such, the differences in meaning and experience of work and leisure time may be blurred.

The intention of work or leisure may adjust the form and function of the regulation of time, however. For sex workers, these practices will be well-versed and form part of their daily working routine. For clients, this temporal relationship allows them to exit their routine and enter commodified 'fantasy', which they are encouraged to generate as consumers (Campbell 1987). As such, it could be argued that within these time bounds, the commercial sex exchange allows 'real time' to stop for clients, and 'fantasy time' to commence. For clients, then, the commercial sex transaction represents leisure time, while for sex workers; it is working time (Brewis and Linstead 1998).

Brewis and Linstead suggest that the differences between sex workers' and clients' relationship to time has implications for the gendered nature of time. These

differences represent the reversal or reconciliation of masculine time as structured and associated with business, while feminine time is intimate:

Clients...could be seen to be moving into a more feminine time which is relational, emotional, intimate and connected to others [and] prostitutes...could be seen to be moving, simultaneously, into a more masculine time, which is linear and sequential (client after client), controlled and technical (to maximize income, ensure safety and protect self) (Brewis and Linstead 1998:240).

The imposition of gendered characteristics in commodified time and relationships is problematic, however, as evidence shows that clients' motivations to enter commercial sex exchanges include "the ability to suspend 'normal' expectations of the male sex role and the type of relationship that is free from societal norms and rituals" (Sanders 2008b:406). I also have doubts as to the nature of time being gendered in the ways described by Brewis and Linstead, where they impose characteristics based on traditional gender roles where women would experience a more 'relational' and 'intimate' experience of time in the domestic sphere, compared to a linear and controlled 'masculine time' in the world of work. This also relates to the problematic assumption that domestic time is unproductive, or that time at home represents free time from contracted labour. Instead, I suggest that these feelings associated with experiences of time relate more to labour and leisure time, rather than ascribing an inherent connection to gender. The relationship between the experiences of either work or leisure time is an important distinction, especially considering evidence that the boundary between each may becoming blurred through technological advances. These blurred boundaries are also often exacerbated in longer-term sex worker-client relationships, which is the focus of the following section.

3.3.3 Longer-Term Relationships

Clients sometimes prefer extended relationships with the same sex worker, to gain familiarity and security (Sanders 2008a). This necessarily stretches the temporality of relationships. In the commercial sex transaction, a duration of time is purchased in exchange for intimacy, but regular clients sometimes speak to sex workers outside of this allotted time through online communication. For these clients, this lengthening and deepening of the experience through time also has the effect of deepening the relationship and, thus, affecting the way in which the relationship is experienced.

These longer-term relationships require extended intimacy and reciprocation (Carbonero and Gómez Garrido 2017). This reciprocation takes the form of seeking knowledge of the sex workers' real lives and the feeling that sex workers are mutually enjoying their time with the client (Sanders 2008b). This requires a level of identity management on the part of the sex worker who must attempt to satisfy the clients' need to 'know' the sex worker personally, while maintaining a professional relationship rooted in commercial exchange. This identity management means that the relationship will be felt very differently by sex workers in comparison to some clients and may suggest that longer-term, or regular, relationships with clients are more demanding for the sex worker who must manage these boundaries over an extended period.

It is likely that this will produce a plurality of experience among different sex workers and clients, as time is subjective and rooted in human nature (Elias 1992) and considering that some clients may prefer to mask the commodification of the exchange (Monto 2004), this has implications for the way in which the temporal relationship is experienced. After all, there is a finite time where the relationship will pause or come to an end, which renders the relationship as vulnerable and fragile. The fragility of this commodity will have a range of meanings to all actors. Through knowledge of time, however, we can begin to understand the simultaneous constructs of sex worker-client relationships.

3.4 Conclusion

The quantification of time creates dissonance between the conception of time and the reality of experience and contributes to the commodification of time (Adam 1990). This diminishes the importance of the worker's experience of time and there is a need to explore a multifaceted, social time, which highlights temporal experience in multiple forms. Sharma's (2014) theory of power-chronography is useful in addressing this, highlighting how temporalities are differently and unevenly practiced and experienced according to contextual conditions.

This also points to the way power is practiced through temporal practices (Sharma 2014). Interactions and negotiations between individuals are sites of power and act

to communicate expectations and adjust behaviour (Elias 2000). In economic relations, commodified time is subsequently open to levels of control exerted by those who hold greater power in commodity relations (Marx 1973). Time at work is thus subject to stringent regulation, which is also symptomatic of the needs of a civilising society to manage greater interdependence (Elias 1992). Important questions are raised for the role of time in the sex industry, where units of time are explicitly valued and sold. The role of time in this exchange has a vital function in defining commodity relations and power enacted through them. This is particularly relevant during a period of economic, cultural and socio-legal change, as I have tried to illustrate throughout the preceding discussions, because of the potential for greater vulnerability and turbulence within them.

Taking note of the regulatory role of time in economic relations, time is central in exploring the complex power relationships involved in commodification processes. Questioning the ways in which time is managed, negotiated and regulated in sex industry interactions could potentially reveal important information on the power practiced by sex workers and clients, which would enrich understandings of their relationship which have often been understood within a restrictive binary, as discussed in section 2.4. These issues, and how they have led to research questions and the research strategy used here are discussed in the following chapter.

4. Researching Time Through Time

To situate participant narratives, the discussion thus far has contextualised the indoor sex industry economically, culturally, theoretically and legally within a capitalist and civilising society. I further demonstrated the role of time to the regulation of productivity (Marx 1976) and management of growing interdependences in economic relations (Elias 1992). These temporal practices are a significant site of fluctuating power between actors (Sharma 2014), who act according to a set of structural and personal concerns (Archer 2007).

Within this framework, the research sought to understand the structural and personal contexts which shape participants' working decisions and relationships with clients. To do this, I questioned how sex workers experience and manage vulnerability and flourishing through time (Emmel and Hughes 2014), and how this shaped trajectories. This acts to contextualise the commodification processes undertaken in their relationships with clients, to which time is central. From this, conclusions are drawn in relation to the power asymmetries characterising their negotiations and temporal practices, and the implications this has for debates surrounding levels of choice and exploitation in the sex industry.

The centrality of time, both as substantive focus and theoretical framing, to the research thus called for a temporal methodology. The temporal nature of this research recognises that, in people' narratives, pasts, presents and futures are intrinsically inseparable and constantly re-worked in light of each other (Adam 1990; Neale 2019). Accordingly, the research is longitudinal in order to capture such *reworking* and how participants manage and negotiate broader contextual or situational changes. Participants were repeatedly engaged in the research over an extended length of time and were asked to explore their histories and futures in relation to their current experiences. The simultaneous theoretical, substantive and methodological foregrounding of analyses of time therefore enabled focus and insight into the temporal dynamics and character of sex work.

This chapter details and discusses my methodological strategies and choices, both proactive and responsive (Neale 2013), which shaped the course of inquiry. I begin by outlining the research aims and questions [4.1], before proceeding onto a discussion of my theoretical perspective [4.2]; focusing on how this informed the

mode of inquiry used within the research. To critically engage with participants' narratives, I employed participatory time maps [4.4] as part of a longitudinal research design [4.3] with purposefully recruited participants [4.5], and I address the practical, theoretical and ethical opportunities and challenges this approach poses [4.6 and 4.7].

4.1 Rationale and Research Questions

Prior to the research I volunteered with a sex worker project to conduct research and offer outreach to indoor and street sex workers. During outreach sessions, it became evident that sex workers were experiencing economic hardship as a result of changes to welfare programmes and labour conditions, which potentially encouraged riskier working practices. This suggested an imbalance of power in favour of clients who were able to make increased demands on sex workers because of their financial instability. Consequently, this informal ethnography and the concerns raised by sex workers and project workers initially formed the rationale to explore experiences of vulnerability and the impact on sex industry relationships as a result of austerity policies. In listening to and prioritising participants' accounts, however, I began to understand time as central to the economic experiences of sex workers and my research questions thus changed over time to reflect this. I became interested in the commodification of time as described by participants, which is reflected more widely in the economic value ascribed to clock time. As such, my aims, objectives and research questions investigated how time is commodified within the sex worker-client relationship and how temporal practices are used to produce experiences and regulate the encounter.

The research questions were thus founded in a temporal approach, where time was explored and used both methodologically and conceptually in a number of ways:

- What shapes sex workers' experiences of 'vulnerability' and 'flourishing' through time and how does this influence working decisions?
- What processes of commodification are undertaken within the sex industry and how is this negotiated by those involved?
- How are temporal practices implicated and experienced in the regulation of sex industry relationships and encounters?

The research questions prioritise the exploration of sex work through a temporal lens both substantively and theoretically. The first question prompts an exploration of participants' pasts, presents and futures in the dynamic contexts of sex work to gain an understanding of their experiences of vulnerability through time and how this shaped trajectories at work. The second question reflects the essential role of time in commodity relations (Marx 1976), with particular attention paid to the distinctions and interrelations between commodifying time and services in the sex industry. Lastly, the third research question interrogates the practice of time in regulating relationships (Elias 1992) and the use and manipulation of time in producing specific sexual encounters. This allows the exploration of fluctuating power chances and asymmetries within the temporal practices of sex workers and clients.

Through a recognition and utilisation of the dynamic and contingent nature of contexts, processes and relationships, this temporal approach offers particular insight into practices of time and work, and processes of power found within them. In recognition of the breadth of contexts surrounding sex workers' experiences, and their dynamic nature, I draw on a feminist-informed figural approach to research, which seeks to identify and explain a processual and relational account of sex work over time, while paying particular attention to existing feminist calls for the improvement of conditions in the sex industry. In what follows, I discuss this theoretical approach in more detail, highlighting the opportunities and challenges that arise from it.

4.2 Theoretical Approach: Navigating Figurations and Feminisms

Given the feminist theoretical debates surrounding levels of choice and exploitation in the sex industry [2.4], it is necessary to detail my own position within these debates. I commenced the research following the work of O'Neill (2001), which calls for a critical feminist standpoint and emphasises the need to work *with* sex workers to understand their narratives within broader contexts. This recognises both the individual choices of sex workers, the importance of recognising sex work as work, but also the economic constraints and exploitation of women at work. Through the course of the research I began to draw on figural sociology because of how it

allowed an exploration of relational power, which has significance for sex work, and contributes an original perspective to debates surrounding the industry.

Through the course of the research I arrived at a feminist-informed figurational approach, which required some navigating of potential incongruities. Many feminist positions advocate the importance of involvement and politicisation through research (Hargreaves 1992; Oakley 1993), which are seemingly juxtaposed to figurational sociologists' desire to balance involvement and detachment in search of greater sociological understanding of the interdependencies in society (Elias 1987). Further, akin to the contradictions between Marxist and Eliasian theory [as discussed in section 3.1.1], feminists criticise Eliasian theory for failing to prioritise the role of gender in social relations. While for some, these differences are incompatible (Colwell 1999; Hargreaves 1992), others offer an effective synthesis (Liston 2007, 2018; Mansfield 2008) on the basis of shared concerns between both approaches and a reconciliation of differences.

A figurational approach looks historically at a broad range of dynamic contexts to understand processes, and this approach, it is argued, fails to prioritise gendered relations (Hargreaves 1992). For figurational sociologists, a prioritisation of gender is indeed problematic, because the existence of males and females does not hold universal meaning: meaning is generated through their interdependent interactions:

Males and females are regarded as being fundamentally interdependent. This is important because figurational sociologists argue that gender cannot be explained adequately as a function of the actions of any males or females on their own. Rather, gender is a function of relations between, and among, males and females, and gender relations are affected by the overall social structure in which they occur... Thus, while feminists have mainly highlighted the constraining consequences of gender relations for females (and, to a lesser extent, for males), figurational sociologists argue that the variable functional interdependence of the sexes has enabling as well as constraining consequences for those women and men (Liston 2007:626).

By these means, this approach generates an understanding of gendered relations as it is produced through the interactions of individuals. In answer to feminist concerns, those who seek synthesis have outlined the ways in which figurational sociology explores the constraining and enabling conditions of gender, in addition to other

dimensions. A feminist-figurational approach generates knowledge which contributes to feminist advocacy through a “sensitivity towards the enabling and constraining consequences, and the active roles of ‘women’” (Liston 2007:633).

Eliasian scholars have also refuted the supposed neutrality required within a figurational approach; explaining that objectivity is not possible nor desirable in a social system where all individuals exist in relation to each other (Kilminster 2004; Liston 2007). Elias’ (1987) theory of involvement-detachment did not pose these values in opposition to each other but aimed to dissolve dichotomies and move away from terms such as objectivity in opposition to subjectivity (Mansfield 2008). Instead, involvement-detachment is a process which recognises that the researcher *is* involved but seeks reflexively to consider their own values through a balance of involvement-detachment to achieve valid knowledge of society from *within* (Kilminster 2004) and avoid ideologically driven findings. This allows a “greater appreciation and understanding of the complex figurations” (Liston 2007:635) of which participants contribute to and negotiate.

Developing this, Mansfield incorporates a feminist and figurational approach through the use of ‘involved-detachment’, which reflects my own theoretical approach:

Involved-detachment is a balance signaling a feminist passion or motivation to investigate gender relations...from an insider perspective; a requirement to be involved, but recognizing and examining the feminist assumptions of the research endeavour and working towards an appropriate degree of detachment from those feminist values in the advancement of knowledge (Mansfield 2008:105).

A figurational approach assists in this level of involved-detachment through ‘forcing’ the researcher to explore personal histories and broader contexts to understand processes through time. It is, nevertheless, a complex process of reflexively questioning assumptions. In conducting the fieldwork, my approach was decidedly feminist, drawing on the work of Oakley (1993) and O’Neill (2001) in creating a two-way process whereby information is shared, and questions are asked by participants in return. But to achieve an involved-detachment, an abductive strategy was employed, which involved “alternating periods of immersion in the relevant social world, and periods of withdrawal for reflection and analysis” (Blaikie 2010:156). This alternating process continued throughout the course of the research in my voluntary

outreach role and through a research design whereby I periodically returned to participants to share, discuss, and test ideas. Periods of withdrawal from the 'primary' fieldwork offered opportunity for analysis through a *degree* of detachment from in situ relationships:

Treating questions of temporal and spatial remove from interview encounters not as a binary divide (between either 'being there' or 'looking back') but as a question of different degrees and qualities of proximities and distance, involvement and detachment (Hughes et al 2020:6).

Immersion and withdrawal was a relational and analytic process, which allowed the development of theories which are bound with the accounts of participants but critically engaged with and developed upon in order to offer explanation (Emmel 2020).

This does not mean abandoning feminist motivations, however, as valid knowledge garnered through this research can facilitate feminist political action (Mansfield 2008). I thus propose that a feminist-informed figurational approach sets out to seek answers to feminist issues through the exploration of a broad set of relations, which, in turn, informs feminist engagement and action. This research stems from feminist concerns because it explores, among other things, the gendered experiences of a group of women in the labour market and in sex work, highlighting their experiences and management of vulnerability within a patriarchal, capitalist and civilising society. Further, in presenting the findings I seek to contribute to knowledge in a way that contributes to the improvement of conditions in the sex industry. These motivations are combined with a figurational approach which seeks to understand temporal processes of commodification, consumption and power as they are practiced within sex industry relationships. A figurational approach is instrumental in understanding pluralities of experience within dynamic interdependencies, whereby relations of power can be explored.

4.3 Researching Time Through Time

The alternating process of an abductive strategy had relevance not only for my theoretical approach, but also for the opportunity it affords in gaining rich data through continued involvement in fieldwork. The research occurred through a period

of time but is not bound within this period: researcher and participants drew on experiences outside of this period; exploring and practicing their pasts, presents and futures through dialogue. Moreover, in communicating with each other these ideas there is a re-working of ideas in relation to each other. As much as the topic of this thesis is temporal, therefore, so is the process of research, and the research design and methodology embraces and exploits this.

4.3.1 Pasts, Presents and Futures

The research employed a longitudinal approach in that it involved looking back but also qualitative longitudinal research that “‘walk alongside’ individuals or groups over time in such a way that privileges the present” (McLeod and Thomson 2009:61). Studying time through time has also been celebrated for its emancipatory function as it allows participants to understand where and who they are now in relation to where they have come from and where they are going (McLeod and Thomson 2009). I asked participants to ‘look back’ and describe their histories, particularly in relation to their work but also how it linked to other aspects of their work. They drew on memories and engaged in a process of remembering by making the connections between their working decisions and other aspects of their lives. Their constructed biographies led them to question why they had made certain decisions or changes and, thus, generated an awareness that perhaps was not there beforehand.

The qualitative longitudinal research design also enabled me to ‘walk alongside’ participants in a fragmented way, which enabled observation of micro events and how these were practiced and experienced through time. When I was not with a participant, I would also sometimes hear about shared stories through other participants who knew them, or contacts made during outreach sessions. I also maintained contact with participants through email or text message, allowing additional updates to their activities. In between meetings and in addition to the participants I engaged with during primary data collection, I also engaged with online secondary sources, such as blogs and forums – particularly exchanges between sex workers and clients – to test ideas around time and power further outside of primary research spaces. In this way, the research method went beyond that of repeat interviewing, because the interactions outside of the research meeting meant that I felt I was experiencing something greater than snapshots of people’s lives.

It was necessary to approach narratives in a way that combined past, present and future. Participants were asked to explore experiences from 2007 to the present to cover the onset of the financial crisis and subsequent changes to economic policy in the UK, as well as asking about their expectations for the future, marking how time has been and continues to be used and the meanings time has adopted throughout this period. Of course, although there were many accounts of social or personal change within the narratives of participants there were also many examples of continuity; which is drawn out within the discussions in following chapters.

The ways in which time was discussed was in no way linear: participants would jump from one moment in calendar time to another a number of years later; they would categorise time events based on themes or emotions rather than chronology; moments in the past would lead them onto a discussion of the future. The context of the research meeting also influenced the process of recollection, where participants would continue to take phone calls from clients or get ready for appointments which would stimulate conversation around the present experiences as well as a recollection of other times and processes. These experiences were congruent with a theoretical approach which recognises the convergence of pasts, presents and futures in the process of recollection (Adam 1990; Neale 2019). A longitudinal methodology thus enhanced the exploration of the rich and complex textures of experiences, wider contexts, and social change through time.

Longitudinal research also allowed the identification of varied sorts of time experienced by participants. The role of emotion in defining and experiencing the temporal became increasingly evident. In some research meetings it was more of a discussion of temporally framed feelings as time rather than a numerical time unit itself. Simultaneously, time was managed and used by participants in a quantified form in order to control the transaction and their subsequent feelings about the transaction. Time is multi-faceted in these accounts, therefore and, consequently, there is no operationalised version of time offered in the research. Different uses and experiences of time are discussed throughout the thesis, which highlights its plurality.

4.3.2 Longitudinal Research Design

The longitudinal method employed within the primary research was to use participatory time maps, which involved exploring the past and present but were also revisited and developed upon at various points throughout the research process in a way which engaged with new presents and futures. This method (which I will discuss in more detail in section 4.4) was chosen because it allowed me to “capture the interplay of past, present and future while also acknowledging how social, cultural and disciplinary positioning shape the resulting narratives” (McLeod and Thomson 2009:5).

| Participant | Participation Dates | Number of Interviews | Reason for leaving |
|--------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Amanda | August 2016-June 2017 | 2 | Worked part-time and we were unable to synchronise additional meetings |
| Claire | November 2014-March 2018 | 4 | Completed fieldwork |
| Deborah | September 2017-June 2018 | 2 | Completed fieldwork |
| Emily | August 2017-June 2018 | 3 | Completed fieldwork |
| Gabrielle | February 2018-July 2018 | 1 | Short-term involvement agreed |
| Isobel | April 2017-June 2018 | 4 | Completed fieldwork |
| Lucy | November 2014-June 2018 | 4 | Completed fieldwork |
| Natalie | April 2017-June 2018 | 3 | Completed fieldwork |
| Tracy | January 2015-February 2015 | 1 | Chose not to participate further due to work time commitments |

Table 4.1: Dates and Durations of Participant Involvement

The fieldwork was conducted between September 2014 and June 2018 with a period of maternity leave between February 2015 and January 2016. I met each participant

a number of times during this period and each meeting lasted around two hours. Table 4.1 depicts when each participant engaged in research and the duration of their involvement. Conducting the research over this extended time with each participant gave participants the opportunity to explore and add to their narratives developed in their visual time maps through in-depth conversational interviews. In this way, the method cuts across a number of methodological strategies in its attempt to access the past through memory, as well as witnessing the present as it unfolds – ‘being with’ methods, and ‘inheriting’ methods in its attempt to access future projections within the present.

Researching over time in this way meant that participants did become increasingly comfortable with the presence of a researcher and with the process of research. In subsequent meetings participants would have prepared pieces of information ready for the discussion and had ideas based on the previous discussion. To this end, participants were increasingly prepared to direct the research process. Research meetings were very much led by participants and, although I had provided a brief outline of the areas I was interested in and gave some loose directions for producing the maps, once participants became comfortable with the process, they directed the conversation towards areas that were important to them and I was happy to spend the additional time needed to allow this. It did mean that some participants focused on certain areas more than others, which is perhaps evident in their prominence or absence in certain areas of the analysis.

The length of the research process has implications for the impact on the lives of both the participants and the researcher. There is an “interplay of research time and biographical time” (Thomson and Holland 2003:235), occurring parallel to each other as well as merging during research meetings. Consequently, I was conscious of how time ‘passed’ and was experienced as part of the research process. I would enter the field and withdraw again periodically, which would have been experienced differently by myself in comparison to the participants. For me, I continued to work on the project, never truly distancing myself from the research although I was distanced from the field, while participants may have had a different experience where they completely disengaged and recollected their involvement in the research before each meeting. For this reason, I began each meeting by revisiting our previous conversations and ended by planning the next time we would meet. The time-

mapping methodology also helped in this aspect: there was a visual tool to help guide participants through the previous and present discussions.

Fieldwork was interrupted for an extended time during my maternity leave, which had an impact on the relationships forged during the research, my original plans for periodic research meetings and attrition rates. This did provide some difficulty as the participants' lives had also moved on and some had new commitments and had to negotiate these to maintain connection with the research. One participant felt unable to continue their participation following my period of absence because she felt she needed to spend more time in her workplace to account for a slower income; a point I pick up upon further within the analysis chapters [see section 5.3.2]. I have no doubt though that the interruption to the research process, and the pausing of the research rhythm will have affected the momentum of the research relationships: a lack of proximity challenges the ability to sustain research relationships.

Additionally, the length of the research will have meant that it had a greater impact on participants than for participants of other shorter-term studies (Thomson and Holland 2003). For this reason, the periods of withdrawal were also of use to participants to reflect on the research process between each meeting: both to consider continued consent and to regulate any strain produced through the research process. Nevertheless, the overwhelming response from participants was that of enjoyment of the research process, which primarily stemmed from an inability to discuss their work so openly with others due to stigma:

I've enjoyed it. It's nice being able to talk frankly about it because there's not a lot of people... I don't have friends who do sex work so it's good (Natalie).

Necessarily, then, there was a heightened need for reflexivity from both parties, and the intervals of withdrawal provided a time for reflection.

Not only does longitudinal research focus on participants over time but demands a focus on the temporal nature of research fieldwork. The context of fieldwork and the way in which fieldwork took place provided as rich data as that gathered by the formal research methodology. I would move in and out of participants' lives in waves. During the planning stages of research, I hoped to meet participants at regular intervals, offering participants advanced notice of my next visit in order to prepare.

In practice, however, it was unsuitable for participants to have appointments arranged in this way because of the short notice they would need to make bookings with clients and because of the flexibility they maintain to complete their work. I ensured that while trying to make firm arrangements for participants, sending reminders when necessary, I also maintained flexibility to change these at short notice. Quite often, however, research meetings were arranged at very short notice, often with less than two hours' notice before I arrived at the location of the interview, as was the preference of many of the participants.

Sanders talks about the rhythms of fieldwork where “the majority of interviews took place in the workplace [which] means there were often interruptions” (2005a:30). In my experience, these interruptions were more usefully viewed as additions to the research meetings, where calls from clients and last-minute bookings were made, other sex workers would come and go in between their appointments, participants and others would complete administrative work in order to maintain their business. These additions provided a greater insight into how participants spent their time outside of the research.

4.4 Methodology: Researching and Representing Time

There has been increased interest in the use of visual and arts-based methods in sex industry research, particularly stemming from participatory approaches to amplify sex workers' narratives and disrupt sensationalist and problematic imagery of the sex industry (Cheng 2013; Desyllas 2013; Oliveira 2019; O'Neill 2001). Visual data have also been used alongside more traditional qualitative and quantitative research methodologies to provide rich insights into varying sites of sex work (Pilcher 2012; Sanders and Hardy 2014). The research methodology complements this body of work by employing a range of visual, observational and verbal methodologies to gain an insight into the temporal perspectives of participants. While I do not make claims to have achieved a participatory approach; primarily because the confines of doctoral research hinder such aims, these methods were chosen and deployed with a reciprocal research process in mind.

The combination of conversational interviews, participatory time maps, ethnography during outreach, and analysis of online written materials culminated in both visual

and verbal accounts on indoor sex work. By engaging with time map data together with participants, the visual aspects of these methodologies facilitated the verbal and the verbal facilitated the visual. Participants engaged in a process of remembering during the production of the visual elements, and this then acted as a cue for further visual and verbal elaboration. This combination of methodologies has been selected for their ability to engage with the social world using all senses available to us (Back 2007), using a range of visual, verbal and textual methods to explore and elaborate upon the narratives of participants.

4.4.1 Time Maps

There is a significant body of research around spaces of the sex industry, and some have employed visual methods to represent this spatiality. The work of Pilcher (2012), for example, uses a creative visual ethnographic approach to explore the spaces of two non-conventional stripping venues for female customers. This research included a range of techniques including participant observation, photo-elicitation interviewing and with email interviewing and internet research. Also, Atkins and Laing (2012) employ map making and photography with interviews and observations to explore male sex work and public spaces of sex work. As I have mentioned, there is comparatively little research interrogating temporal experiences of the sex industry, and there is also a lack of visual methodologies to explore the complexity of time and temporalities. To advance this, I looked to adapt the linear timelines used by Brown (2015) in her research of young people's vulnerability by allowing participants to visually represent their multiple, layered and polysemic experiences of time through the creation of a time map. The process of the time map demonstrated, and allowed for, time to be non-linear in certain circumstances, and for links to be drawn between different times, experiences and contexts. It also enabled connections and comparisons to be made between sex work and other aspects of participants' lives and work histories, which Guha (2019) also found beneficial in her use of life histories with sex workers in India, and which contributed greatly to the understandings shared in this research.

Time maps were used to explore participants' experiences through time. Participatory maps are participant-drawn representations of social phenomena, in this case the events and experiences of indoor sex workers related to economic

conditions, working practices, representations of time and relationships with clients over time. The process of developing these maps enabled a discussion of the times, events and issues raised through the map as they allowed “participants to move from description to depiction to theorising the reasons for the ways in which they represented features on the map through drawing and talking” (Emmel 2008:2).

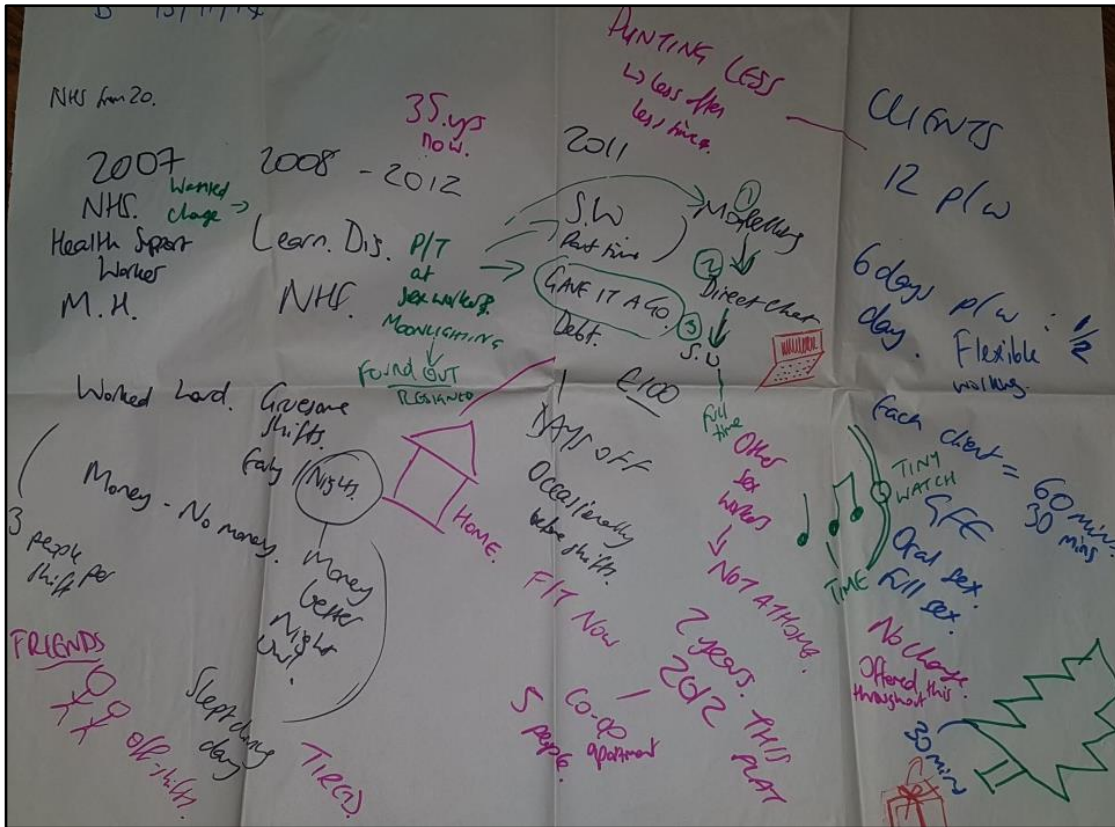


Figure 4.1: Claire's Time Map

Very loose directions were offered in terms of creating the map: I asked where participants had worked between 2007 and the present day and then let them proceed in ways that they felt comfortable. Beyond this, a very loose interview schedule was used only to prompt further dialogue if needed. In practice, this was only used during two research meetings with participants who appeared to prefer prompting as quite often the participant felt able to direct the conversation or the conversation developed naturally based on the information provided on the map. As a result, each participants' map differed in many ways and while some were linear and resembled a timeline, others – including Claire's in figure 4.1 – had grown to include representations of relationships, practices and processes as the discussion in interviews progressed and more phenomena were depicted visually. In contrast,

some participants were less comfortable drawing and preferred to talk. In these instances, they directed me in producing the maps based on the dialogue or the visual aspects of the methodology were forgotten altogether in favour of the conversational.

In allowing participants to direct the conversation and explore their own chosen avenues the research meetings did take longer than if the conversation had been more structured, as Thomson and Holland (2003) warn. While some research designs would have had to account for participants' accounts going off-topic I felt that the knowledge gained during these occasions was valuable and allowed new avenues of exploration. Each meeting took two hours, and, on each occasion, I felt that they could have continued quite easily had neither the participant nor I had other commitments. I was conscious of using the participants' time for this reason, another aspect of the temporal nature of fieldwork which I will discuss further later in this chapter [section 4.6].

The interaction of both visual and verbal data contributed to the knowledge explored and presented in this thesis. As Emmel writes:

Participatory mapping techniques complement and add to the conventional verbal interview. The act of drawing allows the participant to focus attention on a particular feature of the map. It also provides the interviewer with a record that can be interrogated as it is being drawn, during its crafting by the participant, and when it is completed (2008:2).

Analysing the relationship between the visual and verbal data occurred during the research meeting and after, and I realised that participants tended to visually represent events and ideas that were important to them, with verbal descriptions making connections between what was not visually represented. The maps were drawn according to events, critical moments, calendar dates and the experiences of each participant according to their own understanding of times.

As such, the methodology relied on social time, which recognises the interpretation of past, present and future events. Elias identifies that perceiving time "requires focusing units (humans) capable of forming a mental picture in which events A, B, C, following one after another, are present together and yet, at the same time, are seen clearly as not having happened together" (1992:37). Subsequently, participatory time maps allowed participants to explore their own experiences through time using a

visual medium which is flexible to the participants' needs. Times as represented on the map can be elongated or condensed, and in the process of so doing, experiences and stories can be elaborated upon or diminished. This feminist-figurational process allowed for participants' interests and concerns to be prioritised, contributing to a reciprocal process, while also allowing for the identification and understanding of change, continuity and the relationship between personal experience and broader structures.

4.4.2 Ethnography: Online and Offline

I also engaged in other methods of data collection, including a more informal observation and ethnography during my time volunteering with the sex worker project and within virtual spaces observing sex worker and client forums and advertising websites. This allowed greater immersion in the field within a range of sex work settings and the contextual information gathered gave insight into broader working conditions, which contributed to the formulation of research questions. This aspect of the research is not cited in the thesis, however, as it did not form part of the original research design and no formal consent arrangements were made with those involved.

Informal online observations were also conducted as I tested ideas. The internet has become the primary and dominant method for organising work for independent, indoor sex workers (Sanders et al 2016) and moving to a study of online spaces, therefore seemed a logical step in understanding the working practices of sex workers, particularly in relation to their temporal organisation. In trying to understand how sex workers spend their time, it is necessary to engage in and explore the spaces where their time is spent.

In doing so, I heeded advice given by online researchers that although we often separate online and physical spaces for the purposes of distinction and understanding, they are bound with one another (Orgad 2005) and the data found in either environment will be reflective of their actions in both (Hine 2000). For this reason, it was beneficial to spend time both in the ethnographic field in both online and offline spaces (Bakardjieva and Smith 2001; Orgad 2005). Further, both online and offline spaces should be understood to the same degree. Sanders (2005b) found

that online sex work spaces had distinct norms and regulations, as well as having formed an understanding community for those engaged in the industry, either as workers or consumers, to interact. A certain level of understanding and respect is needed, on the part of the researcher, to position and represent data in the context of the particularities of the online space.

There are, of course, difficulties in researching online: a primary concern being the reliability of data gathered from an unknown sample who may be regulating their online interactions through impression management concerns. Yet much research has disputed this and found that much of the data collected online has increased authenticity (Joinson 2005). This is particularly the case when the topics to be discussed may be considered less socially acceptable, where site-users can voice ideas and opinions under the anonymity provided through the internet rather than face-to-face research settings (Bargh et al 2002). This has considerable relevance to those working in the sex industry, where many workers still experience stigma from family, friends and co-workers in the physical world (Sanders 2005a). The internet may therefore provide a space where they are less vulnerable to exposure. Walther (1996) also proposes that participants can detach themselves from self-consciousness around their physical presence and instead focus in more depth on their thoughts and feelings. In encouraging greater exposure of their true selves, though, ethical concerns are raised, particularly in online spaces where informed consent is not gained or guaranteed. This will be discussed further in section 4.6.

In terms of methodological design, I used public online forums to test a range of analytical ideas – or cases – developed during the offline fieldwork. The sites used had become increasingly integral to the organisation of sex work. One site was a major international advertising platform, which all participants used to advertise their services. Two further sites were national platforms designed for clients to review their experiences with sex workers, and one further site was a regional website designed only for use by sex workers and clients in a local area. I searched forum discussions and documented evidence in relation to the cases I had developed. This involved exploring online forums with discussion topics raised by sex workers and clients regarding prices, times and timings of sessions, and how they described their experiences. I was never an active engager during this method of data collection, and only reviewed information previously posted by individuals unknown

to me and in spaces where users were unaware of my presence. Like Sanders' research (2005b), this methodology provided valuable evidence surrounding the interactions between sex workers and clients which would not have been accessible by other means. There are ethical implications associated with this method, however, which I address shortly [section 4.6].

4.4.3 Data Analysis: Casing Methodology

The polysemic nature of time which emerged in participants' multi-layered narratives meant that the data required considerable organisation throughout the research process. For this reason and in accordance with the abductive research strategy, regular periods of analysis between research meetings allowed for the organisation of cases based on themes, categories, groups, and narratives, which were then explored during subsequent research meetings for comparison and analysis. Using a casing methodology (Emmel 2013), the visual and textual accounts entwined, connected and intersected through continual testing of ideas: visual and verbal narratives have been cased together according to theme, content and theory. As this process occurred throughout the research, not just after the completion of fieldwork, it allowed ideas and theories to be tested with participants; benefitting the validity of the research. I would take ideas to participants in subsequent meetings to gauge their thoughts and responses, which would sometimes confirm or refute ideas. It sometimes occurred that certain participants identified with an idea while others did not, which prompted further exploration as to why this was the case. Longitudinal research thus allowed for analysis to occur over a longer period and for participants to engage in this process with me, while adding further to the data.

The cases presented in this thesis have undergone both longitudinal and cross-sectional analysis (Thomson and Holland 2003). Cross-sectional analysis enabled the comparison of participants' temporal experiences between participants based on wider political and social events (e.g. commencement of the Coalition government), specific experiences (e.g. when/if benefits were cut), and calendar time (e.g. Christmas period). However, Thomson and Holland warn that "the main weakness of this cross-sectional approach is the difficulties it poses for maintaining the integrity of individual narratives, cutting data up into small chunks of text" (2003:239). For this reason, it is important to give equal weight to the longitudinal analysis to ensure

that individual narratives are represented accurately and in a manner that conveys meaning. Equally, there is a tendency to simplify our pasts for reasons of coherence (Haug et al 1987) and so there is an equal need to apply cross-sectional analysis to demonstrate the complexity of our biographies.

4.5 Sampling and Negotiating Access

Sex workers are considered more socially excluded than non-sex working women due to the stigma associated with the work. Consequently, the sex industry population has been defined as 'hard-to-reach' because those working within it are disempowered (O'Neill 1996) and also because of the illegality surrounding the work (Hubbard 1999). Because of this I initially adopted a purposive sampling method among service users I came into contact with through the gatekeeper organisation and those that were recommended to me by project workers.

My reliance on a gatekeeper to provide access can be an issue, as it encourages the inclusion of more articulate members of the community (Shaver 2005), which may act to further isolate the more excluded members. Those who were referred to me were selected for their "wealth of experience [and] the resource of lived experience to draw on in recounting their story, how these impact on their lives, and the implications for these social practices" (Emmel 2013:139). While this ensured the relevance and depth of data, it may also have acted to exclude less articulate, or more isolated members of the population.

This route towards recruiting participants is typical of the layered access described by Sanders (2005a) which involved convincing gatekeepers of my intentions and abilities before gaining the cooperation of individual project workers who were to introduce me to potential participants. This was possibly the most difficult stage because of the work pressures and time constraints within the organisation and there was an exchange between this assistance in recruitment and the resources I could offer in return. I had already volunteered with the project prior to the research and continued to do so until February 2015 when I took maternity leave, offering research support and regular outreach to both street and indoor markets. An exchange was also needed between participants and researcher and during some earlier visits for research with those introduced through the gatekeeper organisation

I also offered some outreach services, including offering chlamydia tests, distributing condoms and distributing newsletters. Once introduced to sex workers, either with the purpose of talking to them about research or during outreach contacts, I shared information on the research and gave them time to respond with any questions or to express interest.

This was very useful, although later in the research process I decided to also independently contact sex workers advertising online to attempt to reach those who may not have been in contact with support services, to target specific age groups and ethnicities, and to widen the geographical areas that participants were working within. Having recruited four participants through the gatekeeper organisation I recruited a further five participants by contacting female indoor sex workers advertising on a major sexual services advertising website. I sent one message [Appendix II] to 185 sex worker profiles offering direct services in the North of England, and from this I received eleven responses asking for further information and some of these expressing concerns around anonymity. Four further responses were received from women wishing to decline and I received no response from the remainder of the profiles.

Despite sending information to those I identified as BAME or migrant workers, I only recruited one woman of mixed race. Difficulties in recruiting migrant workers are common and well-documented (Sanders et al 2018), because their work is often conflated within a trafficking discourse and, subsequently, there are greater fears of identification and legal penalties, especially in instances where workers do not have the necessary visa paperwork. For BAME sex workers, the potential to be identified could be considered a higher risk because of greater stigma associated with the work among their families and communities. One Asian woman did write to say she would like to take part but was too concerned about anonymity and, after a short conversation where I gave details of the research process and ethical guidelines, she chose not to take part. Consequently, eight participants are White British and another is Mixed Black British, and I feel a lack of diversity is a limitation to the study: there will be many intersectional experiences that I am unable to identify and discuss here, and the one response I did receive potentially suggests that there are greater concerns around identification among these groups, which may influence their working practices and relationships.

These attempts to recruit outside of those using the support project were not an attempt to gain a representative sample, but to diversify the experiences and narratives that were gathered in the research process. The need for in-depth accounts (Mason 2010; Patton 2002) was prioritised over accurate representativeness and through researching with a small sample continuously over time I was able to gather in-depth data. Ultimately, the research presented here uses 51 hours of interview data from a total of 25 interviews with nine participants. The small sample, together with the intense research method, provided a great depth to the data. Qualitative research rarely employs a large and representative sample in relation to population size and this is also not necessary, especially when the research aims to capture complex, nuanced, and in-depth data (Emmel 2013) of the sample. This does demand greater reflexivity on behalf of the researcher as there is a risk that the data is over-theorised and grand claims are made using a smaller, and therefore unwarrantable, quantity of data (Yates 2003). Consequently, it is necessary to reflect on the meaning of data in relation to existing evidence and knowledge within the field, in order to judge its significance for theory.

Problems associated with sample attrition among longitudinal studies have been well-documented (Elliot 2005; Given et al 1990; Miller and Wright 1995), and as mentioned previously I was unable to complete the research process with one participant following a period of maternity leave. Predominantly, however, attrition was avoided by ensuring that participants are well-informed about the purpose and nature of the research (Given et al 1990). Participants were also offered a financial incentive for their involvement, which did encourage their continued involvement but primarily attempted to reimburse their time within a lengthy research process and demonstrate my awareness of their commitment. There are ethical implications in offering payments, however, which is discussed further in the following discussion on the ethical considerations of longitudinal research.

4.6 Ethical Considerations

4.6.1 *The Ethics of Longitudinal Research*

The nature of researching over time raises particular ethical challenges, not least because of the extended engagement in fieldwork (Neale and Hanna 2012; Thomson 2007), but also because in my facilitation of knowledge of participants' pasts and presents we were potentially altering their futures (McLeod and Thomson 2009:20). In longitudinal research, participants are asked to maintain a relationship with the researcher and discuss issues in greater depth; allowing the researcher continued entry into their lives so they can be 'walked alongside'.

This process affords data of great depth into people's lives, which can mean that lives, when presented longitudinally, can become recognisable to the participants, despite measures to anonymise data to external audiences (Thomson 2007). Further, as outlined previously, participants were asked to represent their experiences over time in a visual way. Consequently, there are details drawn on paper which compromises the anonymity of participants and other individuals and places. Visual methods are problematic in achieving privacy and confidentiality for participants (Emmel 2008), but these issues are exacerbated by the depth of data produced over time. For this reason, much of the visual data have not been made available within the thesis and I chose to describe trajectories where the inclusion of an image compromised anonymity.

The issues of researching visually through time must be considered and negotiated both prior to conducting and during the research and data collection. With this in mind, I ensured I maintained a proactive and reactive approach in addressing ethical issues (Neale 2013). As Neale et al advocate, the need for "situated and processual ethics rather than contractual ethics is based on the insight that ethical practices cannot be fully determined a priori for they are context specific and require a sensitive appraisal of local circumstances and sensibilities" (2012:10). In line with this, the research design included plans to regain consent continually through the research process – participants were asked during each research meeting that they were happy with their engagement so far and were still happy to continue. This

formed part of a wider reflection on the research process during each meeting, which required a reflexive engagement from both the researcher and participant.

Participants were also offered gift vouchers in exchange for their time and continued engagement with the research; offering a value of £30-£50 incrementally as they progressed through the research. Payment for research participation has been a controversial practice in terms of ethical concerns around consent and coercion (McNeill 1997), although evidence also consistently demonstrates how participants do not prioritise payment over consideration of risks and involvement in research (Bentley and Thacker 2004; Slomka et al 2007). Financial reciprocation is increasingly becoming standard practice because “given the time commitments needed from participants in [qualitative longitudinal] research, some reward is often justified, particularly where participants are lacking in resources” (Neale and Hanna 2012:2). I felt that this was particularly pertinent given the economic focus of the research, which aimed to explore economic vulnerability. We spoke about money and time during their working days and, as such, I was taking up their time and potentially inhibiting their ability to earn money. Despite this, the amount offered in gift vouchers did not match the value of their working time and this did concern me at various points throughout the research. It was difficult to place a value on their time that recognised their contribution to the research and the time away from their own work while still negotiating ethical considerations regarding coercion.

This had implications for research relationships throughout the process. Sex work researchers are often engaged and aware of issues of power and reciprocation because of the nature of debates surrounding the sex industry more broadly. Sex workers have quickly become an over-researched group and so consideration of the value of research has become pertinent. Further, participants are encouraged to disclose their personal thoughts and experiences for the benefit of research: a relationship which has been likened to that of a pimp (O’Neill 1996) because of the level of exploitation and inequality within it. That said, indoor sex workers are relatively more empowered than those working in street markets and although they experience vulnerability both economically and socially through stigma, I felt that all members of the sample were informed and able to consent freely, and were comfortable in engaging in the research to the extent of directing the process.

In practice, however, the power relations between researcher and participant were not so clear cut and engagement in the research over a period of time meant that relationships were subject to flux throughout the research process. In fact, quite often I noted that the relationship took the form of participant as expert and researcher as outsider. This had benefits in that participants felt the need to explain more to me, strengthening the depth of data and my understanding. There were times when I had to justify my outsider status and demonstrate my comfort in talking about their lives as well as my position regarding theoretical debates on prostitution. One participant in particular was extremely knowledgeable of feminist theoretical engagement in the industry and would both educate and test me in this area. Equally, participants expected me to offer personal information about myself to reciprocate in the relationship and build trust. I did expect this prior to data collection, as Sanders writes that her participants “wanted to find out as much about my history as [she] did about theirs” (2005a:28).

This reciprocal process based on a relationship of trust has benefited from my own position as a female researcher (Sanders 2005a). Some have argued that being female is essential to access female sex industry spaces (O’Connell Davidson 1998; Sanders 2005a). This demonstrates that gender also plays a role in the power relations of research, and many have pointed out that it forms the basis of fieldwork. Mulvey (1989) argues that all ethnography is conducted through a ‘gendered gaze’ and, thus, feminist research by female participants offers a route to challenge patriarchal representations and stereotypes and facilitate reciprocal research which benefits participants.

As a female researcher, there was also a need to consider safety concerns during fieldwork. Fieldwork involved sitting in people’s places of work. These settings are relatively risky because of the illegality of the work (Sanders 2005a) and although violence is relatively rare in indoor settings, it does still occur (Sanders and Campbell 2007). Consequently, I was aware of a level of risk associated with fieldwork although despite this, I never felt particularly vulnerable during fieldwork because most participants had formal or informal procedures to protect their own safety. Additionally, I implemented and practiced measures and precautions to mitigate risks, including calling in and out of appointments with a fellow research student who knew my location and protocol if assistance was needed.

4.6.2 The Ethics of Online Research

Kivits (2005) highlights that researchers often disclose more information about themselves during online research as they are also influenced by the relative anonymity that online space brings. This mutual self-disclosure should contribute to a more reciprocal process. I was not actively engaged in dialogue with online participants, however, which produces an imbalance in the relationship between the researcher and the researched. Some researchers have justified this by arguing that their presence in the online space would have jeopardised the data collected. Sanders, for example, took on the role of an anonymous “lurker” on online message boards. She writes:

I decided against disclosing my identity as it could potentially alter the behaviour of the participants, fracture the strength of the shared community and probably provoke hostility (2005b:71).

Sanders’ experiences have much relevance to my own research as the online research is conducted in similar online communities.

Others, though, disagree that research should be covert even in online spaces, although they recognise that gaining ongoing consent in a ‘live’ online environment is difficult:

Just because talk takes place in public it does not mean that that talk is public... Those involved have a recognition that their words and actions are viewable by others but this does not mean that everything that goes on in the groups is essentially public discourse and as such ethically available to the online researcher (Rutter and Smith 2005:89-90).

With this in mind and having not sought consent from anonymous users on forums, I chose not to cite information garnered through online research. I used online forums to test ideas and to seek perspectives from male clients, particularly in relation to temporal regulation and experiences of time in the sex industry encounter. This helped to review evidence around clients seeking discounts which is discussed in chapter five; to test ideas by seeking anecdotal evidence around the power relationships of sex workers and clients discussed in chapter seven; and to develop ideas around reciprocal rewards and punishments through time, which is discussed in chapter eight.

As I have hoped to demonstrate throughout this chapter, the research process is continually negotiated and, as a researcher, I hope to have made appropriate decisions within the various conditions and constraints of study to contribute to knowledge of the indoor sex industry. The aforementioned conditions and constraints of study always place limitations on research, however, which I acknowledge and address in the following section.

4.7 Methodological Limitations

While I feel the approach and methodology is well-suited to represent the textured temporal experiences of women at work, my primary concerns centre on the sampling decisions made. Of great regret is my failure to recruit migrant women working in the sex industry. As I discussed in section 4.5, I targeted profiles of those identifying as non-British and non-White, but I failed to receive responses from those workers. Largely, I believe this issue rests with the criminalisation of migrant sex workers through its conflation with trafficking (Connelly 2016). Nevertheless, researchers of the sex industry should aim to find ways of connecting with this population because of the potential for intersectional experiences and issues not catered for within support services, and I feel disappointed that I was not able to further this aim. Correspondingly, a further limitation of this research relates to representing the intersectional experiences of BAME women working in the sex industry.

I also made the methodological decision to only recruit female sex workers offering services to male clients. Some participants offered services to men and women or both in couples, but predominantly their clients were male. It is important to note that while I recognise the sexual services offered by male or trans sex workers, there was a need to limit the sample in some way to bound the research. Further, one aspect of the rationale for the research was to explore work in an economy where women are often disadvantaged, and there were many benefits to exploring the relationship between female workers and male customers. There is no doubt, however, that exploration of the relationships between male, female and trans workers and clients would also gain interesting and valuable findings. My aim has not been to eradicate the voices of male and trans sex workers, and research in these

areas are important to broaden our understanding of sexuality and commercial sex (Smith and Laing 2012).

With regard to further exclusions from the sample, I felt that seeking client participants was not possible due to the time restrictions of PhD study. Involving clients would potentially dilute the research aims and a more focused and in-depth account of sex worker perspectives was of greater utility at this time. As I explained in my exploration of online ethics [4.6.2], I used online ethnography to test ideas with evidence from male clients on online forums. This was an imperfect attempt to gather the perspectives of clients and a more reliable, ethical and inclusive approach would involve the recruitment of male clients to the study. This therefore acts as a limitation of the research but also an opportunity for further study.

4.8 Conclusion

In this chapter I have outlined how a feminist-figurational approach provides original insight into the debates that pervade the sex industry by exploring a relational and dynamic account of processes and power. This necessitates a temporal focus, both theoretically and methodologically, and pasts, presents and futures are explored longitudinally through participatory time maps. The longitudinal and visually represented temporal data is crucial in understanding the lives of participants and temporal experiences of work and provides the opportunity to map experiences against broader change.

The forthcoming analyses culminate from the negotiations made in the design and undertaking of the research. To answer the research questions, a longitudinal approach was valuable in understanding participants' economic trajectories within dynamic contexts to identify and explore experiences of vulnerability through time, as shown in the following chapter. Participatory time maps provided rich data and acted as a cue for further discussion, which enabled conversations about participants' work and relationships with clients to answer further research questions around the commodification of the sex industry, as discussed in chapter six. The temporal practices involved in commodification processes reveal how the experience is produced and consumed, and how power fluctuates through such negotiations, which is introduced in chapters seven and eight.

5. Contextualising Commodity Relations: Participants' Trajectories

This chapter explores participants' economic decisions through a duration of their working lives, with the aim of contextualising sex workers' roles in commodity relations. The longitudinal nature of this research provides a valuable opportunity to identify critical moments in the working lives of participants and broader contexts and, thus, contribute to literature around routes into entering the industry (including Pitcher 2014; Sanders et al 2018, for example), working conditions within them (O'Connell Davidson 1997; Sanders 2005a) and sex workers' future plans (Brown 2012).

This exploration of participants' pasts, presents, and futures draws on theories of vulnerability (Emmel 2017) and reflexivity (Archer 2007) to situate participants within broader social and economic contexts. This approach recognises each of the participant's trajectories differ according to their background, available resources and personal outlook, and highlights the myriad ways in which participants can experience vulnerability (Mackenzie et al 2014), and act to overcome it (Emmel 2017). In what follows, a range of conditions and actions, which both introduce and mitigate vulnerability are discussed; building a complex picture of the contexts surrounding independent sex work.

This focus lends itself to a chronological display of participants' pasts, presents and futures, while also recognising that in many ways the past, present and future cannot be separated from one another in the re-telling of stories (Adam 1990). Accordingly, I explore the social, cultural and economic backgrounds of participants [5.1] and how this has shaped trajectories both in sex work and mainstream work [5.2]; particularly focusing on temporal experiences of work. I outline participants' experiences of, and responses to, changing working conditions in the industry [5.3]; and lastly discuss participants' ability to plan for the future [5.4].

5.1 Participants' Backgrounds

In this section I track the economic backgrounds of participants; analysing their accounts of educational and occupational background and how this has influenced their experiences of work and economic activity. I offer cross-sectional comparisons

to broader economic contexts, which contributes to an understanding not only of individuals' decisions, but of the structural and personal concerns which shape them (Archer 2007).

5.1.1 Educational Backgrounds

Educational attainment is shown to correlate with income levels, employment stability, and unemployment (Taylor et al 2012:17). Further, life history research with sex workers has shown that education levels influence “the age at which the interviewees entered sex work, the range of different job opportunities they had explored and the length of time they had devoted to sex work during their lives” (Rickard 2001:123). The educational backgrounds of participants varied, with some having no academic qualifications (Emily and Michelle), others having studied at higher education level (Natalie, Isobel, Amanda, Claire), and/or professional qualifications in areas related to health and social care (Amanda, Lucy, Gabrielle and Deborah).

Some participants recognised the potential economic benefits of education and three participants were studying at the time of the research to potentially develop a future career outside the sex industry (Amanda, Isobel and Lucy). These participants acknowledged that this was made possible through sex work income, as the rising costs of university often act as a barrier to accessing education (Roberts et al 2012). In this sense, while sex work leads to a greater experience of many types of vulnerability, it also enables action to potentially change economic vulnerability. Amanda, Isobel and Lucy hope to use their income to further future career prospects and increase their choices and control over their lives, although this still requires the negotiation of costs, financial and otherwise, to study and the ability to exit sex work as a result. This forms the reflexive decision process and demonstrates the negotiations of vulnerability in everyday life.

5.1.2 Intersecting Vulnerability

The two participants with no qualifications (Emily and Michelle) could potentially be defined as more at risk of economic vulnerability because of the reduced choices

available to those with lower educational attainments and the increased understanding and ability to access welfare support by the more highly skilled (Taylor et al 2012). However, the outcomes of the two participants are quite different, which could potentially stem from intersecting vulnerability elsewhere in their lives. Michelle started work in the sex industry much earlier in her life than Emily, which allowed her to gain status in the industry and achieve a high enough income to start her own brothel business and hold greater control over her life:

I worked in a parlour for quite a few years and I learned a lot and I saved a bit, and then a load of the girls were complaining about not being looked after properly and I thought I could probably do a set up like this myself and make sure all the girls and me were looked after. I only wanted to do it if it were safe (Michelle).

Emily, conversely, experiences chronic illness and disability which has affected her ability to engage in paid employment, demonstrating how a complex web of other circumstances influence exposure to vulnerability. Emily had left school and undertaken paid employment in the mainstream economy before experiencing a range of health issues which meant that she could no longer work:

I've had periods of having a job and then illness and stuff happening and then not having a job. I've probably spent more time unemployed or on the sick than I have in employment in the last ten years (Emily).

While Emily and Michelle have similar educational attainment, the outcome of their economic security differs because of the intersecting vulnerability that can affect individuals over time.

Emmel and Hughes (2014) theorise a model of vulnerability whereby three dimensions of vulnerability – material shortages, capacity to address and plan for present and future needs, and an uncertain reliance on welfare services – occurs through “a fourth dimension, time, through which these co-ordinates of vulnerability change, to explain the dynamic experiences of vulnerability” (2014:162). This model usefully provides clarity to the differences in the vulnerability experienced by participants, and through longitudinal methods which gather the history of participants, we can start to understand how the varying context of an individual's life influences their experiences of vulnerability and flourishing. Emily, for example, has experienced greater material shortages following illness and disability which

subsequently introduced greater levels of chaos into her life, as she was unable to address present needs or plan for the future. This was exacerbated greatly through barriers to accessing services, which will be discussed shortly [5.1.4]. While Emily attempted to stabilise her finances and economic trajectory through accessing welfare, this is shaped by service provisions on offer and blockages to accessing them. The longer-term inability to readjust this trajectory, in comparison to Michelle who was able to find a way to make changes, demonstrates how vulnerability is experienced and shaped through time.

The data presented here demonstrates how participants generated an expected lifecourse, making plans based on previous experiences, available resources and future desires and expectations. Participants who experienced vulnerability from earlier in the lifecourse had more reserved expectations for their futures (Thomson et al 2010), such as Emily, who had made no definitive plans. From this, it became clear that Emily expected to continue in insecure positions and to manage vulnerability throughout her lifecourse:

It's just a constant, sometimes I just feel like I'm on a merry-go-round, and I think, well, I can't do much with my life, because of my health issues (Emily).

Other participants who were less exposed to vulnerability earlier in the lifecourse, such as Natalie and Deborah, with greater experience of available options and greater access to resources, were able to map out a more controlled trajectory in which they expect to flourish, but the interruption of this trajectory is more distressing to them:

It was hard for me, especially because in a way I was still mourning for my life. I was only a year off actually completing my degree and I'd already, because I kept getting placements in the same hospital and I had pretty much been promised that I was going to get an interview at the end of it, so I had it all lined up. I'm somebody who likes to have a plan (Natalie).

Natalie's time map (figure 5.1) shows clear turning points in her trajectory in 2008 when her job was outsourced in 2009-10 because of unexpected pregnancy, and in 2014 she was forced to move across the country as a result of domestic violence, which rendered her homeless with no belongings or support.

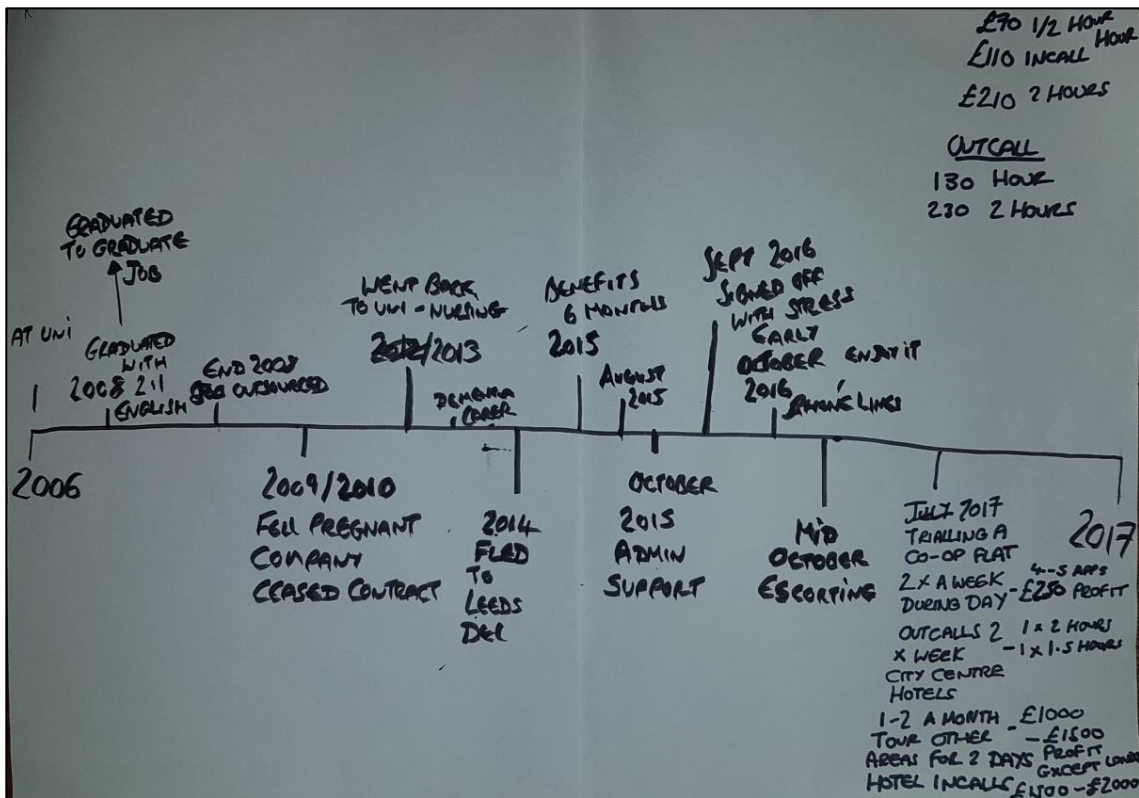


Figure 5.1: Natalie's Time Map

This visual representation of Natalie's trajectory depicts how vulnerability intersects with time. Various events left Natalie exposed to vulnerability in different ways and her levels of material resources, the extent to which she was able to address her needs, access support services, and plan for the future varied according to a range of circumstances at different times. These will be explored further in the ensuing discussion. Despite having different expected trajectories, most of the participants were exposed to vulnerability at various points in their working lives, although those with greater access to personal resources were able to demonstrate greater control in many ways, such as viewing their sex work as a business opportunity rather than a tool for survival.

5.1.3 Responses to Economic Conditions according to Social Class

Those from a middle-class background and with greater access to resources could potentially flourish more than those from working class backgrounds. As evidence shows high levels of lay literacy around issues of social class and inequality (Irwin 2018), there is a strong justification to allow participants to define their own social

class. Some participants defined their class: two self-defined as having a middle-class background (Natalie and Deborah), two others self-defined as working class (Lucy and Claire), one participant stated she was middle class now as a result of social mobility through education (Amanda), and the remaining participants did not offer a self-definition (Emily, Gabrielle, Isobel and Michelle).

The two participants who did identify as having a middle-class background, Deborah and Natalie, entered the industry with economic motivations after having poor experiences in the labour market. Deborah worked in senior management for a health-related organisation but was made redundant following economic recession. This coincided with huge swathes of redundancies in both the public and private sector, with the commencement of the freeze on public sector wages as organisations took the opportunity to reduce costs and boost efficiency. There is evidence to suggest this exercise influenced the trajectories of most participants:

I took a voluntary redundancy in August 2012... they did away with the grade above me. They were trying to just get rid of all old boys and all old girls. Then we knew that they'd come for our grade because we were senior officers and the officers that'd been in the job a long time, because we were too costly. What they wanted were two for the price of one (Gabrielle).

2011, I think it was, I was made redundant. I was doing the same job between 2007 and 2011; working for a charity as a senior manager. I'd been there 18 years and then I was made redundant (Deborah).

I graduated in July, but I actually had a graduate job lined up from the April... so I actually started working as a graduate before I'd graduated so I started off pretty well. But that lasted six months... I was working for a big automotive company in a graduate scheme doing stuff with the head office and then they decided that they were going to move all their operations to Eastern Europe because of the financial crisis here (Natalie).

The economic downturn and the subsequent austerity project signalled an increase in experiences of labour insecurity, intensification, unemployment and underemployment (Shildrick et al 2012), which has a negative impact on health and wellbeing (Brown 2012). Having lost the security of their previous roles, Deborah and Natalie became subject to the cyclical churning between low-paid and low-skilled jobs (Shildrick et al 2012) in an attempt to secure income:

I worked in a supermarket, pick and packing for the online stuff. I worked in a bar. And I worked in a hotel. Three jobs at minimum wage. And I was going from one to the other. And obviously the wage I was getting was nothing like what I was used to. I was trying to do three jobs to make up for the wages I had lost and the jobs that could get me more part-time than full-time (Deborah).

Deborah, who was in middle age at the time of her redundancy, shared responsibility for the household income with her husband and, having been accustomed to a relatively high wage in management, attempted to make up for a shortfall by working a demanding schedule of three minimum wage jobs. Indeed, the growth of highly skilled workers in a labour market which lacks skilled employment opportunities forces those with education and skills to seek lower skilled work (Taylor et al 2012). This has the effect of reducing the availability of work for lower-skilled workers also. In an economy defined by these poor working conditions, many workers at all levels engage in lower paid work and there are increasing risks of low income, poverty and unemployment.

Natalie was motivated to find work because of the negative connotations associated with accessing benefits and she took a low paid administrative role where she struggled financially. The organisation subsequently changed her contracted working times and it became impossible for her to care for her daughter while working:

They changed my shift because I'd been saying I wanted additional responsibilities and more money... I agreed because they promised me a promotion at the end of it, for three months and three months only... it almost killed me... They wouldn't let me change it back; at the end of it they said no because everyone else has left the five AM shift so you're going to have to continue (Natalie).

Here, Natalie lacked independence and control over time with her managers imposing difficult and inflexible work schedules. As an employee experiencing higher levels of vulnerability, she had little means to challenge such conditions. Circumstances for both Deborah and Natalie meant that they could no longer rely on familial safety nets and, despite their education levels and middle-class backgrounds, found themselves subject to poor labour conditions. This is reflective of the way vulnerability fluctuates through time according to a range of circumstances, but also demonstrates the far-reaching impact of the widespread efficiency savings sought by organisations.

This programme of 'austerity' and decline in labour conditions was attributed to economic downturn, although these narratives fit with a broader experience of insecure labour, demonstrating that austerity measures are an ongoing project to increase efficiency at the cost of the worker (Shildrick et al 2012). This has led to "the normalisation of instability, uncertainty and permanent change in working life" (Sanders and Hardy 2013:16).

Interestingly, of all the participants, only Deborah and Natalie claimed to have been affected by economic decline and subsequent austerity measures. This mirrors Thomson et al's (2010) findings that those with greater assets were most worried about the economic downturn because they had more to lose and had yet to be impacted by 'austerity'. Other participants responded negatively when asked if the recession had any bearing on their lives, work and decisions, although during extended conversations it became clear that efficiency savings made in the workplace and welfare system did impact them.

5.1.4 Women's Experiences of 'Austerity', Labour Market Conditions and Welfare

Feminist authors recognise the continuation of these conditions in women's work, in particular (Sanders and Hardy 2013), where "women are bearing the brunt of the recession both in terms of occupying the most precarious positions in the labour market, and in terms of absorbing the radical cuts to the welfare state" (Thomson 2014:120). Consequently, many have drawn the link between the feminisation of poverty and entry into the sex industry (Phoenix 1999) and even in less disadvantaged economic positions, "incentives for engaging in sex work remain intricately tied to unequal relations of class and gender" (Bernstein 2007:181). Significant evidence demonstrated that much of the situational vulnerability experienced by participants was of a gendered nature, which highlights the vulnerability of women to poor employment options, as women continue to experience discrimination in the workplace:

I accidentally fell pregnant and because I was on a rolling contract my contract suddenly finished because they didn't want to pay maternity pay. They even said to me to my face that they didn't have to because there were plenty of other people who would take the job and they didn't see the point of paying somebody for nine months. I got union involvement and everything else but there was nothing I could do because I was on a short-term rolling contract (Natalie).

Accounts such as these are familiar and not symptomatic of economic downturn: they represent the perpetual discrimination of women at work. Women hold the most insecure positions in the labour market and form the majority of those accessing welfare (Thomson 2014).

There have been significant changes to welfare also, with several revisions to the welfare system since the Conservative-Liberal Democrat Coalition in 2010. Again, this was cited as a response to the financial crisis but mirrors broader moves in cost-saving and a reduction of the state. Correspondingly, most participants had accessed or attempted to access welfare and subsequently experienced the welfare system over a period of change. Participants cited a lack of support when engaging with the welfare system, as well as difficulties in receiving payments, which led to increased exposure to financial vulnerability.

Access to service provision forms one axis on Emmel and Hughes' model of vulnerability, whereby "participants are uncertain in their relationships with service providers across health and social care, and this insecurity is most keenly felt in response to crisis. Service providers listen and do not listen and act or do not act to address need" (2014:162). Participants cited not being listened to or not receiving financial and other support when it was needed:

They had a mess up with me having to go for medical assessment and all that stuff. It took nearly nine months to get any benefits help. They would pay my rent, but I was literally no income whatsoever. It got to the point where I sold anything of value to live. To be able to get food and feed the pets. Just to carry on life. And all my debts spiraled out of control and just everything was just all a downward spiral. I used a food bank and things were just too much to cope with and not knowing what my injuries were and the fact that it wasn't getting any better. It was getting worse. The whole thing was just frustrating because I couldn't see any light at the end of the tunnel (Emily).

For Emily, her lack of access to support services meant that her life ‘spiralled out of control’ toward chaos. She lacked a diagnosis and subsequent treatment, which meant her condition was deteriorating, but she was also unable to work or access financial support, which had severe consequences for her ability to address present needs. Effectively, she was plunged further into vulnerability.

Deborah, on the other hand, holds a higher level of education, which is shown to improve ability to access services and gain support (Taylor et al 2012). She also experienced issues in accessing support, however, because her age and experience did not correspond to those expected to need support:

To start off with I've been on jobseekers... which again in itself was a joke. I'd never claimed before in my life. Signed on. *'Oh yes, you can have it till January'* so something like six months at £52 a week. And then obviously I've got these jobs, so I was only in it for about six weeks. But during which time it really annoyed me because it was in and out and you know you have to go and show your little book thing and the woman said *'I do like people like you, you know, you've got it together; you just go and do it, oh you're dead easy'*. And I'm thinking no, just because I kind of know what I'm doing and I'm a bit computer literate it doesn't mean to say I'm easy and I don't need help (Deborah).

Deborah's experience of accessing welfare somewhat mirrors the experiences cited in Emmel and Hughes' study (2014) on grandparents who act as primary carers to their grandchildren, where participants felt invisible to service providers because their role as primary caregivers did not correspond to the expected biographical narrative. Similarly, Deborah's biography of successful employment and the stage of life she was at meant that job centre staff were not willing to offer appropriate support.

Comparatively, Natalie, who used benefits for a short period after escaping domestic violence with her child, found that she was able to access the welfare services she needed because she had evidence of needing support:

I personally had no problems, but I came in armed with letters from Women's Aid. I was already under a police thing called MARAC – risk of homicide – so I come in armed with all this (Natalie).

The differences in experience among participants in accessing services reveal the differentiation between those perceived as deserving or undeserving of support (Brown 2015), with certain circumstances prioritised within support services. Natalie was deemed deserving of support because the circumstances lay outside of her personal control and could not be associated with any personal failing. Her ex-husband's behaviour was easily categorised as problematic and Natalie was categorised as victim; a status which is easily defined as vulnerable in policy terms and deserving of support. In comparison, Emily whose welfare needs resulted from disability was seen as less deserving because the problem, however involuntary, is constructed as a personal 'failing' in public discourse (Briant et al 2011).

Once Natalie's circumstances changed and she had moved in with her new partner, however, she did experience problems in terms of what was expected of her, which shows the changing experience and categorisations of vulnerability and deservedness over time:

They were expecting him to support me, but before I moved in he had had a housemate who had paid half the rent and the bills so it was putting him financially... he couldn't afford to support us all and I was left with just my wages at £700-800 a month but then you're paying £100 off debt, got to pay for myself and my daughter to live, got to pay £300 for rent even though that's just half, then you've got all the other stuff you've got to pay for, like bills and stuff and it was like being back to benefits again... So, I went onto sex work from there (Natalie).

The expectation that Natalie would become dependent on her new partner meant that she was no longer deserving of support. Despite being a relatively new partner and only moving in together because of problems with Natalie's accommodation, they were expected to share finances, but this left them both worse off financially. While this impacted both Natalie and her partner's finances, the expectation that Natalie would become dependent on her partner is especially troubling considering the vulnerability she had been exposed to while dependent on her previous partner. Withdrawn support and poor labour conditions exacerbated her experiences of vulnerability.

Natalie was not the only participant to experience domestic issues which indirectly contributed to a decision to work in the sex industry. Many participants reported they had been led to economic hardship because of debts created by their partners

and held continued responsibility to repay debts, rebuild finances and manage ongoing costs:

I only started doing this because my husband was a dickhead and we nearly lost the house and I was under so much stress. I don't know. I know this money isn't guaranteed and you could not get anything all week, but when you do, you get a lot of money. And it pays the bills. My husband doesn't really contribute much towards that (Lucy).

I started as an escort in 2011 and I gave it a go because I came out of a relationship that got us into a lot of debt. Then he bugged back to London, which left us carrying the can. Then I had no money, not even with a full-time wage was it touching the sides, so I needed something to make some money and working shifts it's hard to get like a cleaning job or a bar job or something of that nature (Claire).

These participants' accounts demonstrate the gendered nature of their vulnerability, where they are disadvantaged by the actions of partners in addition to the conditions of their work.

There is a correlation between interpersonal violence and women's poverty (Renzetti 2009), where male partners intentionally sabotage women's economic position, which is recognised as a form of violence. The generation of debt in a partner's name is a form of economic abuse and this holds significant implications for women:

Economic insecurity is...a gendered issue with factors such as the gendered nature of care, the undervaluing of women's paid and unpaid work, and workforce discrimination all contributing to women consistently experiencing poorer social and economic outcomes throughout their lifecourse. Given that existing prevalence data provide evidence of gender asymmetry in victimization and perpetration of [interpersonal violence], it is not a surprise that economic abuse is compounded by the context of women's economic insecurity more generally (Postmus et al 2018:2).

Women are exposed to economic vulnerability as a result of conditions in both the workplace and at home, therefore (Fuchs 1989; Scott et al 2008). Power asymmetries between men and women result from the vulnerability created through such processes, which in turn compromises their agency in the labour market. Despite the associated risks, working in the sex industry represents an active response to this vulnerability in an attempt to gain control and independence, thus demonstrating the agency of these individuals in vulnerable situations.

5.2 Time and Money in the Sex Industry

The choice to sex work is reflective of women using agency to control their lives and stabilise their economic positions, where participants make reflexive decisions within the context of structural and cultural concerns (Archer 2007). The cited benefits of sex working over other forms of work have been well-documented and many sex workers report high levels of job satisfaction (Pitcher 2014; Sanders et al 2016), as did the participants of this study. The key positive characteristics of sex work include: the higher financial value of time in sex work; the flexibility of the work; and the independence it affords them. These 'pull' motivators to sex work are reflexively considered as worth the risks and negative connotations associated with the work. Here I consider how these motivators have influenced participants' decisions in the context of their personal and structural concerns.

5.2.1 *The Monetary Value of Time in Sex Work*

In an economy where wages have, until very recently (ONS 2019), been falling in real terms since 2008 (ONS 2013), many women are drawn to prostitution because of the relatively high income. The financial value of their time is considerably higher than in the types of work participants had been engaged in prior to working in the industry. All participants indicated that the level of income was a primary motivator to work in the industry, having experienced demanding and low paid work or unemployment previously:

Being able to go and spend £50 in Aldi rather than spending £16 in a corner shop trying to scramble together enough food for the week... it's a vast difference. It's the security of it (Natalie).

I'm not ashamed of what I've done, no. I did it because I needed to live and, without it, I'd probably ended up on the street... I wouldn't be sat here now probably. Because it did get that bad. It was affecting my mental health and I didn't want to get up (Emily).

The conditions of participants' lives were significantly improved with the relatively higher income from sex work and it meant a departure from struggling with the daily costs of living towards gaining control of lives which had become chaotic.

5.2.2 Work Time Flexibility

The higher value of time often means those working in the industry can afford to work less intensively in comparison to other forms of work and they are afforded greater flexibility, which is common in other research samples in the industry (see Sanders et al 2016, for example). Flexibility provides a level of autonomy over time, as opposed to flexibilisation being used as a means to gain greater control over the time of workers (Rubery et al 2016; Tuckman 2005). Through this flexibility, all participants described relative temporal freedom as part of their work, which meant they could reinvest their time in other parts of their lives:

It meant that I could be there for my daughter's things, like I could go to her school plays and things (Natalie).

Work which could be organised around childcare commitments was important to participants with children, as flexibility in work commitments is beneficial to parents in many ways (English Collective of Prostitutes 2019), especially given the rising costs of childcare (Rutter 2015). While some have questioned the suitability of independent sex work for those with parenting responsibilities because of the unsocial hours involved (Pitcher 2015), the participants with childcare responsibilities within this study had all been able to arrange work during traditional daytime working hours, which allowed them flexibility for engaging in their child's education as well as caring for them outside of school. Of course, this has gendered implications also, as temporal demands are known to be greater for women both in paid labour and unpaid domestic labour, which subsequently has an impact on wellbeing (Warren et al 2010).

5.2.3 Control Over Time

For others it was about the independence and control gained over their time, which enabled them to escape the vulnerability which resulted from chaotic work schedules:

Because you're self-employed you think '*oh, I fancy a coffee this afternoon*' and you can down tools, and you go... and if I don't want to work, I don't work (Deborah).

Deborah's account also points to the third primary motivation for sex working, which was also found among Sanders et al's (2016) sample, that of independence and self-management. Participant narratives suggested that this was a treasured aspect of the job:

I love the feeling of being independent and that I'm doing it myself and nobody's taking a cut from it or anything like that, it just feels proactive (Isobel).

This independence represents the control sex workers can establish over their own lives, in an economic and personal sense. Participants exercised greater control over their exposure to vulnerability through sex work. This control represents the greater ability to move toward a flourishing future, which is in stark contrast to the chaotic moments in the lives of some participants. Even for participants with less chaotic backgrounds, sex work offered freedom and independence from the types and standards of work for women in our economy. This independence also includes the way sex workers can organise their work, whereby participants had relatively higher levels of autonomy over their trajectories in the sex industry, including the type of services offered, the working spaces they consumed and their times of work.

5.3 Sex Industry Trajectories

Participants' decisions to start sex working show the reflexivity involved in working decisions: participants are balancing their time, income and safety to decide the course of their work. Many of these decisions centre around maximising income, maintaining time flexibility and ensuring their safety and independence, which mirrors the broader motivators for entering the sex industry. These trajectories are also representative of women making choices to manage their vulnerability. This section tracks these trajectories with particular attention to the temporal organisation of sex work.

5.3.1 Working Time Trajectories: Sex Work/Mainstream Work

Decisions concerning working time is often a response to financial need and existing commitments, including those of mainstream employment. Claire, Deborah and Gabrielle undertook part-time sex work to supplement their incomes from

mainstream employment, which is often the reason for sex workers managing 'dual lives' in the sex industry and mainstream employment (Bowen 2015; Oppenheim 2019). This often meant that involvement in the sex industry was gradual, where the time intensity of work increased as workers became more involved in the industry, relying less on less fruitful mainstream work.

Claire describes the shift in her feelings about work as she moved from part-time sex work as an addition to mainstream work to solely relying on an income from full-time sex work:

On my days off it were quite exciting – better than sat slumped in front of the telly falling asleep. You had something to look forward to, especially if it was a guy you'd seen who looked quite nice. It's a bit of company and a bit of leg-over. If I'm honest I enjoy it less now I'm full-time, because I'm doing it full-time. And when you work full-time, and this is your only source of income you have to be less discerning than when you were only part-time. When I was part-time, I never used to publish my phone number. They had to pass an audition to get a booking with me. You know they emailed, and it was like don't like the sound of them, maybe, whereas now you're answering the calls (Claire)

Claire's account reflects the move from viewing sex work as supplementary income, or as a distraction to mainstream work, toward viewing sex work as the primary income. The view that sex work is a form of 'anti-work' and more enjoyable than other forms of labour is expressed elsewhere (Colosi 2010), which is relevant for these accounts of part-time sex work: Claire describes part-time sex work as a preferable replacement to her existing leisure activities. Engaging in more casual sex work also meant she could discriminate against riskier clients as she could rely on the income from mainstream work. This shifted once working full-time in the sex industry, and the time was experienced less as a leisurely alternative and more as *work time*. As a result, the time spent in the industry became increasingly economically focused and being solely reliant on sex work income meant investing more time in advertising and responding to client enquiries. Overall then, Claire feels that sex working on a full-time basis is less enjoyable to part-time engagement.

Conversely, while Gabrielle also felt that part-time engagement in the industry while still maintaining full-time mainstream work was 'fun', she continues to experience the time in sex work as leisurely, despite now relying solely on sex work income:

It's like once I'd done that one client it just like put me jammies on and go. It's like I'm almost, I feel like I've retired. I'm permanently retired (Gabrielle).

While Claire continues to work for a duration that matches full-time mainstream employment, Gabrielle has chosen to reduce her outgoings and work less. That she is afforded this choice means that she is able to limit her work to one appointment per day, which contributes to her feeling as if she has retired and her overall feelings towards her work and leisure time.

In addition to the benefits of engaging in both sex work and mainstream work, Bowen (2015) articulates the specific experiences generated through this duality, including having to manage the information of both areas of work to avoid stigma. While many participants managed duality in their personal lives, Amanda was the only participant engaged in mainstream work while sex working at the time of research. She had developed a mainstream career where she was able to openly use her sex work experiences, however, and thus avoided experiences of duality.

Amanda was in transition towards mainstream work because she wanted to use skills she had acquired through study:

It means that sex work now is very different for me. It's like, when I work, the pressure is just... I have a regular income now, so sex work becomes... In the scenario that clients wanna hear I'm a horny MILF who, you know, children are expensive and they get to go on holiday if I do this and that's what they want to hear, and that's not a reality but it is more of a choice now. In order to pay the bills this month I don't need to be here these three days and that's just huge. Because choice and work is bollocks, everybody has to work, but...once you have money you have choices! (Amanda).

In the same way as sex work income increased participants' ability to use their agency to negotiate previous and ongoing vulnerability, Amanda feels that her mainstream work is further strengthening her ability to express agency. She denotes this as a right to choose, which is afforded through an increase in resources. In so doing, she speaks directly to Emmel and Hughes' (2014) model of vulnerability in how she is better placed to act with improvement in conditions across the four dimensions of vulnerability. In this case, Amanda has improved material resources, which enables her to better address present need and plan for the future and, thus,

reduce her reliance on support services. Amanda also provides an example of a reduction in vulnerability over time as a result of her mitigating actions.

This discussion has looked at how full-time or part-time sex work, and the transitions between them, influence experiences of sex work as work or 'anti-work'. For most participants, work in the sex industry has been a positive action in response to vulnerability and they have found ways to fit sex working into their lives in a way that suits their preferences and existing commitments. There are also examples of challenges experienced in sex work trajectories and how these are managed by participants. Of course, there are further external pressures which shape the temporal organisation of sex work. The following discussion outlines the ways in which the internet both introduces opportunities and risks for time at work. I then move on to discuss the impact of economic conditions on participants' trajectories.

5.3.2 Navigating Work Online: Control Over Time and Income

Independent escorts use the internet to advertise, take bookings, screen as well as selling online services; enabling greater flexibility and independence in the times and spaces used for work. The internet has become a necessity in the organisation of independent escorting, therefore (Bernstein 2007; Cunningham et al 2017). While online technologies facilitate greater control over the time and location worked, its use also has the potential to make additional demands on the sex worker.

Maintaining a business online is a time-intensive exercise, and to varying degrees participants reported spending considerable time updating their profiles, responding to enquiries, writing for blogs and monitoring social media, in addition to screening their clients. This adds an additional aspect of work, producing greater demands on the worker:

I'm quite lucky because my other half does all the advertising, well, I do some of it, which leaves me a lot more time to do the camming and the chat and the meetings.... [He spends] a lot of time, he'll take the photos and videos as well. So in between times he's sorting out the pictures and the movies, putting them on all these different places, tweeting different stuff for me and changing any dates, taking off dates that have gone. So basically, that's his job, it's a full-time job (Deborah).

While working time in sex work has relatively high value, a significant time investment must be spent online to generate that value. Indeed, nearly two thirds of the sample in Sanders et al's research (2018:75) "felt that the Internet had increased the time they spent managing their work, so there was some trade-off between relative autonomy and working hours". Deborah's account, above, demonstrates this trade-off, as both she and her husband must devote a significant proportion of their time to online advertising to generate business.

Of the participants of this research, those who recognised the value of online advertising reported having much more custom than those who spent less time online. Natalie, who is much newer to the industry, spends a considerable amount of time online to generate business through updating her profile, talking directly to potential clients, and building a profile on online forums, although she does also recognise the demands on her time as a result. Natalie cites this as part of her business model and views this time investment as responsible for her being in high demand:

I think the internet has been a big change. A think a lot of the girls that I've spoken to, say girls that are like ten years older than me, they don't go about things the same way as me. And I think meeting them and maybe working with them that I probably am getting more bookings because of the amount I'm interacting. But it takes up more of my time, so, yeah, I'm making more money but I'm working more (Natalie).

Comparatively, those who have worked in the industry for much longer and complain about reduction in custom, feel they lack the energy for investing time online:

Now, probably not that much. I'll have a day a month where I will go through them all, but I can just do that quickly on my phone and between bookings you can update and swap the photos and stuff, so not that much really... I do have a website. I used to blog a couple of times a month, but I can't really be bothered with it now. But I'm going to try and get back into it. I think that there was a time you'd get a more fluffy type of client if you blogged because they felt like they knew you. But that can be a double-edged sword because you sometimes get the ones where they obviously think it's a date and start quoting things off your blog and you'll think '*right, okay*' (Claire).

Despite recognising falling demand, Claire believes the costs and drawbacks of online advertising outweighs its value. Primarily she is concerned with the demanding time investment online advertising requires and she also balances the need to attract

custom with the safety risks associated with managing online relationships. This was a common struggle among participants who had worked in the industry for comparatively longer and indicates a generational shift in sex working styles which I continue to refer to throughout this chapter. These generational shifts somewhat mirror Bernstein's (2007) paradigmatic definitions of the sex industry which are linked to capitalist practices in commodification and consumption [3.3.1]. The differences in perspectives and working practices between those who have worked in the sex industry for longer or shorter periods represent those who are more willing to embrace such capitalist values. As Bernstein explains, "those who participate most fully in the emotionally contained economy of recreational sex and bounded authenticity are also those whose psychic lives are most fully penetrated by the cultural logic of late capitalism" (2007:175-6).

Claire's account also points to the difficulties in balancing privacy with the need to advertise online (Cunningham et al 2017) and the use and dependence on the internet is not without risks. While the internet has facilitated independence, it can mean that sex workers are at the mercy of website hosts' procedures. The site can also remove members, for example, as it did just before my first meeting with Emily, which resulted in her business suffering considerably:

When they kicked me off last Tuesday, I went straight to the email because it's literally an absolute joke. I've kicked back at them and said "*Well, look. I've worked on the site for nearly three years. How can you suddenly diss who I am and what I've done? ... It's so well known. It's the biggest one. It's the one that comes up in everybody's search... I just-- I want to be back on there because it's so frustrating losing all the connections that I had, and I don't really know any other way around it* (Emily).

Since the 2000s a range of profile hosting sites have emerged, which provide an avenue for sex workers to advertise and clients to search for and choose escorts in their proximity, although one or two hosting sites have dominated the others, necessitating their use. While independent escorts do run their own businesses, they are subject to the rules and financial obligations imposed by these websites, or what Bernstein (2007) terms as 'virtual middlemen'. Unfortunately, the interests of these websites often lie with the clients (Cunningham et al 2017) and there is very little protection for the sex worker advertising with them. This has serious implications for the imbalance of power in sex work mediated online.

5.3.3 Defining Work Time in Declining Labour Conditions

Broader economic conditions form a further challenge to the control sex workers hold over their time at work. Most participants organised their working times around existing commitments, preferences and their required income, and were seen to hold a great degree of control over the times and frequency they worked. There was evidence of declining labour conditions mirrored in the sex industry, however, although the extent of this depended on the ways individual sex workers had organised their business.

Isobel, for example, had chosen to work infrequently but offer a niche service, which allowed her to charge higher rates as part of her business strategy when entering the sex industry:

I know that once a day is enough for me and usually only three times a week, I prefer (Isobel).

Natalie chose to work intensively but for a few days a week to reach specific financial goals while still managing childcare responsibilities:

My fully booked is I'm working two to three nights a week and this other girl who is always there and doesn't seem to be as high-in-demand is there 24/7... If I'm not working doing outcalls, I'm doing my work admin then or my housework... I put myself as available for all the days of the week. Once I get in enough bookings that I think is reasonable for the week I then say I'm fully booked (Natalie).

Isobel and Natalie worked on the basis of limited availability and advance appointments, which afforded them a great deal of security as they were better able to plan for their income. Interestingly, both Isobel and Natalie also reported experiencing less cancellations or 'no-shows', despite having their appointments booked far in advance, demonstrating a much greater control over time overall. As Schwartz (1974:843) theorises, "those who sell their skills tend to create queues so as to minimize their idle time", which works to increase the worker's productivity, but also reduce their period of waiting for custom. The avoidance of waiting equates to avoidance of a reduction of control over time. Moreover, it generates the need for clients to wait for available appointments; rendering them as waiting and reducing their command over time. There are limits to the amount of time a client will wait (Schwartz 1974), however, which is exacerbated by difficult market conditions.

Other participants indicated that they worked full-time hours and took bookings on a shorter-term basis, often receiving calls asking for immediate appointments:

From when I get up, my phone will go on; I'll answer any text or e-mails. So, you look at your phone, your texts, your WhatsApp, you look at Twitter, Adultwork, and you read e-mails. In between times, I'll start and put my phone chat on. So that might ring, people might start ringing for appointments and in between time to try and get your hair and makeup done and get ready (Deborah).

In addition to the harried feeling induced by high demand, this often resulted in experiences of waiting for custom, with similarities in the experiences of the increasing numbers of underemployed in today's economy (Wilkins 2007). Underemployment is experienced as a period of waiting. The experience of waiting changes with knowledge of what is to come, which allows individuals to engage in other activities (Adam 1990), but for sex workers waiting for clients to make appointments, the timescale is often unknown, which limits their control of time. In this period of waiting participants reported using the time to try to generate business but in a period of economic hardship the waiting can extend into the longer-term, which dampens motivation:

I turn up when I'm ready, but I still try to get a booking for as soon as I get into work, but it isn't one after the other anymore. I've had two today. In between clients I used to be on computer. Mind you, there wasn't much in between times and same in the parlour; it was always one after other so there was just time to get a quick wash and maybe grab a coffee. Now I do my assignments or texting... I lose the will to live after a while and then I just want to die. I can't do when you've had it all day and you've not had a booking, to start again does my head in. Whereas I can do it like I've done two this morning and I don't mind sitting around for a bit and then starting but if you don't get a booking until five o'clock by then I'm suicidal (Lucy).

The waiting which results from a lack of control some experience over their working day and income levels results in the threat of vulnerability. Independent sex workers, much like other self-employed workers, experience this threat of vulnerability through lack of control over resources (Cohen et al 2019). The work is defined as unpredictable, and the destabilising effects this can have on sex workers' ability to control income and plan for present and future needs means that this form of unpredictable labour always involves a level of vulnerability.

Self-employed sex workers in a market of increased competition attempt to regain some control through the development of business models to attract custom, through offering niche services or promoting their services through rigorous online advertising. A niche service which is desired by particular clients adds value to the service through its scarcity (Schwartz 1974), which empowers the sex workers offering the service by rendering clients as waiting for it. The different business strategies employed by participants had varying levels of success and those who worked less often but in a more targeted way seemed to perceive their work as more successful than those who worked on a full-time basis. These perceived results could stem from varying levels of economic need and the priority given to gaining financial recompense as opposed to holding control over time. Adam (1990:125) usefully draws on the work of Hohn (1984) to root this relationship in modern capitalism, suggesting that those with greater need to secure a wage are more inclined to take a 'short-term planning perspective'. This short-term planning perspective can be seen in participants, such as Claire, Lucy and Emily who all experience day-to-day economic need and therefore may be more focused on the present rather than the longer-term.

Arguably, however, this could also link to the stages of participants' careers and their readiness to adapt to a more demanding consumer culture in an increasingly capitalist economy. Claire, for example, describes below how her economic focus has changed according to the stage of her career and she now feels less pressure to plan ways to attract greater custom. This also potentially reflects how sex workers may periodically disengage or reduce their work to deal with burnout (Sanders 2007) and therefore be less inclined to future plan:

I don't think you need too much of a strategy, I suppose any strategy I'd have thought of when I first started, joining forums, advertising on various directories and stuff. Now I'm probably at the tail-end of my career anyway so I don't put that much effort into all that so, you know I've got a lot of regulars and I see new people so there's not a lot of strategising to do ongoing. I'm not out for getting six clients in a day like I used to, so it's not as *I must do this, do that*, I just do it when I can be asked (Claire).

Those who were only able to plan in the short-term, felt far less in control of their income, although Claire cites that this is partially intentional as she does not want the

same level of trade. Overall, however, many participants experiences levels of increased competition and falling demand following economic changes.

5.3.4 Impact of Competition and Demand on 'Productive Time'

Participants who had worked in the industry for several years reported a decline in the level of custom:

I think punters are punting less. I think some of the ones who would have punted twice a month will be punting once a month instead. I think some of the blokes who would have had hours go to half-hours. You work around it and work more flexibly (Claire).

Alongside falling demand, participants were also aware of increasing competition:

Well just before the recession I used to do fifteen to twenty a day, there... and then you'd do, maybe, ten to fifteen, because there's a lot more girls. When I first started working you could earn £1000 a week and you only had to work three days and now you have to work about twelve for that. The amount you have to work has increased (Lucy).

As an industry which relies on the disposable incomes of clients, the relative lower disposable incomes of clients act to displace instability to sex workers. Further, poor labour conditions in the mainstream economy drive increased engagement in the sex industry (English Collective of Prostitutes 2017; Oppenheim 2019; Swerling 2013), which means there is greater competition for falling demand. The sex industry, despite its position within the informal economy, is not impervious to the mainstream economic conditions.

Those who had worked prior to 2007 struggled to maintain the same level of income while those who were newer to the industry had not experienced these changes. This highlighted apparent generational differences in the perceptions of demand and competition. Lucy, Claire and Michelle had all worked in the industry prior to the onset of enforced austerity and were accustomed to a market which required less energy to generate custom. Consequently, participants who had experienced these changes felt that work intensity had increased and the value of their time at work reduced, which mirrors the intensification found in mainstream work (Everingham 2002; Shildrick et al 2012).

These conditions problematise financial planning, rendering sex workers increasingly economically vulnerable, especially considering the already unpredictable nature of self-employment (Cohen et al 2019; Sanders et al 2016). Because of this, many workers feel increasing pressure to earn when they can to provide a safety net for when there is less demand:

You don't know when your next client is coming, you might not have anybody for the rest of the week, you think do I cut my nose off to spite my face and risk not seeing you even though I've got nothing else on the afternoon (Deborah).

Given the choice between waiting or working, most participants were spurred to work and gain an income when available in the moment because of the unpredictability of custom. These market conditions act to reduce sex workers' control over time, therefore.

This has implications for the safety and wellbeing of sex workers, with costs to their mental health through strain and also their physical safety should they choose to be less discerning about their clients to secure further income. As Amanda and Claire describe below, this pressure to earn can be demanding and most participants expressed uncertainty about taking time away from work and reported stress as a result:

It's really hard when time equals money to set aside an hour to go and eat something healthy, no I set aside ten minutes to go to Greggs even though I've made £500 in the morning. Because an hour has a... Because in London every hour can definitely be sold if you pay me enough and you make sure you're on AW and on the front page. So, it's incredibly easy to make money there but it means the time... I felt that I was losing money by not working rather than thinking no, that's not how it works. Because every hour has... and it's... it got me actually feeling guilty for doing something like having my tea (Amanda).

I've got better but I'm never truly off work. I have got better though; I'll leave my phone on silent for the whole Saturday but at some point, I will have to check that work phone. You just can't help yourself. You always feel like you're missing out on something. And it's like when I go on holiday, I always set everything to I'm on holiday, but you still get people bloody emailing you. *'I know you're on holiday, but can I still arrange a booking for next week blah blah blah'* (Claire).

This intensification of work to boost productivity is not unique to sex work and is felt broadly by many different workers in the mainstream economy (Brown 2012; Shildrick et al 2012). The subsequent pressure to work more intensely to secure income has many negative consequences to the health of the worker (Brown 2012).

This emphasis on efficiency and productivity is quantified and measured through clock time and through these means, it has become commonplace to apply a monetary value to time. In line with Elias' arguments (1992), there is evidence that these economic values are largely internalised by participants, although Amanda describes trying to re-evaluate the way she has learned to think about time at work. These practices demonstrate the level of temporal control in work. The narratives of participants within this study also reveal the extent to which these values are internalised, rationalising the need to be efficient and productive as a personal trait or preference:

I have got really lazy now, so once I've got to £500 a week, whereas it used to be a thousand pounds. I used to have to earn a thousand pounds and I need to get myself back into that because I'd work a lot more (Lucy).

Here, Lucy is ascribing guilt to her own perceived personal failings for not earning enough money within an allotted time, rather than identifying wider changes to market conditions, demonstrating the internalisation of the values of productivity.

Conversely, Isobel and Gabrielle, who experience less pressure to earn than other participants, feel more comfortable in turning clients away to ensure downtime:

For the last month, I have just been seeing the same two guys every week...and one-offs sometimes but I'm mainly just sticking to those. I don't know how but I think in my head I thought I was taking a bit of a break for the summer; I think I've just wound down for the summer (Isobel).

I'm very low volume. It's probably one client a day, don't matter if it's half-an-hour or an hour's booking. It's just low volume I guess because I can't be bothered, and I guess because my running costs are very low (Gabrielle).

While all participants recognised that time is ascribed an economic value, there was evidence among the sample that participants tried to resist this, carving out protections for their personal respite time. This is made possible by the flexibility

afforded through the relatively high wages of sex work and the independence sex workers experience in setting their own working hours.

Changes to levels of competition and demand have destabilised sex workers' incomes, although participants demonstrate relative autonomy in determining working times and productivity levels. Participants react to poor market conditions differently, with those who have experienced greater change in their income attempting to maintain levels of income, while those newer to the industry enjoying the increased free time available as a result of the higher value of time in sex work compared to previous mainstream work. These reactions also reflect the extent to which values of productivity and efficiency have been internalised, and the evidence suggests that participants both adapt their work according to capitalist demands, as well as resisting them. In spite of resistance, however, economic conditions do bear heavily on the organisation of work in the sex industry, and this is seen in the way time is given a monetary value, also.

5.3.5 Control Over Time Value: Sex Workers' Hourly Rates

Those who worked before economic recession maintained their hourly rates at the same level despite the cost of living rising. Three participants (Emily, Gabrielle and Natalie) who were newer to the industry cited having increased their rates, but this was primarily to adjust their initially low rates in line with the rates of competitors:

I have put my hourly rate up by £20. I'm quite interested to see how that affects me; whether guys will... For guys that I've seen before, it'd still be the same amount, I won't charge them the extra. It's just the new customers. I think I'm worth it. I offer an experience as well as all the sexy stuff. I know that I offer a nice service. It's value for money (Gabrielle).

That the majority of longer-term workers had maintained their wages is also reflective of broader economic conditions whereby wages have broadly stagnated against rising living costs (ONS 2018), until very recently where income levels and inflation have levelled slightly (ONS 2019). Those who are newer to the industry are also those who expect, and desire, less custom and have generated a business model around low volume and high quality. Those longer-term workers have therefore maintained their rates to attract the same volume levels, although, according to the

accounts of participants, this is yet to be successful. This is likely a reflection of the changing commodity within the sex industry, which requires a focus on more experiential and individualistic services, which I discuss further in the following chapter.

Nevertheless, there are still clients who push to achieve value-for-money, and this has spurred some participants to respond to calls for special offers or discounts:

Sometimes I've maybe like made him an offer if he didn't last that long, because obviously, everybody's struggling for money, aren't they? I try to be value for money at the end of the day. The fact that they would always want to come back, is a good thing (Emily).

The offer of discounts is rare, however, and confined to those who possibly struggle to achieve a certain level of income. Most participants refused to negotiate on prices because of the perceived reduction in power associated with reducing the value of their time. Nevertheless, there was evidence that a minority of clients attempted to haggle or drive down the value of sex workers' time.

There is also evidence of clients collectivising to exert power over the rates of sex workers:

There is actually a protest ... They've decided that the market rate for this city is £120 an hour. Obviously, agency girls are £150 an hour, you get some lower than that. I'm quite happy being at £110. They've decided that they don't like the fact the rates are increasing, so they've now, they're now kind of making this little mutiny where they're only see girls that are £100 an hour or less and they think it's going to bring the market down... the more expensive girls are not going to drop their rates by £50 an hour, they're deluded (Natalie).

While some consumers look to enforce cost reductions, evidence demonstrates they have very little power to do so unless they collect together to create change (Gottdiener 2000). Ultimately, there were a mass of consumers within the situation described by Natalie, but they were still unable to influence the hourly rate of sex workers, demonstrating that while consumers do exercise some power in the exchange, the sex worker, who sets her own rates, has far greater control over the value of the time duration purchased. Further, this demonstrates the strength of sex worker collectivising, albeit informally. Although there is no official advice not to

negotiate prices, the majority of sex workers refuse to do so for both the personal and broader implications in doing so. These interactions are telling and will contribute to further discussions around commodity relations in the ensuing chapters.

That so many participants had maintained their rates demonstrates how sex workers have internalised broader market conditions and reduced the value of their time in real terms, however. Those who maintain prices claim to do so to match the stagnated wages of clients and to maintain income. The difficulty they face, therefore, is the unpredictability of their income, which can make it difficult to judge which time should be protected and plan for their income and respite. Planning in general can be difficult, which has implications for how participants were able to view their futures.

5.4 Participants' Futures

Much research concerns the backgrounds and present experiences of sex workers, while there is comparatively less literature regarding the ways sex workers perceive and realise their futures (Rickard 2001). Discussion of sex workers' futures tends to centre on plans to exit the industry, sometimes with a presumption that they require 'rescuing' from exploitation (Ham and Gilmour 2016). Certainly, while sex worker support projects engage in a holistic range of services (Pitcher 2006), many of them are drawn to provide exiting guidance because this aligns their services with abolitionist policy discourse, which helps in their cases for funding (Connelly 2016).

There are some valuable exceptions to this, however. Bowen (2015) explores sex workers' plans for future work in a way that ensures sex work is not positioned in opposition to 'conventional' work. This approach is also used by Ham and Gilmour (2016) to explore how exit plans form part of a broader professional strategy among sex workers. Lastly, Pitcher's (2014) PhD thesis which includes an exploration of sex workers' plans for longer-term work in the sex industry. This small body of literature reveal the plurality of future plans, of which exiting sex work may, or may not, form a part.

5.4.1 Financial Future Planning

For these reasons, I specifically chose not to reference exiting when participants were asked to imagine and describe their futures, as I wanted to leave room for them to discuss any and all of their plans for both the short and long-term. Interestingly, however, all participants answered at least partially with their plans and concerns around exiting, despite the relative economic benefits of sex work. Many participants were concerned about the financial implications of leaving sex work and engaging in lower paid mainstream labour (Pitcher 2006):

You get the ones that want to save you and I'm like, 'Save me from what?'... 'Oh, you're such a nice girl why didn't you go and get a normal job?' And I'm, 'Yeah, because I don't want to work for £7.20 an hour cleaning toilets. If that's what you think is saving me, I think maybe you need to have a look at things' (Natalie).

Participants were aware of this difficulty and cited it as a reason for staying in the industry despite having alternative options. The pay differentials between sex work and mainstream work makes it difficult to leave the industry, and research shows that many sex workers periodically engage in mainstream and sex work (Bowen 2015):

I've had breaks for various reasons at full-time jobs and stuff like that. I was always like it's just so easy and I know that once you get into this line of work it's very difficult to get out of because of the ease of it and because of the money (Gabrielle).

Participants had mixed perspectives on their longevity in the sex industry, therefore, and it was widely understood that working in mainstream employment would bring challenges as well as perceived benefits.

5.4.2 Sex Work as Work? Imagining Futures in 'Real' Work

In Isobel's imagined future, she is aware of the possible options both inside and outside the sex industry, and demonstrates agency in her ability to choose, showing reflexivity in her considerations of the various reasons to stay or exit from the industry:

I'm going to have figured out what I want to do and be settled, not doing sex work... I also do worry that I could just be a party girl because that's what two more years of escorting might do to me... I've got negative connotations [about mainstream work] but I know that they're coloured by the fact that the job that I'm doing now pays really high unrealistic wages and has unrealistic hours compared to other jobs... I want something that gives me a reason to do it... The satisfaction that it was giving me as a person, the meaning. This job isn't giving me any meaning. But that's a lie; I do get a lot of meaning from it (Isobel).

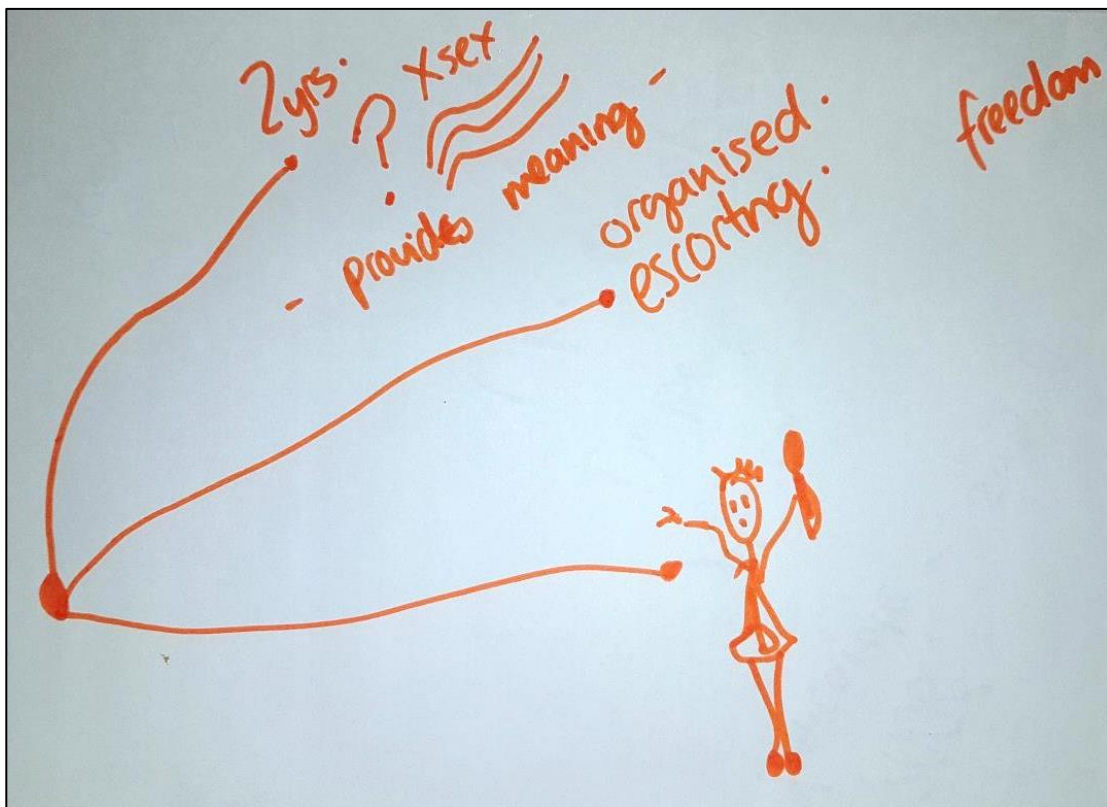


Figure 5.2: Isobel's Future Time Map

Her comparisons of her sex work to an imagined future in mainstream work – which is further depicted in her future time map (figure 5.2) – reveal her perception that continued sex work would render her too leisurely and lacking discipline. Here, Isobel's account suggests that the value of productivity is so ingrained that we also gain meaning and virtue through productive activities (Weeks 2011), but also the need to practice and experience authenticity through work (Bernstein 2007). While Isobel currently enjoys significant leisure time, she wishes to be more productive and therefore find work more meaningful. Contradictorily, the overarching aim to the

three potential futures is 'freedom' (figure 5.2), which she further describes during interviews as independence and control over work and leisure time. I suggest this reveals the internal struggles between an internalised value of productivity within 'meaningful' work, and desired resistance to the regulation imposed to achieve productivity.

To a certain extent, Isobel's descriptions of imagined futures reveal the internalisation of the moral judgements of sex work. It seems that Isobel is debating between the common rhetoric concerning the immorality of sex work and her own experiences of finding 'meaning' in the job, suggesting that she is partially influenced by wider perceptions of her work. Gabrielle, when talking about why she periodically takes mainstream work, is more explicit in these thoughts:

It's because of I guess it's such a stigma attached to it... I guess there's also an element in me that is embarrassed in myself about what I do. It's like I think a mental struggle (Gabrielle).

The expressed desire to leave sex work may be reflective of wider notions of the deserving and undeserving, in that those who wish to be 'saved' and exit prostitution are deserving of support and status while those who continue to work in the industry are undeserving (Scoular and O'Neill 2007), but also in terms as what is considered 'good' or 'bad' work. This demonstrates the complex personal and structural concerns individuals reflexively engage with through their working decisions, especially when their work is not valued in society.

Others were more pragmatic in their assessments of sex work as work, comparing the practical differences rather than moral or theoretical ones. Amanda, for example, feels that sex work is different in its organisation and therefore lacked something mainstream work could give her:

My whole sex work career isn't a career, you can't put it on your CV, and you can't say '*I'm a middle manager sex worker and I hope to be promoted*'. There is no career, so I quite like the idea of having a career (Amanda).

In this sense, by exiting the sex industry Amanda is wishing to have the daily and longer-term structure and career recognition that can be gained from mainstream work. She also highlights a vulnerability exposed to sex workers in their economic trajectories in that, because sex work is not legitimised as work in public discourse,

many sex workers have a gap in their CVs for the time they have been sex working. This is both a result from and a contributor to the stigma experienced through the work and can act as a barrier to sex workers finding work elsewhere (Sanders 2007).

The stigma associated with these discourses have negative consequences and are often a motivation for sex workers wanting to leave the industry. Other participants viewed their work as meaningful but were still affected negatively by the stigma associated with the work, reporting fatigue caused by having to live fictional lives. Leaving work in the sex industry thus represented a wish to recover by ceasing the identity management which was necessary to this work. Over the course of the research I noticed that Claire was becoming increasingly disillusioned with the duality involved in sex working:

You can't be truly honest with everybody about what you're doing. That's really hard. It's all tiring, I'm tired a lot of the time... It's not depression as such, but its strain. It's mentally tiring sometimes, and you don't have regular annual leave, do you know what I mean... And I think with the job that it is you're never going to be as enthusiastic as when you first start. I've been at it for six years and it's like... [sigh]. There's only so much I can be asked doing that. You know, I'm thirty-eight, I was thirty-two when I started so I'm approaching middle age and can't really be as arsed. And I think as you get less naive you realise they don't half talk a load of shite, those clients (Claire).

The exhaustion, or burnout, associated with the negative aspects of sex work has been found to be comparable to the experiences of those working in nursing (Vanwesenbeeck 2005) as they have similar demands in terms of emotional labour. Vanwesenbeeck (2005) also found, however, that levels of depersonalisation were higher among sex workers in the sample because of the stigma and subsequent violence they experienced. Public perceptions and common discourses, therefore, play a significant role in the experiences of work for sex workers, and policies which promote this discourse exacerbate conditions and experiences of vulnerability further. For many, entry into the sex industry is a response to overcome vulnerability, but they are also exposed to forms of vulnerability as a result of this work. This impacts sex workers' future plans and may contribute to reasons for exiting. Consequently, many sex workers view their work in the short-term but plan to exit in the longer-term.

5.4.3 Sex Work: A Short-Term Activity?

That sex work is a short-term career is a common perception, and Rickard also noted that her respondents distinguished between sex work and other work through the “time-limited nature of the work” (2001:125). Like Rickard’s sample, participants had different thoughts on their future plans, but many participants seemed to view their work as a short-term activity, despite some having worked in the industry for over a decade. Here, Claire deliberates over the longevity of her sex work career and shows that, while she has yet to make definitive plans and could sex work until retirement, she initially had not considered longer-term sex work:

I've been thinking about this, like when should I retire, but I haven't got any real reason to retire, but then part of me... I don't want to be doing this every day. I don't want to be doing this into my late fifties like some do. But maybe I will. You never know, maybe when I'm in my fifties I'll think I quite enjoy it (Claire).

Unlike the participants engaged in this research, Pitcher (2014) did find that many had planned to engage in the industry in the long-term and had developed business strategies to do so. Among the participants here, Deborah, who was 52 years of age at the time of the research had entered the industry with a developed brand of the ‘middle-aged housewife’ and had experienced success in doing so. The diversification of the sex industry therefore provides opportunities for longer-term engagement. Despite this opportunity, however, most participants had not planned longer-term engagement in the industry, and had career plans that involved shorter-term sex work (Amanda, Natalie), potential plans to exit at some point (Isobel), or having no definitive plans at all (Claire, Emily, Gabrielle, Lucy). A lack of definitive plans could reflect participants’ temporal perspective and ability to plan.

5.4.4 Ability to Future Plan

Those with less stability and less resources experience increased vulnerability, however, and subsequently have less options to change forms of work. Emily feels that because of her disabilities, she is left with limited alternatives:

I don't know what I'll be doing next year. I live from day to day and it's like hand to mouth sometimes (Emily).

For individuals like Emily, with relatively little control over their lives, it is difficult to imagine a future at all, and she found it very difficult to communicate any future plans.

Similarly, there were other participants who were aware of alternatives but also aware of the barriers for them to realise those options. For those who are still exposed to significant levels of vulnerability in other areas of their life, they continue to lack control over their lives to the extent that they could change career path. Lucy, for instance, had returned to study to start an alternative career, while simultaneously sex working to afford household bills, pay for her studies and save for retirement. These plans are fragile, however, because her husband poses a risk to her financial stability:

I've left saving up for Christmas until the last minute because my husband ran up £2000 debt on my bank card so I've been paying that, because I won't dip into my savings money because I've got savings for when I retire and I've got another pot I can spend (Lucy).

This reminds us that “as embodied, social beings, we are both vulnerable to the actions of others and dependent on the care and support of other people – to varying degrees at various points in our lives... vulnerability and dependency are thus intertwined” (Mackenzie et al 2014:4). Lucy tries to protect the control she has been afforded through her sex work income, but the actions of her husband threaten ongoing vulnerability. Simultaneously, Lucy feels unable to end the relationship and seek independence from this threat because of the needs of her children.

Comparatively, those with relatively more control over their lives had greater capabilities in future planning. Natalie, by comparison, holds greater control of her future and is able to offer a five-year plan that she works towards. Natalie enjoys a relatively steadier income and is also very determined to overcome financial vulnerability as a result of negative past experiences. Importantly, she also has the necessary social capital to realise her potential. Having drawn a time map [figure 5.3] during an interview in July 2017, she had already achieved what she had set out to do when I met her again in December 2017 and had bought a car. This represents the ability to hold control and move towards a flourishing future, which is enabled through sex work income. She has clear plans for starting a degree and subsequent

career in nursing. As such, she views her time working in the sex industry as a means to an end, with the specific goals of paying debts, purchasing specific items to secure her future, and save for her university course and future career. This reflects one aspect of Natalie's proactive attempt to professionalise her sex work.

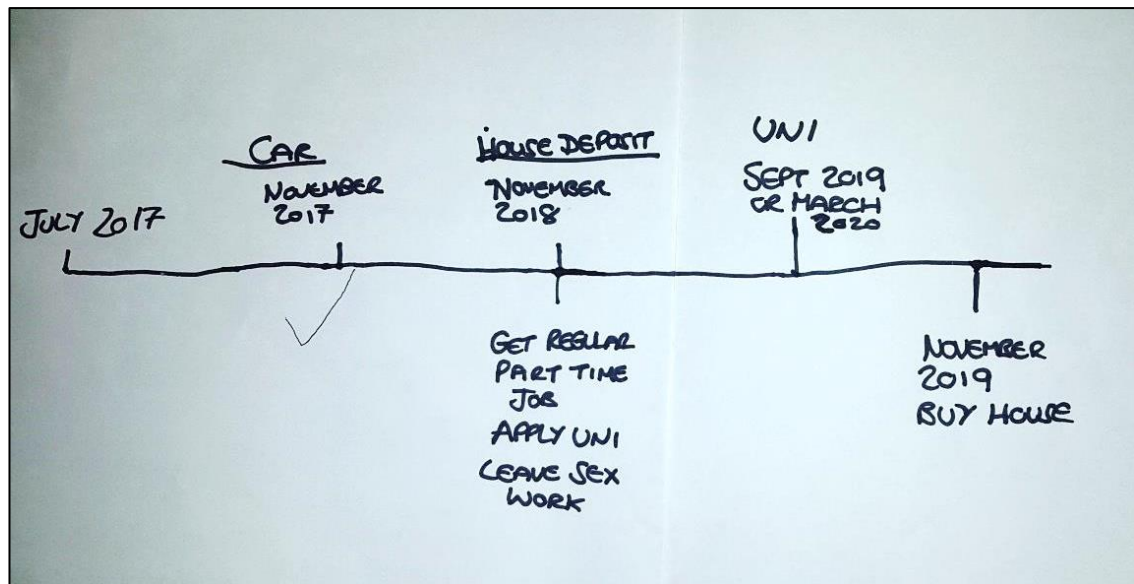


Figure 5.3: Natalie's Future Time Map

This future perspective can possibly be attributed to her relatively privileged upbringing from being raised within a middle-class family. While Natalie has received little to no support from family through her somewhat turbulent adult life, the skills, expectations and entitlements of a middle-class background still assists her in the present and future. Delayed gratification and waiting is much more easily practiced by those who have experienced stability in the past and can have more confidence in their futures. As Adam notes:

Power of a different kind enters into waiting for some future benefit and doing something now for reward at some later period... This entails a certain trust, knowledge and expectancy of the future; in other words, the future has first to attain reality status (1990:124).

Those with more resources to overcome vulnerability are better able to plan for their futures, therefore, which signifies a different experience of time. When able to control the various aspects of life, participants can envisage a future and plan their work and other activities.

5.5 Conclusion

In mapping the trajectories of participants, I have drawn links to contextual changes such as the entrenchment of capitalist values and growth of online technologies to explore how these conditions have shaped work. Economically, there has both been change and continuity. Continuity is represented in the sustained experiences of women's discrimination in the workplace, the feminisation of poverty and in the continuing evolution of intensified, flexibilised work towards an efficient capitalist economy. Change is characterised by the financial crisis of 2007, for example, which provided an opportunity for a programme of austerity to be enacted; to further entrench poor working conditions. Sex work, like other forms of self-employment, is defined by unpredictability, which is further exacerbated in current economic conditions in the form of increasing competition, declining demand and pressure to earn, which results in experiences akin to the underemployed in the form of waiting, or the employed in the form of intensification of labour.

Participants' accounts illustrate complex experiences of vulnerability over time which, as Emmel and Hughes (2014) suggest, were influenced by personal control over resources; their ability to address present needs and future plans; and their engagement with welfare services. Vulnerability is experienced differently through time, but these experiences also shape experiences *of* time and the degree to which participants can control their presents and futures. Those with greater control over resources are better able to circumvent vulnerability and have more trust in their ability to flourish in future. Comparatively, those who had continued experience of vulnerability throughout the lifecourse focused more on the present, evident in their perspective of work. This was reflected a great deal in the ways participants organised their work and may also influence their relationships with clients within commodity relations.

Participants' narratives reinforce existing evidence demonstrating that sex work is a proactive economic choice (English Collective of Prostitutes 2019; Weitzer 2012) which is used to mitigate vulnerability. Of course, vulnerability is also introduced through sex work, and sex workers balance this in their economic decisions. Current economic policies only serve to plunge workers into insecurity and vulnerability, however, and welfare provisions to combat this are shortcoming. Reframing the

vulnerability of sex workers from powerless victims in need of regulation towards active agents who manage their vulnerability promotes a recognition of sex work as work. This provides a basis for the designation of work-based rights to sex workers and the eradication of stigma, which otherwise undermine attempts to reduce vulnerability.

Understanding participants' trajectories within these broader dynamic contexts has been a useful exercise for framing relationships within the sex industry. Sex workers engage in negotiations of time and labour, which are necessarily contextually influenced. In the chapters that follow, this is explored in further detail, firstly by exploring the way that commodification processes in the sex industry are defined through these relationships [chapter 6]. The contexts surrounding sex work and the vulnerability experienced by sex workers is a vital introduction to the ensuing discussion on commodity relations.

6. Defining the Sex Work Commodity

There is extensive commentary on the commodification of the 'personal' and 'intimate'. Many have pointed to the features of capitalism, such as the merging of public and private, individualisation, and the importance of the open market, to explain that under this system the commodification of private matters is inevitable (Allison 1994; Gottdiener 2000; Prasad 1999). Bernstein explains that "the desires that drive the rapidly expanding and diversifying international sex trade have emanated from corporate-fuelled consumption...and the emergence of new paradigms of family and community" (2007:4). Similarly, in Bauman's essay on sexuality he argues that:

It takes more than the greed for profit, free competition and the refinement of advertising media to accomplish a cultural revolution of a scale and depth equal to that of the emancipation of eroticism from sexual reproduction and love. To be redeployed as an economic factor, eroticism must have been first culturally processed and given a form fit for a would-be commodity (Bauman 1998:22).

According to Bauman, it is through weakening social bonds that sex has been separated from its traditional ties to love and is sought after as a hedonistic pursuit. There are still many that advocate for sex and intimacy being protected from commodification (Anderson 1993; Radin 1996), however, and the notion that sex is considered personal and intimate and therefore different to other commodities has led to specific theoretical challenges in the sex industry.

The previous chapter explored participants' trajectories and experiences of vulnerability as a foreground to defining commodity relations and the commodification processes undertaken through them. Their dynamic and varying experiences of vulnerability and flourishing over time necessarily shapes commodity relations. To reflect this relational account of commodification and the role of both sex worker and client, I choose to focus on processes of commodification, rather than labour process, and have organised this chapter around the relations involved. The first two sections explore commodity production through the labour of the sex worker, engaging in theoretical debates to explore the extent to which sex work involves the sale of time [6.1] or the body or self [6.2]. I then discuss the role of commodity consumption by focusing on how clients purchase and engage with services [6.3]. Through this approach I argue that within the sex industry exchange,

clients purchase an 'experience' (Pine and Gilmore 1999), and I explore the challenges of commodifying an experience which is produced and consumed simultaneously [6.4]. In the final section, I address the temporal nature of this relationship; exploring how the experience is produced through the commodification of time [6.5].

6.1 The Function and Value of Commodifying Time

In Marx's declaration that ours is an "economy of time, to this all economy ultimately reduces itself" (1973:110), time is placed as the central unit of exchange. Time is the only common feature of all commodities, in that all commodities are produced through the worker's labour and, essentially therefore, their time. In the sex industry exchange, time is given the monetary value with clients usually paying for units of clock time. As Adam (1990:111) explains: "not labour but labour time is being exchanged...labour is exchanged for money in a mediated form and time is the medium through which labour is translated into its abstract exchange value".

Solely focusing on the exchange value of time masks the temporal experiences of labour (Sharma 2014), however, and we must look more sensitively at the activities and negotiations within work time. Indeed, there are additional elements of the commodity within the exchange: a certain level of intimacy is expected within the allotted time and this is only achieved through the labour of the sex worker:

You're selling intimacy and you're selling time, as opposed to actual... everyone knows you're paying for sex, but it is literally the time for some people, they want intimacy with a person, they want somebody who isn't going to judge them, they want to be their crap selves in bed and for somebody to tell them it's wonderful (Natalie).

The unit of time is given a monetary value, but the intimacy and acts produced by the sex worker within that time is what is being sold. Sex workers provide a menu of the acts and styles of experience on offer on their online profiles. These lists can contain physical descriptor items, such as oral sex, full sex, or anal sex, as well as more experiential descriptor items, such as domination and discipline (BDSM), roleplay, pornstar experiences (PSE), or girlfriend experiences (GFE). The profiles also have images of the sex worker and there are sections where the sex worker writes about

her 'persona' to attract certain clientele. These profiles provide guidance to the client about what he can and cannot request and expect during his purchased allocation of time. The image of the sex worker, the persona of the sex worker, the acts and experiences offered are all being advertised, but it is only the allocation of time which is given an exchange value.

6.1.1 Exercising Control Over Temporally Bound Labour

The lists of services provided on the sex workers' online profiles represent the level of control they hold over the work conducted during the allocation of time. Clients must act within the offers and constraints pre-defined by the worker and those who request unlisted services are often refused:

You get asked for more extreme services, but I don't do them, but you get asked for them. You get a lot more blokes wanting anal and wanting to put fingers up your ass and if they try to do that during a booking, they'll get told to fuck off then as well. You get more guys asking for strap-ons, face-fucking or skull-fucking or something like that. Some of them want to replicate what they've seen in porn films but that's not my bag, so they get told (Claire).

The practice of listing available services and declining requests for services not offered provides a crucial limit to the control exercised by the consumer. Korczynski's notion of the myth of customer sovereignty is useful here, suggesting that the menu "allows the worker to guide the customer through the rationalized constraints to production [through] ritualized presentation to the customer of a range of choices, but also formally through the placing of the customer as the autonomous figure who chooses between available alternatives" (2013:31). The consumer's sovereignty seemingly remains intact, therefore, but the sex worker exercises control over the encounter. The influences of consumptive practices are also important here, and I will refer again to Korczynski's theories when discussing clients as consumers later in the chapter [6.3]. Presently, the example of the menu is offered as a type of control sex workers enact on the mode of production.

O'Connell Davidson (1998) recognises the variability in control sex workers may have, which inevitably relates to the structural and personal contexts surrounding each sex worker, as I proposed in the previous chapter. She suggests that sex work

encounters bound by time units rather than specific services can require greater negotiation:

The prostitute-client transaction may be formally arranged along the lines of a closely specified, speedily executed commodity exchange (that is, x sexual service for x amount of money), but it can also be organized as an exchange that is more like a contract of employment or indenture (that is, x amount of time being served by the prostitute for x amount of money). Where the prostitute-client exchange takes this latter form, there can be enormous variability in terms of how and where the boundaries of the contract are drawn. The limits to the transaction and the client's powers of command within it may be tightly drawn, but in other cases the exchange is diffuse and loosely specified. The client may even get to command the performance of non-sexual labour as well as sexual services in exchange for a sum of money and/or benefits which are not explicitly negotiated in advance (1998:10).

Sex workers enact significant control over their labour through the process of listing available services and clients must operate within strict boundaries which are communicated prior to the appointment. Sanders and Campbell (2007), too, found that the extent to which the rules for the encounter are communicated for the indoor sex industry are an important safety measure and mean that this form of sex work is often the safest. The strict controls over the content and value of time provided by the sex worker, and the negotiations of content between sex worker and client, challenge a definition of clients as employers, however, and, subsequently, the purchase of sex workers' time does not equate to control over what occurs in that time. These relationships are made clear through the interrogation of, and distinction between, time and labour in commodification processes, which I continue in the ensuing discussion. I return shortly to the problem with defining of clients as employers [6.2]. As a precursor to this, I explore sex workers' control over the monetary value of their time.

6.1.2 Value of Time

The previous chapter [5.3.5] explored the level of control participants exercise over the rates set for their time within a difficult context of increased competition and decreased demand. This context necessarily influences commodity relations, and I explore the practice of rate-setting further here to demonstrate the relationship

between time, labour and value. Labour time in the production of commodities influences the economic value of goods and services (Marx 1976). In a more exploitative capitalist class arrangement, an employer imposes a rate for the time investment at much lower than the commodity exchange-value. Self-employed escorts, however, enjoy relative autonomy in calculating profit levels based on time investment, comparative rates, clients' ability to pay and the perceived value of their brand (Pitcher 2014). Sex workers charge an hourly rate based on the amount of effort or the duration of their labour that they feel they undertake both within the appointment and in preparation for it. For example, Amanda considers the additional time investment needed to charge higher rates in a cost-benefit analysis of her income:

If I wanted to push them up at all I'd have to seriously think about things, like I'd always have to have a pedicure and manicure, because I know I could do the whole dinner date companion thing, but... I'm not sure if it would be worth it with all the extra work it involves when I can just get a reasonable amount of guys who just want to shag for an hour but do want to make sure it's an English girl and someone who they think enjoys sex, you know it's quite easy. As long as you're smiling, and they think they've made you come they're happy. And putting it into the next price bracket to me would be a lot more work (Amanda).

The higher rates can denote 'higher quality', which in this instance can signify greater investment on the part of the sex worker; more experience in that field of work; a specialist service is offered during that time; or particular aesthetics.

Rate-setting is further influenced by the visibility of competition on the internet, providing an opportunity for comparison. Sex workers decide on the value of their time by relating the rates charged by existing workers in the market to an evaluation of her own skills, attributes, experience, and the perceived value in the service she is offering, including if any specialisms are offered:

I went on the homepage of [local] escorts. I went through them and had a look at them and thought about where I might sit in comparison. Because you can see some of them and they're like '*oh I'm going to offer bareback*' or something, and they're offering a different service to someone who writes that they're offering a girlfriend experience, for instance (Isobel).

I'm not the most expensive end of the local range but I'm one of the few who promotes that I've been to university. There are a few posh ones... Because most of the local sex workers are either Romanian or Chinese or Thai and then the English ones tend to be younger ones and look at my gorgeous body and stuff, I used to get quite a few business men who wanted someone who they could talk to of an evening (Amanda).

Some participants consequently felt a need to build a distinct brand in which to bound and market their services to justify the value of their time, which was often prioritised over reducing prices. Branding is significant for marketing purposes, but it also allows the determination of a price range for their services.

As such, although many have made calculations to set a standard rate, there are occasions when sex workers adjust the value of time according to the experience or act that is offered. Although this is not the norm, it does demonstrate that time is not the only aspect of the exchange given a monetary value, as pricing will change according to the amount of effort required of the sex worker:

I'm trying to work out with him, because he pays me £100 a week into PayPal for me and I'm trying to work out what is the right amount of give for that and I'm not sure... I'm not doing anything except for sending a couple of naked selfies and emailing saying 'hi' and 'how's your day?' and that kind of thing, which I could be doing just be doing to one of my friends... I think it's important for the girl to think about what she's comfortable with. I think if you're going to do something you're not comfortable with, I would try to get a bit more for it but if it's within my enjoys then not (Isobel).

Dinner I do at £70 an hour because I'm not having sex with them and they're feeding me, so I like to reflect that because it's unfair if they're spending all the money on me on food and drink and they're paying to be nice, so I'll just knock off that extra money that they'd be paying on dinner as it's nice (Natalie).

Natalie and Isobel are newer to the industry than other participants and I have found that more experienced workers offer less flexibility in their prices and services. This difference may reflect the career generations I referred to in the last chapter [5.3], whereby sex workers who have worked in the industry under different economic conditions have different working styles to those who are solely accustomed to the newer ways of working within late capitalism.

Newer sex workers may be less aware of the broader implications of negotiating prices and services, also. Many sex workers highlight the risks associated with adjusting rates for specific services or clients (Pitcher 2014), including opening the opportunity for clients to negotiate and therefore potentially redistributing the power balance. This is why most participants maintained their rates for all activities, regardless of effort and time investment:

It's just a normal rate. I do charge more if I go away. But you do get blokes who ask how much it is for a wank, and it's not like that, it's just a normal price (Lucy).

Instead, they would limit and regulate the amount of investment needed by only undertaking acts and experiences listed on their profiles. Those activities listed are all deemed as within the set value of their time.

The sexual and emotional satisfaction of the client also tends not to have a bearing on the rates set by sex workers: they charge the same amount regardless of whether a client reaches orgasm, for example. Indeed, some clients still consider the service valuable without an orgasm because they seek company rather than sexual satisfaction:

You get ones in their late fifties and sixties who think they're coming for sex but there's no way that's going to happen, most of them have erectile problems and most of the time they just want to sit there and talk and give you a cuddle and then you have to pretend that things have been going on when they really haven't (Natalie).

Sex workers maintain rates based on the agreed time allocation. In fact, while there are examples of sex workers offering special discounts, most workers maintain their prices in all circumstances, regardless of market conditions. As I demonstrated in the previous chapter [5.3.5], participants had not decreased their prices during a time of economic decline, despite experiencing pressure to earn, because it would adjust clients' expectations; making it subsequently difficult to raise them in times of prosperity. An important role in the production of the sex work commodity is therefore to manage consumer expectations, both in the form of the menu and in the consistent pricing. This is a point of economic security and safety for the sex worker (Pitcher 2014).

Time is important, therefore, in bounding the commodity in terms of both the duration of labour offered and experience expected by the consumer; offering a way for the sex worker to control the production of her own labour. While it is time that bounds the commodity and is ascribed a monetary value, however, the experiences offered during that time and the way these experiences are branded can influence the value. There is therefore a need to move on from a discussion of time as holding value, to the extent the different aspects of the labour hold value.

6.2 The Commodification of the Body/Service/Experience

Time importantly bounds the activities and, thus, the labour, but this also leaves scope for a personalised service. Within the allocation of time a range of activities can occur, subject to negotiations between the individual sex worker's offer and the client's requests. Participants describe a complex temporally bound service to satisfy the various desires of consumers:

I'm selling an orgasm for the guys, sexual satisfaction, I guess. I really do believe that part of it is you're selling ego-stroking, making them seem as desirable. I think a bit of escapism, sometimes it's like taking a drug... because it is an expensive thing. I think companionship. I think to some, especially to older guys, you're giving them a bit of youth in their life. I think you're selling an image, whatever that might be (Isobel).

Most participants agree that a complex mixture of sexual acts, body work, aesthetics and emotional labour undergo commodification, which is combined to produce the simulation of a seemingly authentic experience for the client. This section explores the processes of commodification for these experiences and their relationship to the commodification of time to offer a definition of the sex work commodity, which has relevance for theoretical debates on sex work.

6.2.1 Experiential Definitions of the Sex Work Commodity

The move towards experiential sexual services is supported by Bernstein's (2007) research in her documenting of increasing supply and demand of diversified and specialised services predicated on bounded authenticity. Developing this further, I

draw on the work of Pine and Gilmore, who distinguish between service and experience commodities by explaining that:

When a person buys a service, he purchases a set of intangible activities carried out on his behalf. But when he buys an experience, he pays to spend time enjoying a series of memorable events that...engage him in a personal way (1999:2).

In doing so, they suggest that consumers are increasingly likely to save money on goods and services to spend money on experiences.

The escorting sector of the sex industry has responded to this trend, which is reflected in the prevalence of the girlfriend *experience* and pornstar *experience* and in participants' prioritising of the experiential, psychological, and emotional aspects of their work:

I am selling my personality probably more than my body because, I know that sounds daft, but because I interact... I get most of my bookings mostly from forums and things. They are getting to follow me on what I'm doing on a daily basis. I probably comment on most forums every day about something. I'm telling them about how much I really love giving oral, but that's also interspersed with some aspects of my personality that are real, like I post up pictures of films I've enjoyed. Or I will talk about crap like I saw a really cute cat today. You know stuff that is inane crap that makes them think that they know me... and I don't think some men realise that that's what they're doing... But it means that they are turning up because they think they know me as a person (Natalie).

While they speak less often about the role of the body in producing this, there is also evidence that they appreciate the body's production and marketing of the commodity:

I worry if I please them aesthetically because that's half the job done in a way (Isobel).

I'm second on the page when you search for a girl that is over size 14, that is size 14 or over, I'm second. Although people might not like my body type, why would I change my body type because I'd rather be a big fish in a small pond than a small fish in a big pond? (Natalie).

It's sex! It's wrapped up and marketed as GFE or whatever but it's a shag basically. A nice shag, a nice kissy cuddly shag or a blow job. I mean you do get deluded ladies that make out they're high class this and that but we're all selling the same thing and the lads are buying the same thing. Some of the punters can get quite deluded and think it's all roses and candles and wine and stuff, and it can be, but the fact is that they want to get off and I want to take their money (Claire).

The sex worker's body is used to produce the experience and the aesthetics of the body are also used in the promotion of the experience. Clients are purchasing time with the sex worker's body and the experience that is produced through it.

Many have pointed to the negative consequences of commodification; particularly in relation to the personal and intimate (Anderson 1993; Radin 1996), and it may be that participants are trying to defend against these arguments in their prioritisation of the emotional over the physical. Indeed, Doezema admits that sex workers often try to promote their more positive experiences in research to counteract the widespread negativity surrounding the work (Doezema 1993, cited in Chapkis 1997:8). While some pose sex workers as rational agents who make constrained choices within an existing economic system (Posner 1992; Reynolds 1986), others heavily criticise the commodification of the body and intimacy, and industries which capitalise on it, because private spheres should not be tainted by capitalism and should remain reciprocal (Anderson 1993; Radin 1996). This is recognised by Amanda, who talks about the difference between paid and voluntary emotional labour, but I think we can transport this to an interpretation of commodified intimacy as opposed to reciprocal intimacy, as there are negative connotations in public discourse with both commodified emotional labour and commodified intimacy through body work and emotion labour:

There's a stigma around the sale of emotional labour that goes further than sex work. Charities do it all the time as well. People who do emotional labour for free in our society are seen as better than those who charge money. And you've probably seen it around the Christian charities because they push how good they are because they're volunteers who do it for free. Why is that better? You don't think people who cook for free are better than people who cook for money. It's fascinating. Sex work has a lot of stigmas but part of it is people think genuinely, you know, you're performatively nice and kind for someone for money – that is wrong, and it touches on something that we think should not happen (Amanda).

Although Amanda is talking about emotional labour here, it can quite easily be applied to the other intimate services offered in the sex industry: there is opposition to the commodification of acts considered personal and intimate. We are uncomfortable with the idea of an emotion-based service mixing with the 'rationality' of payment.

In public discourse there is a tendency to equate payment of money for a service as a rationalising process, whereby emotion is removed; a debate which is hotly felt in matters of surrogacy, for example (Anleu 1992). This requires a distinction between the rational and emotional that does not exist, as "emotions...matter for rationality" (Goleman 1996:28). The promotion of the idea that the purchase of emotional services or things renders them unemotional leads to the moralist-driven perspective that the rationalising of emotions through payment alienates and objectifies the worker. I argue instead that, while sex workers do experience a level of alienation and objectification (as do all workers), they reflexively negotiate these conditions and, in some examples, use them to their advantage. To explore this further and to draw some conclusions, it necessitates reflection on feminist debates on prostitution and how those from different perspectives have viewed the commodification of the sex industry.

6.2.2 Theoretical Definitions of the Sex Work Commodity

Those who argue that prostitution is exploitation reduce prostitution to a patriarchal system whereby the 'prostitute' sells her *self* to the male client (Barry 1995; Farley 2004; Jeffreys 1997). She sells her sexuality, which is bound to the body and self, and is entirely powerless to the client who has unlimited access to the prostitute's body. This fails to recognise the agency of the sex worker and the multiplicity of identities which could allow the sex worker to exploit one part of her being without giving away her whole self, as there is no intrinsic connection between sexuality and the self (O'Connell Davidson 1998). Further, there is a need to consider broader processes driving the growth and diversification of the sex industry (Bernstein 2007).

There is a need to recognise nuance and complexity within levels of choice and exploitation in the sex industry, therefore. Participants' narratives demonstrate that they have a much higher level of agency and control than these reductionist

perspectives prescribe them. Unquestionably, I am working with a particularly empowered sub-section of the sex industry: these participants are all independent, self-employed businesspeople, and I do recognise that in other sectors there will be varying levels of control and choice. In many sectors, however, the client never has full access to the sex worker's body outside of what is temporarily agreed, and he has limited control; he acts within a set of physical, emotional and temporal boundaries set by the sex worker. What occurs is a negotiation of both parties acting within the contexts of their personal and structural concerns.

In terms of the complex arguments around exploitation and choice through work, van der Veen (2001) usefully distinguishes between Marx's earlier and later works. Marx's earlier writing discusses commodification and promotes the idea that the worker's body is sold in prostitution. Indeed, Marx uses prostitution as a metaphor for capitalism and so all labourers' bodies become like the sex worker's body which is sold to the capitalist. As such, the sale of labour, as the commodity, becomes alienating and dehumanising because part of the body and the self is given away with the commodity. However, she argues that Marx's prostitution metaphor is limited because within the client-sex worker relationship:

The needs and desires of the consumer (subject/client/capitalist) render him vulnerable to the commodity (object/prostitute/laborer). The more commodities the consumer-client buys to satisfy his needs and desires, the more he has to labor to obtain them, reducing *himself* to the status of commodity (van der Veen 2001:41).

As such, the sex worker is viewed more of an active agent and the consumer's power is questioned: the consumer does not inherently hold power through the act of purchasing a commodity, as some accounts suggest (Keat et al 2005, for example). This would lead to a more complex account of power involving:

Viewing the commodity not as a passive object but as an active subject, and regarding the production and sale of commodities (and labor as a commodity) not as (inherently) objectifying and alienating but as (potentially) empowering and liberating (van der Veen 2001:42).

van der Veen suggests that in this way commodification processes can be empowering for the labourer. Of course, these relationships are complex, and it is less

a case of *reversing* power but more to explore the complex and nuanced fluctuations of power within them.

It is important, nevertheless, to view the level of control sex workers exercise over their own labour. They are businesswomen who have control over how *they use* their body, as opposed to selling *the use of* their body:

It is a brand and that's what some girls don't realise, and you have to think about the way that you portray yourself, especially this type of economy... I wanted people who were different from that and I wanted to offer something different from the people who trade a lot on their looks and bodies because although it should be a very looks-oriented market, I'm making a niche myself with something that's very personality-based (Natalie).

Natalie's quote is reflective of sex workers producing an experience through the body, rather than selling the body itself. In an experience economy (Pine and Gilmore 1999) the sale of bodies as commodities is given little value: the body must work to produce an experience.

The internet has been key in facilitating the development of sex worker brands through the growth of online profiles where workers can advertise their 'personalities' and style of experience (Cunningham et al 2017). Sex workers create a brand to package the experience and to enable clients to choose the commodity they wish to purchase. As Pitcher writes:

An essential element of business management is marketing, not only of the services offered but also of the individual(s) providing the services. In this way, sex work may be seen to be both similar to and different from other forms of service work, in that the individual worker is as much a focus of the marketing strategy as the services provided (2014:142).

To develop this further, however, I suggest that the reason both the worker and service are marketed in this way is to produce an experience, rather than service commodity, which takes account of the body and style of experience within a coherent brand. Sex workers develop their brand as part of a business strategy and are able to determine the acts offered within the experience, which is further protected within temporal boundaries. This approach recognises the role of the sex

worker as business owner, which has significant implications for commodity relations.

6.2.3 Self-Employment: Implications for Commodity Relations

Independent escorting can be viewed as a form of self-employment, therefore, as the sex worker is responsible for her own business; manages her own means of production and maintains ownership of her profit:

It's comparable to being self-employed in any way of working, in which case you know you are selling a product, they can choose one way or another whether to return... it's a two-pronged thing, you need to have your advertising to bring the business in, but then you also need your repeat business, otherwise you haven't got a business. And it's the same with any other self-employed business (Natalie).

There is a wealth of evidence to suggest that escorts operate their work in the same ways as mainstream businesses (Bretners and Sanders 2010) reflecting the professionalisation of sex work (Bernstein 2007), and therefore the growing similarities to experiences of self-employed individuals in the mainstream economy. Within this business model there are reduced opportunities for exploitation resulting from employers, because sex workers operate independently and maintain control over profit:

For the independent prostitute, economic self-determination may be associated with control over one's sexuality, in which the selling of a sexual service is not experienced as degrading and dehumanizing, but rather, as empowering. The same person who produces the surplus appropriates it; thus, strategies to increase or decrease the surplus (through the provision of more or fewer services) are enacted by the same person who produces it. As producers and appropriators of surplus, it may be possible that an independent sex worker produces only those services that she finds empowering or affirming. Here, the commodity sold may be a clearly defined service rather than complete access to the body (van der Veen 2001:47).

This is not to say that there are no other constraining factors which shape commodification processes, such as the discriminatory legal context in which sex work operates; income inequality; the labour market; and gender, class and racial power relations, for example. Marx writes that workers are free to choose *when* to

labour, but they have little freedom on *whether* to labour (1999), which reveals how something like gender income inequality can affect a woman's decision to sex work over other professions, but also why all workers continue to work through certain levels of exploitation.

The problem with defining escorts as self-employed business owners is that if the sex worker is considered as self-employed, it could be argued that the client as the temporary employer within a short-term contract, which would mean that clients have a level of control over the labour of the sex worker. As Isobel notes:

Maybe if you pay some money you've got some say in how it goes and what happens (Isobel).

This is not analogous to purchasing full access to the worker's body, however, and we are reminded of Marx' (1999) positioning of time as integral in bounding the labour, whereby the worker "must constantly look upon his labour-power as his own property, his own commodity, and this he can only do by placing it at the disposal of the buyer temporarily, for a definite period of time. By this means alone can he avoid renouncing his rights of ownership over it" (1999:105). Despite threats to this under modern capitalist demands on workers' time (Everingham 2002; Rubery et al 2005; Tuckman 2005) [see section 3.2.2], this interpretation of Marx is more in line with the narratives of participants as self-employed individuals with a greater degree of control over their time. It speaks to their conceptualisations of the commodity as a bounded experience.

It also allows for the range of experiences at work to be explored, as it recognises that the worker does not give her *self* away. We can see this at work in the participants' accounts, where they report exploitative as well as more pleasurable experiences at work:

I genuinely enjoy sex. I enjoy around 60-70% of my bookings, so do an awfully lot of sex workers that I know (Amanda).

It's when I'm tired which I know effects my mood anyway, but having to ignore that and be energetic and bubbly and find that energy and it's the hardest thing for me and it seems extra draining because it's like there's this annoying myth, from the SWERFs [Sex Worker Exclusionary Radical Feminist] and anti [anti-sex work], that if you're a sex worker that men come in and want an available hole and they use all this dehumanising language, there may well be men that want that but because of my marketing and because of the image that I portray, and I choose to portray myself this way, they kinda want to see someone who's smiling and happy and enjoying themselves, and sometimes I wish they did just want a hole so they can just get on with it, so like emotionally that's the hardest part and it's not about acting even, it's about finding the energy to look like you're having a good time when really you're just knackered and don't wanna do it (Amanda).

All participants both enjoy and endure different parts of their work, and I have used two quotes from the same participant intentionally to show the variance in experiences one can have through labour. The experience of labour cannot be reduced to negative exploitation of the worker's body, therefore. Viewing prostitution in a way that is more nuanced and does not essentialise it to the sale of unlimited access to a body allows an understanding of work that is not purely exploitative; that labour and commodification can be both exploitative and pleasurable (van der Veen 2001). This also recognises the limitations placed upon the experience through the commodification of time. Although clients are purchasing the experience, it is the time which is given value and so both the labour power and the experience commodity are bound together. This creates tension, however, as production and consumption occur simultaneously (Tregenna 2009), which is tacitly managed by the sex worker while maintaining the myth of customer sovereignty (Korczynski 2013).

6.3 Demand and Consumption

6.3.1 Client Definitions of the Sex Work Commodity

I have outlined the commodity sold according to participants' descriptions, but there are possible similarities and differences in the commodity conceived by clients. Of course, our understanding of this is limited as I have asked sex workers to think about clients' motivations and desires, rather than asking the clients directly. Many

participants suggested that clients would more readily describe the commodification of physical acts, for example; omitting the emotional and psychological aspects of the experience, despite benefitting from them:

Not consciously, but I think they want that feeling that they get after they've seen an escort who will attend to their every sexual need, every emotional need, every physical need. I think that's the feeling that they're after. I don't think they could consciously articulate that, but I think that's what it is. Consciously I think they're thinking they're buying sex... and excitement, I guess... I don't think they would consciously say they're buying companionship, but the image they would say they'd buy as well, because they'll choose an escort with a certain image and a lot of them will ask you to wear a specific outfit as well so that must be important to them (Isobel).

They think they're buying sex. They like it when people make them feel important and then they'll keep coming. They think they're coming for the sex but really what they're coming for is to leave with a smile on their face feeling like they matter, or they've had a good time with someone (Natalie).

According to these descriptions, participants perceive clients as more readily adhering to the idea of purchasing access to a body, rather than engaging in an experience that incorporates psychological, emotional and physical features.

This may be reflective of the way participants interpret clients' motivations within the context of their 'masculinity', however; reading clients as distancing themselves from emotional engagement. Existing research around client motivations demonstrates that there are a range of reasons why men engage in sex industry exchanges (Bernstein 2007; Milrod and Weitzer 2012; Monto 2004; Sanders 2008a; 2008b), including seeking companionship or addressing a lack of confidence. This evidence suggests that while some men do purchase sex primarily for physical reasons, many clients engage with the emotional and psychological aspects of the experience and we cannot reduce client's motivations to solely fulfilling a physical need.

The diversity of client motivations and desires further complicates the definition of the commodities negotiated within the sex work encounter. The range of options available to clients within that time recognises that clients have a multitude of needs and desires that are addressed during the appointment and so charging for individual services and acts is unrealistic:

Most of the clients I see they just ask for girlfriend experience, kissing cuddling, oral, sometimes full sex... Sometimes it's not the sexual things, it's the little things you do, like when you're giving them a kiss stroke their face and giving them all the eye contact with the doughy eyes because they think you mean it (Claire).

This also acts as further evidence that the UK indoor sex industry is shifting in line with a broader experience economy (Pine and Gilmore 1999), whereby a simulation occurs, such as GFE and PSE.

Clients' desires are becoming more intense and diverse, which is arguably because they have access to a greater range of sexual inspiration through the availability of porn, for instance, but also because of broader changes to consumption habits which focus on experience (Pine and Gilmore 1999). By selling time, therefore, sex workers can commodify sex and intimacy in a way that will satisfy a variety of tastes and needs, and account for the broader economic move towards the sale of experience which is personalised rather than standardised. The pervasiveness of this suggests a move away from the standardised services suggested through Ritzer's (2010) McDonaldisation hypothesis, which has previously been applied to the sex industry (Hausbeck and Brents 2010) [see 2.2.2].

The experience offered within that time is branded in a way that attracts particular clients looking for particular, individualised experiences, and can be used by the sex worker to manipulate clients towards purchasing their commodities, in the same way that mainstream businesses manipulate consumers through advertising:

Just because its sex work why shouldn't you approach it like you're setting up a massage business or you're setting up and selling a product? You've got to do your research, you've got to realise what people want. You need to make sure you can deliver it, or at least make them think that you can deliver it. Even if they think they want a size 8 blonde, you need to find enough for them that then they're intrigued by this different product that's providing something different and then a lot of it is hype. You've got to generate hype. A lot of it is playing a game. I think it's because I've come into it while the markets saturated and while the punters think what I'm selling is not a standardised product (Natalie).

Through marketing, sex workers can attract clients towards the style they advertise but allow room for clients to believe the experience is personalised and responsive to individualised requirements, which – to a certain extent – they are.

Currently the predominant experiences offered within this sector of the sex industry are GFE, PSE and BDSM experiences. As previously identified [2.2.2], GFE has come to dominate the industry, with most profiles offering a simulation of a genuine romantic relationship. Domination and BDSM is a specialism offered by a number of workers also. A small number of profiles advertise as offering PSE also, whereby the persona adopted by the sex worker mirrors the more dramatised personas and activities found in the porn industry:

It's basically all code for what type of shag. PSE girls is code for hair swinging and mm-ing and ahh-ing and face-fucking and like what you see in porn films, GFE and girls like me and we're just dressing it up for what type of shag you're gonna get, you're gonna get loads of sensual kissing and then a shag, so it's all the same thing, it's just different styles of doing it (Claire).

All participants of this research primarily offered GFE, which is reflective of the dominance of this experience within the market, as a result of client demand but also sex workers' preferences of how to labour.

During the course of the research, however, there did appear to be a growing disjuncture between the offer of GFE and increasing demand for PSE-related acts. Many participants commented on the growing requests for PSE in some format:

On my profile it might say I don't offer pornstar experience or anal, but some people don't read that, and they send an email asking for it, but I just don't reply (Isobel).

They see stuff and they want to try it and it's a place to explore, which is really interesting. I do like the kinks and fetish stuff and I'd love to know more about the psychology behind it (Deborah).

There is growing demand for porn-related experiences, therefore, which is evident in the increasing requests from potential clients. This is largely incongruent with the experiences offered by participants.

While some participants like Deborah responded to this by altering supply, others expressed agency in not changing the services they were comfortable in offering:

I ask them what kind of meet they are hoping to get and when they get back to me and say lots of sensual kissing, GFE, stuff like that then I would carry on talking to that person (Isobel).

What I do is what I'm comfortable with, what I'm safe doing and I wouldn't change or adjust it to get one more client... The guys that are into the proper hardcore porn watchers that want those types of services, they're not my type of customers (Gabrielle).

That commodification processes are influenced by sex workers' preferences further demonstrates their ability to enact control in their relationships with clients. Clients are increasingly requesting PSE, but this is not always offered according to sex workers' preferences.

While the rise of requests for PSE could signify the decline of GFE-related services, these market activities are far more complex. Like the generational differences found among workers in the sex industry, the rise of porn-related requests is potentially symptomatic of generational differences among clients. This does not necessarily mean that a new generation of clients will lead to a permanent shift in the experiences offered by escorts, because client requests reflect the expectations of their life stage and, additionally, those services are resisted by many sex workers. For example, all participants discriminated against younger clients because greater numbers of younger clients request, and attempt, behaviours and acts associated with PSE:

We're definitely getting more younger clients now, although I don't personally see anyone under 25, I can't be arsed with that, my step kids are 25 and to be honest I'm 38 and I don't want to see some kids... It's unfortunate really because my age group, they all want MILFs, that's why you get loads ringing up but to be honest it makes me feel like a paedo. I don't like them in bookings, they're immature. They watch porn films and just want to re-enact the latest porn scene they've seen and that's not for me (Claire).

I used to have it on my profile that I wouldn't meet guys under 40, but I've just changed that to 35... I find that with younger guys, when they're talking to you by email it's more about... they're talking to you like you're going to do a porn film or something. It's like *'I'm going to ram you'* and stuff whereas the older guys are like *'I'm going to give you a massage'* and stuff and I prefer the massage (Isobel).

I don't see anyone under 25. If they tell me, I'll usually say I'm too busy. Under 21 I definitely don't see... the way they have sex, there's too much pounding and you can't work after them... Give me a 60-year-old man who will leave after coming once, having a chat, having a kiss, with a huge smile on his face, it's so much nicer. And when they say they want to make you come they genuinely mean it; they genuinely want some physical contact and to make someone come (Amanda).

Most men under the age of 33 suffer from the porn effect, as in they've watched a lot of porn and think it's all about things like face-fucking and think it's all about them and all about getting the most bang for your buck. I don't deal with that nonsense (Natalie).

In the previous chapter [5.3] I discussed the possibility that some workers have adapted to newer market conditions differently to others, but there are also generational differences in the demands of clients. Younger clients who have grown up with greater access to pornographic material have different expectations and seek different experiences to an older generation who have not. It may be, therefore that GFE is predominantly produced for, marketed to, and requested by older clientele. This may also stem from the life stage of clients, as older clients are more likely to have, or have had, longer-term relationships and therefore look for experiences that mirror this. Younger clients also seek experiences which mirror their life stage, but in this case those experiences entail sex acts which a number of sex workers avoid.

6.3.2 Negotiating Supply and Demand

Rather than simply responding to market demand, therefore, sex workers can choose between the services they offer, which suggests that sex workers exercise considerable control over the experience. Furthermore, participants state that they often doubt the true desires suggested by clients and they can manipulate and negotiate on these to create a closer alignment between supply and demand:

Most guys don't actually want what they think they want. They might think they want you dressed up in all PVC and '*I'm going to give you a facial*' and all this, and then when it comes down to it, it's just kind of, they want the normality of feeling wanted and feeling that they've turned you on and that you're enjoying it as much as they are (Emily).

They all get told that there is actually a better way to do things and then they change their minds. I educate them (Natalie).

Contrary to this, Amanda suggests that clients cannot be taught, and this should not form the role of the sex worker:

The idea that you can teach them how to have sex is rubbish because we need to get paid so you have to do a job. And they're not going to enjoy a booking if you're telling them they're not doing a good job, or it hurts or '*Do you know what foreplay is?*' They're not going to enjoy it, but what if they get pissed off? You have to do the performance of them being good. Fair enough you might move their hand or saying things indirectly (Amanda).

In creating an experience, sex workers cannot interrupt that simulation to teach clients because, as discussed earlier, a large part of the experience involves fantasy-fulfilment and flattery. The experience must be enacted in a way that fulfils the needs and matches the perfected vision expected and requested by the client as consumer, as Campbell describes in his account of enchantment in consumption practices:

Just as in romantic novels and films, heroes and heroines rarely have hiccups, headaches or indigestion unless this proves essential to the plot, so too are our dreams purged of life's little inconveniences... In this way, our imagined experience characteristically comes to represent a perfected vision of life (1987:84).

The client expects the simulation of a reciprocal romantic relationship in which the worker is perceived as a partner, rather than a teacher. Any interruption to this simulation would compromise the authenticity of the simulation. This is symptomatic of broader shifts towards authentic consumer experiences (Baerenholdt 2010; Pine and Gilmore 2007; Ritzer 2010). Authenticity also undergoes a process of commodification, therefore, which is shaped through the interactions of sex workers and clients.

6.4 Commodifying the Experience: The Role of the Sex Worker and Client

6.4.1 Simulated Authenticity: The Extent of Mutuality

Carbonero and Gómez Garrido assert that escorts impersonate authenticity by appearing as an 'ordinary woman' through their "external appearance; proximity to clients; and the use of mainstream forms of online interaction" (2017:7). Participants' narratives confirm these findings, and marketed themselves as the '*girl next door*':

My selling point is, which probably seems odd talking to me now, is that I'm not a professional. I am a normal girl, ex-graduate. I like cute things. I'll maybe drop a few brain cells but I'm well-spoken and they are buying into the whole idea that I am this normal girl that they would see in an office, they would see on the street, that they might talk to in a bar. My whole selling point is that I'm normal (Natalie).

That's more sexy because it's almost real for them. You are out of their league but not so far out of their league that it's unbelievable, and that's more of a turn on psychologically because there's that little bit in their head that's like '*oh I could, I could, I could pull her*' (Claire).

They also suggest that the clients were more satisfied when there was evidence of physical effort and exertion during and after the sexual encounter, which is symbolic of authenticity.

This reflects the desire of the consumer to separate the process of commodification from the experience (Boltanski and Chiapello 2005; Carbonero and Gómez Garrido 2017; Monto 2004), as signs of exertion are interpreted not as representative of the labour undertaken by the worker, but as representative of genuine mutual enjoyment:

All my clients know I might look nice at the beginning of the session but by the end I'm mullered and all hot and sweaty. And they like that because the fact is I have actually... they can tell if you've enjoyed... they can tell I've put some effort into it (Emily).

I can fake really well but they know what a fake orgasm looks like but they have sex with me and it looks very real so they assume the whole package is real, and that says an awful lot about most clients... because most of them want you to have a good time (Amanda).

The mutuality of enjoyment is questionable, as while sex workers do enjoy some aspects of their work, they will not receive the same level of pleasure from the encounters with clients because for them, *it is work*. O'Connell Davidson (1998) refers to this as the 'contradiction of clienting', although Sanders (2008a:99) argues that these contradictions "are more complex than delusion as mutuality occurs in different guises, usually within the control of the sex worker's routine and emotional labour skills". She proposes that mutuality is experienced by clients in three ways: as an 'authentic' delusion of mutuality, whereby the client believes the sex worker is experiencing pleasure while she is not; an 'authentic-fake' delusion of mutuality whereby the client recognises the labour involved in simulating mutuality; and 'genuine' mutuality where the sex worker does experience mutual pleasure.

This is worthy of exploration, because while mutuality is seen as risky because it blurs the boundaries between commodified and 'genuine' relationships, Amanda's account above suggests that, in desiring mutual pleasure, clients often equally care about the worker's experience. Participant accounts demonstrate that they find a level of both sexual and emotional enjoyment through their work, which serves to demonstrate the complexity in the reciprocal nature of this relationship and that in all forms of work, we find aspects of labour and enjoyment. Bernstein (2007) develops this by identifying that in recent, postindustrial markets, sex workers, too, seek bounded authenticity through their work, which is achieved through genuine enjoyment and contributes to a feeling of the 'single self'. There is evidence of this among the participants of this research, although I suggest the sex industry in this locality is not quite at the stage of development found by Bernstein because participants prefer to *simulate* mutuality and authenticity rather than to genuinely feel it.

In relation to the perceptions of clients, previous research demonstrates that clients seek simulation, or bounded authenticity (Bernstein 2007; Prasad 1999), which challenges the idea that male clients seek to purchase a '*real*' relationship. They prefer to purchase intimacy in commodity form. The bounding of the experience commodity through a duration of clock time is beneficial to both sex worker *and* client, therefore. This suggests that clients seek mutuality within the bounds of market exchange, but the maintenance of this simulation is still important in the practice of the experience.

Accordingly, escorts distance the practice of the experience from signs of commodification to simulate genuine intimacy. This achieves a seemingly more authentic experience and greater efficiency as they can better deliver an experience if there are no barriers to the 'belief' in that experience. Participants reported distancing the process of payment from the services offered to minimise signs of commodification within the experience to simulate mutuality and intimacy:

I always think I should ask for it first and I always plan to, but a lot of the time I end up getting it at the end. And I think that shows a level of trust as well. I think the money must be in their mind because it's a big amount... I prefer to go in and be like a whirlwind, I don't try to like creep up to it, I try to straight away create that atmosphere and I think if I went in and straight away asked for the money that might create a hurdle or something (Isobel).

It's like the rule, isn't it? That they hand the money straight away. But I think most of them like to switch off to the fact that they've just handed over a hundred quid. Basically, get over and done there and then and that's it and the ones that make me wait till to the end, I often worry, are they not going to give you or are they are not going to give me the full amount kind of thing, but I've never had that situation (Emily).

Let me get this out of the way, so they'll get the money out and I'll just put it back to the side. Sometimes I'll joke and say, *'I'll leave it there, I might be rubbish and you might want your money back'*. It will just be like a little joke and they'll say, *'I'm sure you won't blah blah blah'* (Gabrielle).

Emily recognises that 'the rule' of taking payment first regulates safety, and advocates for sex worker rights and safety indeed stipulate this as best practice (SAAFE 2018). This reveals a process of balancing safety with the need for authenticity. For some sex workers, this means they risk taking payment at the end of the appointment in order to appear authentic.

Both sex workers and clients benefit from intimacy in commodity form (Bernstein 2007; Prasad 1999), but the experience is based on the simulation of a genuine relationship. This distancing that is encouraged by both sex workers and their clients is a useful tool employed to disguise commodification process in simulated authenticity. Authenticity is temporally produced through a range of techniques within the appointment and while those feelings are not necessarily 'true' – an escort does not feel genuine lust for all clients and clients often suspend disbelief to aid its

simulation – in producing and consuming the experience, the authenticity is enacted *as real* (Pine and Gilmore 2007). Clients, then, must undertake the commodification of an experience while suspending disbelief of the authenticity of that experience.

6.4.2 Co-Production of the Sex Industry Experience

Escorts *and* clients, therefore, are both proactive in the commodification of the experience. Contrary to the rationalisation process creating disenchantment, as proposed by Weber (2001), Campbell (1987) proposes instead for the necessary willing enchantment in consumerism, demonstrating clients' responsibilities in commodification processes. They must suspend disbelief and welcome willing enchantment:

You weave a bit of magic, that's what it is. A good escort knows to – it's about being personable as well. You can be a very plain looking lady, I'm not the most attractive of girls compared to some, but it's about having that personality and belief in yourself. If you greet them at the door with a smile, and make the best out of yourself, and you believe you're sexy, then they will as well (Claire).

Then they join in with me, if you bring the energy up in a place then other people get their energy up too. They just kind of get swept up in it. It does feel a bit fake at times, but I think it's better than the alternative to just go in as I normally am, I don't like that. I think they're happy to be swept up in it (Isobel).

In addressing Isobel's account that it can "feel a bit fake at times", it is useful to draw on Baerenholdt et al's account of authentic tourism, and his argument that the distinction of authentic, or real, and performed, or fake, should not reduce these two 'worlds' to binary form, as both the enactment of fantasy and the reality of commodification occur simultaneously: "authenticity and secondary worlds are thus not of a transcending world, but are practices in the now and here" (2010:3). This does not necessarily act as a barrier to clients' enchantment, therefore, and it is through the presence of the client that enchantment can be executed.

Sex workers provide the basis for simulation but there is an expectation that clients will follow their lead in creating it. They do this through the acting of confidence and describe how this moves clients to also act:

If they're reciprocating, then it's easier because you're feeding off them, so you can react to it (Deborah).

Deborah develops this further by alluding to the two-way process of creating a simulation, or commodifying the experience, whereby clients also need to take a lead in communicating their desires and reciprocating in the production of the simulation. The enchantment is a mutual process which 'feeds' the roleplay for both workers and consumers.

In their descriptions, participants directly speak to the willing enchantment (Campbell 1989) required of clients, without prior knowledge of the theory, suggesting there is truth to this in a sex industry, which increasingly relies on experience:

The guy has to take a certain level of responsibility, as long as you're trying your best. And I always do try my best, I'm always happy and cheerful, I'm always loving, I'm always smiling and even if I don't particularly feel like it, I'm smiling and making sure they're feeling nice. So, they can't say I'm not trying and I'm not enthusiastic. If they're lying there like a sack of shit, it isn't helping, is it? They're responsible for their experiences too. If you take a child to Disneyland and they believe in all the characters and all the magic then they're going to have a great time, if you've got the kind of kid that goes '*Ugh, it's a man in a Mickey Mouse suit*', they're not going to have a nice time... It's partly my responsibility, you know I'll always welcome them with a kiss, and I'll hang their coat up and look after them. I'll do all that because it's the girlfriend experience, so I'll act like their girlfriend (Claire).

Clients actively contribute to the commodification of that experience, not only in the requests they make to the sex worker, but also in the way they enact enchantment and engage in the roleplay.

To refer to this joint role in commodification processes, I borrow the term commodity co-production, which is increasingly used in economics and business literature in relation to consumption to describe the interactive and cooperative process undertaken by producers and consumers in designing and producing commodities (Ramirez 1999; Solveig 1996). To develop this, however, I use the term with the added understanding that both the sex worker and client exist within the contexts of their own personal and structural concerns (Archer 2007). Co-production occurs in negotiation of these concerns and commodification processes are, thus, a

site of struggle, with asymmetrical balances of power at different times and in different circumstances.

6.4.3 Temporal Experiences of Commodity-Production

The role of clients as co-producers is not positioned to downplay the responsibility of sex workers *as* workers and producers. The sex worker attempts to secure clients' enchantment through enacting authenticity both inside and outside of the synchronised encounter. This allows clients to look forward to the experience and begin to imagine and plan the scripts he brings to the experience, as well as enabling the client to suspend his everyday activities to enact enchantment within the simulation. When clients fail to reciprocate, sex workers must work harder because they are expected to have interpreted clients' needs and provide the basis for the simulation.

The greater work intensity necessarily changes the experience of time at work, and participants reported frustration at these occurrences:

There was one guy that I met a couple of weeks ago and I just couldn't figure him out. You know we were doing things and he was really nice and gentle, but I just couldn't figure him out, I just didn't know what he wanted me to do, if he wanted me to be slutty or did he want me to be girlfriendy and nothing was really happening. And when it got to the end of the hour I was like well I could stay and be nice or I could just go and not see him again, you know, I've done as much as I can, so I chose to go (Isobel).

You get some, you don't get loads, that lie there and expect you to do all of the work. There's different ways of being a sack of shit. You get the ones that lay there like a sack of shit and don't want to do owt with you, but they still come quite quick and then they're ready to go and they're fine, I don't mind selfishness - after all if I were paying for it I'd be lying there expecting the worker to do all the work. But then you get the ones who lie there like a sack of shit and offer you no response at all and they just look at you and I think '*Well, what is it you want me to do?*' (Claire).

Claire recognises the role of the consumer and his perceived rights as purchaser but argues that her ability to commodify an experience is limited if there is no willing enchantment of the client. While the extent of mutuality in terms of sexual and

emotional enjoyment is contested, there appears to be a mutual need for both sex worker and client to engage in creating the experience, therefore. The experience is enacted by both producer and consumer, demonstrating a level of co-production, though not necessarily equity.

Instances where clients were less cooperative or if their personality did not align with that of the sex worker impacted on the experiences of time passing. As Gabrielle and Natalie describe, if the co-productive relationship between client and worker is lacking, this acts to elongate the experience of working time and alter the intensity of work:

If you're not really into them, that hour is like ten hours (Gabrielle).

Sometimes an hour or two can pass really quickly and you don't realise, especially with somebody who is a conversationalist or is interested in pleasing you, but it can feel like a really long time if they're crap (Natalie).

Comparatively, when participants felt the client reciprocated more equally in the commodification of intimacy, time passing was experienced differently and there were opportunities for sex workers to also consume the experience and to 'lose track of time':

If it is somebody I like, I won't check the time and I might look, and I might be two hours rather than one and I'm not too bothered (Isobel).

Sex workers work harder to compensate for clients who fail to co-produce the experience, but there is also evidence of genuine enjoyment in more reciprocal commodity relationships. This develops the discussion of mutuality in commodified sex industry relationships and suggests that greater levels of mutuality are possible where both sex workers and clients more successfully co-produce the experience.

Time passing is experienced as fleeting or enduring according to enjoyment and intensity of labour, which is linked to the level of input from clients in the co-production of the experience. Sex workers are dependent on clients to co-produce, therefore, to protect the intensity of their labour. This hints at the temporal regulation imposed upon the commodified experience, to manage an increasingly interdependent relationship; an idea that I develop in the coming chapters. Of

particular interest here is the regulation undertaken within the appointment, where sex workers and clients commodify time to simulate an experience.

6.5 Enacting the Temporal Experience

Here, I build on the ideas developed thus far by demonstrating how commodified intimacy and simulated authenticity are enacted temporally. The experience is not only bound by time but is also produced and consumed through time, timing and tempo. This allows the experience to speed up or slow down according to sex workers' and clients' needs. In a market where consumers are increasingly encouraged to expect immediate consumption, for example, sex workers must learn how to create intimacy *immediately* within the appointment time (Carbonero and Gómez Garrido 2017). The commodification of time and intimacy are, thus, interwoven: time is further commodified to negotiate the commodification of authenticity and intimacy.

6.5.1 Anticipating Intimacy Through Technology

In self-regulating their work time, many participants were critical of those who send messages to clients outside of appointment times, as this is perceived as *giving away* part of the service and thus reducing its value. Given the expected immediacy of intimacy, however, some use early communications with clients to envision an atmosphere in anticipation of intimacy during the appointment:

I send photos beforehand to get them excited and also to make them feel more comfortable before they come. I've had guys who have never visited a sex worker before. And I'm just trying to make them realise I'm not going to do anything you don't want me to do and it's just all at your own pace (Emily).

Online technologies have aided this aspect of the work and sex workers use online spaces to promote intimacy before the client has arrived, ensuring they feel comfortable and ready to co-produce the experience. This, once again, represents a choice made by individual sex workers to balance the value of their time, the temporal bounds of their labour, and their task in commodifying an experience. In

this case, Emily chooses to engage in additional labour to reduce the demands during the appointment time.

Just as Emily attempts to understand the clients' 'own pace', Natalie uses online reviews and posts to decipher individual clients' expectations before they arrive:

Somebody comes to see you and they've got twelve reviews; you can figure out who they are because they've already put a list of all the girls they've seen on the internet. You then read back who's sent them, who they've seen, and if it matches up you can then read back on previous reviews what they liked and what they didn't like on previous visits and you can make sure you incorporate all the things they've said they liked (Natalie).

As previously outlined [5.3.2 and 6.2.1], Natalie's business model centres on an immersive, personalised experience, which requires greater time investment. The additional labour undertaken outside of the appointment time is viewed by Natalie as forming part of that business model. Not only do sex workers have online profiles that can sell their brand and therefore set a mood, they can choose to engage in extended research to address clients' expectations and please them *immediately*.

These connections also contribute to an *authentic* experience as the client more readily perceives authenticity in situations which feel familiar and comfortable:

They will turn up and they will perceive that they're having a different type of booking to somebody else because probably for the last four or five months they've been reading what I've been saying on the internet, interacting with me. I've been flirting with them a little bit. So, to them it's more like they've gone on, it's more like they've already had the first date (Natalie).

Simulated authenticity occurs synchronously within the appointment, but online technologies allow the longer-term relationship to occur asynchronously. Online communications represent the 'connective authenticity' proposed by Baerenholdt et al (2008) in their research around 'authentic' tourism, whereby the consumer of authenticity connects with the production of the experience. Much like the tourist imagines a future in a foreign location, clients are able, through blogs and forum posts, to imagine a future encounter with a sex worker, or perhaps by engaging with these online materials they provide memories of past encounters. As such, they provide "important *connections* in time and space between the concrete place of

experience and imaginations spanning from past... to the anticipation of future” (Baerenholdt et al 2008:199). Online technologies enable connective authenticity to be represented across time and space. Through this, familiarity can be built asynchronously between sex worker and client.

6.5.2 Adjusting the Experience Through Tempo

Many participants chose to limit their online interactions with clients to avoid additional time investment and risks to professional boundaries; instead using other tools to simulate immediate intimacy during the appointment. Specifically, sex workers perceive cues from clients to deduce and adjust the tempo of the experience; speeding up or slowing down according to the needs of the client. Newer clients, for example, may need a slower service to achieve familiarity and comfort:

You get some guys who come in shitting their pants, they've not done this before, or some get nervous just when they meet a new lady... And you've got to sort of cut through that, and some of them come in and you can actually feel them shaking and you have to greet them nicely and say, '*Come in and sit down, let's have a chat and a cuddle first*', so you have to kinda ease them in and you start very slowly and sit down and rub their back and give them a little kiss and they soon calm down (Claire).

Sometimes you've got to stop yourself going straight for playing with their cock. Sometimes if they're that tense you just have to avoid that area and work on every other area, touching, stroking, kissing, to try and keep their mind away from it or just touching around the area. You know, it's just so easy to go straight in there and just start wanking away, which is what some guys want, but for the nervous ones it's more about getting them used to being touched (Deborah).

Tempo is achieved corporeally through altering the intensity of experience. Participants perceived the desired tempo according to the clients' level of experience, descriptions of their expectations, and behaviours within the appointment time and altered the tempo of intimate and sexual acts accordingly. In this way, time is commodified to produce personalised experiences.

While participants indicate maintaining a slower tempo for new or nervous clients, the growth of services such as the pornstar experience suggests that there is growing

demand for faster and more intense experiences. As many of the participants here hypothesised, this could be related to the growing use of pornography. In pornographic films the sex acts displayed occur immediately with very little build up, and this could have influenced the expectations of male clients. This may go some way to explain the reported need to offer a faster experience with greater sexual intensity:

It's sort of like slamming them against the wall and kissing them and saying you're so happy to see them, that's half the job done. You've got to learn to do a bit of acting. Basically, when that guy walks in the door you're focused on him 100%, he is the best-looking guy you've ever seen in your life, you fancy him rotten, you could fling your knickers and they'd stick against the wall, you've got to keep that in your head (Claire).

Simulated authenticity is roused by the sex worker who interprets the needs of clients and adjusts the tempo and rhythm of the acts to match their desires. The use of timings and tempo is demonstrative of the temporal nature of the sex work commodity, but also the important regulatory role time plays in commodification processes. Time bounds the duration of commodification and different sorts of time are used to regulate the intensity of labour and consumption. These processes are explored further in the ensuing chapters.

6.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I defined the processes of commodification undertaken by sex workers and clients to achieve a complex and diverse physical, emotional, and psychological experience. To do this, I have explored commodity relations between sex worker and client, as well as broader contextual influences. I have also recognised that external perspectives shape the commodity and have addressed the way commodities perceived as 'intimate' or 'personal' are treated in theoretical debates. In doing so, I offer a perspective which accounts for the complexity of choice, exploitation, labour and enjoyment we experience through work. The temporal and processual approach used within this research is invaluable in exploring these debates in an original way.

The synchronous production and consumption of experience commodities introduces specific difficulties in the sex worker-client relationship, which

Korczynski (2013) suggests is managed through the myth of customer sovereignty. Indeed, clients also consume according to their own structural and personal concerns (Manyukhina 2018) and these are negotiated by the client and sex worker through processes of commodification. The forms of temporal regulation in managing these commodification processes demonstrate a level of control exercised by sex workers, and while they experience pressures within their social, economic and cultural contexts, they can exert control over the types and styles of experience offered.

Developing this, however, I have suggested that the commodification of an experience requires the co-production and co-consumption of the experience, while also acknowledging the limitations to that co-production in the context of work and consumptive leisure. This co-dependence is potentially another means of managing tension within in the relationship, which is discussed further in the following chapter in exploring the ongoing development of Elias' civilising process. This co-dependence subsequently requires the strengthening of temporal regulation, which I will go on to discuss in chapter eight.

In my discussion around the relationship between the commodification of time in relation to the commodification of body/service/experience, I have suggested that time acts as a boundary of the experience. Time is given the value, rather than the experience. The experience is temporal in nature, therefore, and I have shown the ways that, through its commodification, time is used to manipulate the experience and intensity of labour. This is one function of temporal regulation; which are discussed further in the remaining chapters.

7. Co-Dependence: The Civilising of the Sex Industry

For the purpose of producing and consuming in the sex industry the sex worker and client seek to co-produce a sexual and intimate experience in negotiation of the contexts of their own structural and personal concerns. These negotiations are a site of struggle, as mentioned previously [6.4], and co-dependence does not precipitate equity. Some argue that clients are not reliant on the sex worker in the same way as sex workers are reliant on clients for income (O'Connell Davidson 1998). Brewis and Linstead question this, however, as "the client's dependency on the prostitute depends on the nature of the client's demands, the skills of the prostitute and the nature of competition on the sexual labour market" (1998:236). This could suggest a co-dependency; both client and sex worker are mutually dependent on the other for different reasons. For the sex worker, there is a financial imperative to their work, while the client requires commodified intimacy (van der Veen 2001). This interdependence facilitates the co-production of the experience, which I propose is symptomatic of a broader process of civilising, as defined by Elias (2000).

Elias' thesis (2000) documents how state formation influences behaviour and regulation in society. He tracks moves towards centralised power to coordinate larger chains of mutual dependence between those in an increasingly differentiated and individualised society. This relies on the self-regulation of impulses, which acts to reduce violence and risk, but also dampens pleasure. These shifting expectations are communicated and regulated tacitly and facilitate a gradual evolution:

Civilization...is set in motion blindly, and kept in motion by the autonomous dynamics of a web of relationships, by specific changes in the way people are bound to live together (Elias 2000:367).

In the preceding chapters I have hinted at some of the contexts in which these civilising changes occur in the sex industry. The relative legality of sex working alone; the enabling role of online technologies; and consumption practices encourage decentralisation and diversification, resulting in higher numbers of independent escorts, for example. This independence has the potential to increase vulnerability to dangers and violence, and independent sex workers are subsequently reliant on the communication of expectations and self-regulation of clients.

In this chapter, I identify a number of gradual contextual shifts for the sex industry which indicate a continued process of civilising. In reviewing the accounts of participants, I explore the role of co-production and differentiation [7.1], the effects of regulating impulses in an industry that relies upon emotions and pleasure [7.2], and sources of control and forms of communicating expectations [7.3]. The discussion then highlights how the civilising of the sex industry allows activities to occur in synchronicity with broader economic activities, which contributes to its mainstreaming [7.4]. Ultimately, this chapter argues that we are witnessing the civilising of sex industry [7.5], although this is an uneven process, which gives rise to conflict in the relationships between sex workers and clients.

7.1 Functional Differentiation in the Sex Industry

The co-production required for commodification processes undertaken in indoor sex work represents a division of responsibility as a result of differentiation. Social functions are divided between a greater number of actors and groups and this requires greater cooperation and the civilising of bonds. Here, I suggest there is evidence of this in two more dynamic contexts of the sex industry: the diversification of markets and the perceived distinctions between commodified and non-commodified sex and intimacy.

7.1.1 Differentiation of Roles: Diversification of the Sex Industry

Elias (2000:367) traces how “social functions have become more and more differentiated under the pressure of competition”. Mirrored in the sex industry, the increased competition as a result of growing numbers of sex workers [as documented in section 5.3.4], leads to growing differentiation which can be seen in the diversification of services and sex work markets. Sex workers increasingly offer specialisms to appeal to the diverse tastes of clients and attract custom in a saturated market. This also functions to differentiate roles: clients are expected to seek the appropriate sex worker according to their motivations and preferences. This requires greater communication between sex workers and clients in order for clients to identify the specific experiences they seek:

If it starts becoming an ongoing conversation... These guys who are just like, *"I've read your profile. I'm just wondering can I just ask, do you do I don't know anal?" "No" "How much is it for hour?"* Block, delete, because it's all there (Gabrielle).

You do get the ones that look for a specific type of service and you do get the ones who think you're all one and the same and they might think it's gonna be PSE when it's not, so you do get the ones who don't read your profile but come because they like the look of you in your pictures and think they can do what they want with you when they get here, but they get turned away (Claire).

This denotes additional responsibility to the client as it demands his time investment: the sex worker has invested time in producing the information and there is an equal expectation that the client engages with it prior to contact. Clients who fail to fully prepare before contacting sex workers are disregarded, thus tacitly communicating to clients how they must self-regulate their demands, boundaries and temporal behaviours. The expected time investment of researching profiles demonstrates how power is negotiated temporally through the encounter. Clients who fail to invest the time required to read the profiles before contacting the sex worker produce an imbalance of power: the sex worker invests time in producing the information, but the client fails to invest time in receiving it, which portrays an unbalanced relationship where the client does not feel the investment is necessary.

This expectation of reciprocity is symptomatic of the increased cooperation between client and sex worker: the co-dependence suggested by Elias (2000). Participants subsequently felt that the proportion of time investment is more heavily skewed towards the responsibility of the worker, but most had tactics for dealing with this to achieve a more balanced time investment and subsequently redress the power imbalance and increase the possibility for a successful experience:

You learn to cut through the bullshit pretty quickly. I have a three-question rule. You can ask me any three questions and after that you're gonna get referred back to my profile 'cause you've not read it (Claire).

I try to have a three-text rule - it doesn't always work, to try and get them to say who they are, how old they are, where they're from and what do they want... it's trying to find a way of saying I'm really busy and happy to answer any questions, just put them all in one message. I can't do text tennis because I'm busy (Deborah).

The requirement for greater regulation to protect the time of the sex worker and demand equal, reciprocal time investment of the client represents the increased sharing of responsibilities between the actors involved in the sex industry transaction; a greater differentiation of roles. Elias writes, “as more and more people must attune their conduct to that of others, the web of actions must be organized more and more strictly and accurately, if each individual action is to fulfil its social function. Individuals are compelled to regulate their conduct in an increasingly differentiated, more even and more stable manner” (2000:367). For a client to engage in sexual services and subsequently co-produce an experience, he must demonstrate willingness and ability to self-regulate his temporal behaviour and invest time in learning the expectations on his behaviour.

7.1.2 Differentiation of Commodified and Non-Commodified Sex

As highlighted previously [6.2.1], the commodification of sex and intimacy is often surrounded by moral objections on the basis of the negative consequences of commodification (Anderson 1993; Radin 1996). The account I offered [6.2.3], however, suggested that experiences of labour and commodification processes are far more complex than these interpretations, and I argued that labour can simultaneously incite enjoyment and displeasure, and be both chosen and exploitative (van der Veen 2001). Sex workers choose to commodify temporally bound sexual and intimate experiences and this is beneficial to both sex workers and clients. I subsequently suggested that objections to the commodification of commercial sex were predominantly moral and ideological in nature, which is not reflected in the accounts of participants.

Brewis and Linstead (1998) suggest that tensions occur because sex work involves the commodification of something that is not fully commodified: sexuality. Sexuality represents something that is viewed within private time-space, and sex work therefore crosses borders between private and public, economic time-space. In this view, sex and intimacy is still held in separate regard to other commodities, which the authors argue causes tension in the temporal organisation of sex work. This interpretation is limited, however, because there are countless goods, services and experiences which undergo commodification in specific circumstances but not in others (childcare, for example). Brewis and Linstead (1998) suggest that temporal

understandings are different for sex workers and clients because of the tensions resulting from blurred boundaries between private and public time-space. For clients it represents intimate time-space and thus 'feminine time' while for sex workers it represents 'masculine work time'. This fails to question heteronormative values and subsequently presents outdated prejudice inherent in promoting work as masculine and intimacy as feminine.

Quite conversely, Bernstein argues that client narratives reveal a distinction between sex and intimacy in the private and public realm, which complicates accounts which view the commodification of sex in this way. She demonstrates that these interpretations:

Rest upon the implicit premise that prostitution as an institution caters to needs that would preferably and more fulfillingly be satisfied within an intimate relationship in the private sphere of the home. Yet for many sexual clients, the market is experienced as enhancing and facilitating desired forms of nondomestic sexual activity. This is true whether what the client desires is a genuine but emotionally bounded intimate encounter, the experience of being pampered and 'serviced,' participation in a wide variety of brief sexual liaisons, or an erotic interlude that is 'more real and human' than would be satisfying oneself alone. The by now platitudinous insight that sexuality has been 'commodified' – and by implication, diminished – like everything else in late capitalism does not do justice to the myriad ways in which the spheres of public and private, intimacy and commerce, have interpenetrated one another and been mutually transformed, making the postindustrial consumer marketplace a prime arena for securing varieties of interpersonal connection that circumvent this duality (2007:120).

Here, Bernstein confirms a duality between sexual desire in public and private relationships, but challenges moral objections to their separation. The evidence presented within this thesis instead contributes to an understanding of how intimate and commercial activity; and the public and private occurs simultaneously through varying practices.

It is therefore worth developing these perspectives further in light of the evident differentiation processes within the civilising of the sex industry. In 'Western' society, the civilising process impacts the comfort and openness with which sexual behaviours are acted upon and discussed in all relationships (Elias 2000), meaning

that sexual behaviours increasingly become regulated and separated from public life. While sex is traditionally considered private and belonging to marriage, the regulatory functions on sexual behaviour may also influence these 'private' relationships because partners do not feel comfortable making requests of their partners which could 'offend'. The opportunity to explore potentially selfish or risqué sexual desires within commercial relationships could, in some circumstances, signify a differentiation of functions between commercial and non-commercial sex, therefore.

The differentiation of social functions also has implications for commodified sex and intimacy more generally. Bernstein's (2007) and Prasad's (1999) research demonstrates how clients specifically seek sex and intimacy in commodified form. Participants, too, reported that clients indicated differentiation between the experiences gained through commercial and non-commercial relationships:

I do hear a lot of men say that they couldn't ask for the things they want with their wives because they don't see each other that way (Isobel).

This somewhat problematises comparisons of sex work to marriage contracts (see Pateman 1988) because of the different relations and expectations negotiated in each of these circumstances. While the sex industry advertises experiences such as the girlfriend experience, the behaviour, environment and sexual acts differ to those found in non-commercial *girlfriend relationships*. It is more an imitation of those relationships which allow for a greater focus on the purchaser and consumer and potential opportunity for further experimentation. These key differences challenge arguments which centre on sex work being inherently exploitative through comparisons to the marriage contract because sex workers do not fulfil the same function as wives and girlfriends. The sex industry experience is thus an additional form of sexuality, rather than a replacement for non-commercial relationships.

For some clients, the differentiation of the social functions of commercial and non-commercial sex could be interpreted as an opportunity to experiment outside the confines of genuine relationships, where there may be more fear of causing offence and potentially damaging longer-term relationships. In some ways, then, the regulation imposed, enacted and resisted during the sex work encounter is more easily managed as expectations and rules of conduct are expressly communicated. As

such, time spent in the sex work encounter represents an opportunity to indulge in clearly bounded pleasure. There are issues arising from the balance of pleasure and regulation, however, which has specific implications in the sex industry.

7.2 Controlling Emotion and Impulsiveness: The Case of Regular Relationships

The increasing differentiation of social roles contributes to greater interdependence, which demands greater regulation to encourage cooperation and safety. This acts to temper impulses, including pleasure:

Life becomes in a sense less dangerous, but also less emotional or pleasurable, at least as far as the direct release of pleasure is concerned (Elias 2000:375).

My aim here is to explore how changing bonds and subsequent tempering of emotions impact the sex industry, particularly as it relies on the elicitation of pleasure through the commodification of sex and intimacy. To do this, I explore evidence related to relationships with regular clients – those who repeatedly visit the same sex worker – because the duration of the relationship often calls for extended emotion work from the sex worker and incites deeper emotional connections from clients. Heightened emotions call for greater regulation, and this relationship thus provides an interesting case study into the dynamic of emotional engagement and regulation.

7.2.1 Safety Through Regularity

The benefits to securing regular clients include gaining a more secure income and a greater degree of safety. Of course, there are exceptions to this where regular clients' behaviour change, yet all participants reported appreciating the security, financial or otherwise, brought through regular clientele:

If you're doing it full-time you want to be known for doing something good because that's what gets you the regular clients and that makes you more money. It's bigger picture stuff, like any small business. You can't do this job for a long time without having your regulars, they're the ones that when its quiet will tide you over, they're your bread and butter bookings (Claire).

It makes things safer for me because the majority of my clients are now not randoms but people I can trace on forums or regulars... You expect if somebody spends that much time with you that to a certain extent although it is a business relationship that they are going to treat you like a decent person (Natalie).

Sex workers looked to develop regular clientele to regulate for their own safety and security, which is offered by means of familiarity and developed co-dependent relationships.

While client narratives were not sought, participants also expected that, among other motivations, regular clients seek committed relationships (Sanders 2008a) for the depth of relationship and security of familiarity. Participants demonstrated an understanding of the risks with engaging in sex work for clients, also, including risk of crimes, arrest and the inability to guarantee quality:

Sometimes with your regulars it's just a question of if they feel comfortable with you (Claire).

He knows that he's coming to a safe place, he's not going to get jumped on, robbed, or dick him about in services. I'm not high. I'm not drunk. He knows exactly what he's going to get at the other end as well (Gabrielle).

Sex workers and clients can both seek familiarity through regular meetings, and while there are a range of motivations, safety is mentioned as a factor for both parties. In seeking out these relationships at the expense of shorter-term arrangements which are more open to risks, both contribute to the regulation necessary for growing civilising of bonds. As I now go on to discuss, screening clients and workers for safety is a form of regulating impulses, which is necessary for co-dependence. They screen out risk by seeking familiarity.

7.2.2 Regulating Impulses, Emotions and Pleasure

The frequency of visits from longer-term clients causes the relationship to extend and deepen through some form of shared history which is developed through time. Longer-term relationships stimulate a deepening of emotional connection, and in some ways the boundary between the commodified and genuine aspects of the

relationship can become blurred (Carbonero and Gómez Garrido 2017). The nature of simulated familiarity, which is enacted temporally [6.5], is altered through this extended interaction: with time, the familiarity becomes genuinely felt rather than simulated through behaviours. This can be beneficial to the client in his pursuit of authenticity, but it can also be problematic, because of the desired bounding of authenticity that is sought (Bernstein 2007; Prasad 1999), and the necessary regulation to maintain civilising, co-dependent relationships:

I think a lot of them are in a boring marriage, in actual fact, that want an affair without the complications. You do end up building up a longer-term rapport because you've got to (Claire).

Some of them can have a girlfriend or they have a wife at home, and they see them every day – they don't then want another one. Some of them make themselves go elsewhere because they don't want that attachment because then it goes into their everyday thoughts (Natalie).

Clients desire bounded authenticity in which it is possible to detach from and return to everyday life, which is a potential reason Natalie cites for regular clients ceasing custom. Clients often seek escapism and fantasy, but they do not necessarily want the boundary between their escapism and everyday life to blur. In this way, clients self-regulate their dependence upon the sex worker. Clients self-impose limits on the authenticity garnered through their consumption of experiences.

While the majority of clients enjoy the bounds of the commodified relationship, there are those who push at the boundaries in an attempt to secure greater pleasure from intensified authenticity. All participants noted problems where boundaries had become blurred:

Sometimes they can get a bit emotionally invested and you have to back off a bit, and they don't like it because they think it should be going somewhere (Natalie).

In these cases, clients do not exhibit the self-regulation of emotional impulses required of them within an increasingly interdependent relationship. Natalie describes 'backing off a bit' as a way of resisting the impulses of clients and enforcing regulation on their behaviours. This demonstrates how sex workers also regulate client behaviours to maintain professional boundaries; that regulation occurs

internally and externally to the individual. It is also reflective of the resistance to, and unevenness of, civilising relationships, which I will discuss in more detail later [7.5].

Sex workers, too, may prefer to avoid longer-term commercial relationships to self-regulate attachment and avoid the deepening of bonds:

I don't pretend it's any sort of a relationship. It's a more intimacy thing, or a more intimacy-type dialogue. I don't - If any of them ask if I'm in any sort of a relationship I just say I'm with somebody. I never encourage that sort of thing. Because some of them, if you get into stuff like that... I've seen it with Jane quite a lot and my other mate Tina gets it quite a lot because they are single and because they say that they are single it encourages the weirdos to private number you and text all the time (Lucy).

I don't really like to make regulars. I would prefer to... I have been offered just recently by this one man to meet up twice a week because he is here for business and just wants somebody to go out for drinks and then back up to the hotel. And I thought in a business sense that would have me sorted out and I wouldn't have to do anything else but actually I thought I don't want to meet him that often, because I find it harder the more you get to know a guy. I find that first meeting really easy; it's fresh and you're getting to know each other, but then the more you meet it's harder and you're actually getting to know more about them and stuff, and I find that more difficult (Isobel).

Sex workers and clients self-regulate the emotional attachment which can occur in longer-term commercial relationships. The relationship must be carefully managed to simulate 'authentic' feelings associated with longer-term relationships, but to maintain the boundaries of the commodified relationship. Sex workers not only have to regulate the feelings and behaviours of clients within the appointment and over longer-term relationships, but they also need to regulate their own emotional investment. Existing evidence demonstrates the regulation of clients' emotional investment (Milrod and Weitzer 2012; Sanders 2008b), and also posits sex workers as distancing their true identities from their working ones in order to maintain emotional boundaries at work (Sanders 2005a). Yet this thesis presents the opportunity for a more nuanced account of how sex workers use emotional intelligence to manage their own emotional impulses while at work. This recognises the ways in which sex workers experience and use emotions in the undertaking of

work, as opposed to existing accounts which suggest emotions are somehow abandoned through a separation of 'working and personal lives'.

I have touched upon the forms of temporal regulation that are used to maintain and bound these relationships, which will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter. These relationships are regulated to screen out the overly emotional, as well as self-regulate emotional investment, which is symptomatic of the need to regulate impulsive and emotional behaviours in a civilising society (Elias 2000). Regular relationships are sometimes felt to be safer, as well as holding other benefits of familiarity, such as the deepening of understanding and shared history. This is regulated to avoid the blurring of the commodified relationship, however, which potentially tempers the emotions and authenticity of relationships.

7.2.3 Inciting Pleasure While Screening Out Emotions

Familiarity in regular relationships reduces risk but also potentially reduces the excitement of variety in relationships and experiences that can be purchased:

Why on earth would they want to keep seeing the same lass week in week out? Personally, I find it a bit odd anyway, like if I was a punter, I'd like to see lots of different girls. That's part of the fun (Claire).

Those involved in the sex industry relationship potentially sacrifice an element of pleasure through new experiences for the sake of safety, therefore, although without speaking directly to clients it remains unclear how much pleasure they gain through familiarity. This is potentially a site of conflict because the sex industry exists to incite emotions and pleasure while tempering them through regulation. This has implications for the modes of regulation which are used in the industry, which will be discussed further in the following chapter. The escorting experience must be subject to careful and unobtrusive regulation while also stimulating and simulating emotions and pleasure expected within sexual and intimate relationships.

For this reason, there is a need to maintain some aspect of novelty and to provide 'fresh' experiences, as "an effort is needed to create an authentic experience every time anew. Escorts are under constant pressure to innovate, to incite in the client, the enthusiasm and surprise of a first romantic encounter. They must work harder to

surprise the regular client, to keep his interest and loyalty” (Carbonero and Gómez Garrido 2017:11). This is typical of experience commodities, whereby “experience staggers must constantly refresh their experiences – change or add elements that keep the offering new, exciting, and worth paying money to experience all over again” (Pine and Gilmore 1999:95).

Sex workers attempt to address the shortfalls in pleasure by innovating ‘fresh’ experiences for their clients to co-produce and consume:

You’ve got to keep it going cos otherwise lads will stop being your regular (Claire).

I think with a regular you've got more of an idea of what they enjoy, but it would be easy to get complacent and you can't get complacent. But if they're only wanting a girlfriend experience then it's difficult to make it different. I suppose it's being aware of what you wore last time, lingerie is different, music is different, what you're wearing to meet them at the door is different (Deborah).

Sex workers invent novel experiences within a familiar scenario, maintaining the energy of a newer relationship while continuing an ongoing dialogue to hint at familiarity. For this, sex workers ensure they remember clients' details to maintain the ongoing dialogue:

I write their age, their job, if they’ve given me a name, where they live. I just used to add to it and write down the key things that they’d told me, but now I would just remember it. Like this guy on Sunday I don’t write everything down because I’d just remember it. I always write about it afterwards (Isobel).

In my other diary for this year, what I started doing is writing down what they liked, what they wanted type of thing, just so that I know for when they come back (Gabrielle).

Four participants (Isobel, Natalie, Gabrielle and Deborah) reported writing notes to remind them of key information about regular clients to produce continuation in their dialogue. Other participants did not mention using notes, although Lucy and Amanda also spoke of remembering details and picking up on them in future appointments. Isobel's increasing reliance on memory rather than note-taking could be suggestive of two possibilities: firstly, becoming increasingly skilful in the managed emotional connections she is able to produce with clients, but also potentially a shift in the relationships with regular clients which means she

remembers information rather than using notes to remember. This could be reflective of a more reciprocal relationship whereby there is greater level of connection, but Isobel sees relatively fewer clients and it may thus be easier to remember details for each of them.

There is tension, therefore, between the demands within a consumer culture which emphasises the consumption of 'fresh' and 'exciting' experiences and the requirements of regulated co-dependence within a civilising economy. Clients look to hedonistically engage in experiences, while also required to self-regulate their emotions and impulsive behaviour, demonstrating the range of structural and personal concerns that are reflexively negotiated in consumption (Manyukhina 2018).

The effects of civilising thus contribute to the frustration documented by Campbell (1987) whereby consumers are unable to fulfil their desires. Campbell (1987) describes how consumers are constantly longing: we are taught to want more and encouraged to always seek the next product, service or experience we wish to consume. In the sex industry experience, clients search through online profiles in search of the 'perfect' experience that matches their desires. Sex workers build brands to tempt clients via their online profiles but also ensure they clearly delineate the acts and styles of experience available to clients. This leads to frustration, though, because the control demanded to regulate such a relationship tempers the pleasure that can be garnered from it, thus never matching expectations.

Somewhat similarly, Elias also refers to a process whereby "what is lacking in everyday life is created in dreams, in books and pictures" (2000:375). The imagination of the consumer is limited by the regulations imposed for the civilising of bonds, which, for Elias, leads to "perpetual restlessness and dissatisfaction" (2000:376) and is comparable to the endless wanting Campbell finds in consumption behaviours. This acts as further evidence for the struggles between sex workers and clients as they negotiate processes of commodification. This is explored further in section 7.5 in relation to the other features of civilising in the relationship. I firstly continue to identify additional characteristics of the civilising relationship and the conditions which facilitate its development.

7.3 Centralised Power: Sex Work and the Internet

Another contributing development to the civilising process of states, as proposed by Elias (2000), is the centralisation and monopolisation of power to govern increasingly differentiated social roles. Here, I explore the role of the internet in contributing to this centralisation of power in the sex industry. The internet both facilitates and communicates the increasing differentiation and decentralisation of sex work and diversification of markets, for example. While moves to independent working allows sex workers greater control over their work, therefore, online technology has the potential to increasingly monopolise control externally, especially in lieu of safe and supportive state regulation.

7.3.1 *Setting Expectations, Defining Rules and Instigating Self-Regulation*

Online information about sex markets enable a more informed clientele. Potential clients view various messages about the expectations of their behaviour when they seek services and book appointments through online portals (Horswill and Weitzer 2016). In the previous chapter [6.1.1], I demonstrated how the internet provides a useful resource for sex workers managing their businesses online, communicating expectations, and screening for suitability and safety. These technologies also potentially add to conflicts, however, as they arguably have contributed to an expectation of instantaneous access in our consumer culture:

I think in general clients have changed. I think there's a lot more of a *now* culture. When I started guys would ring me for a booking tomorrow or they'd ring in the morning for a booking in the afternoon. Now they'll ring and ask if you're free for a booking now. And you'll go '*Can I at least have ten minutes to get ready?*' and they'll say '*No, I need it now*'. It's very much that mentality. It's partly because everything is on bloody apps now, so it seems like everything can happen now and they don't think when they're horny, blood seeps into their bloody head, they're not thinking straight and it's that sort of generation where everything is now (Claire).

Changing attitudes to consumer-supplier relationships have arguably been driven by the internet, which accommodates increased choice and instantaneous access. These values promote an imbalance of power in favour of consumers, which is certainly the case when examining the organisational structure and focus of website hosts towards

favouring their clients' needs above those of the sex worker; and underscored by a myth of customer sovereignty (Korczynski 2013). This forms one context shaping consumer motivations, although participant narratives confirm it as a significant one in shaping interactions.

As a result, many participants noticed increasing demand when they indicated that they were '*available now*' – an option provided on the predominant advertising site, but that they missed this trade if they failed to frequently indicate immediate availability:

Because I don't show as available, I don't really get that anymore... it was great because it was about £400 once a month (Amanda).

Clients are screened according to their ability to engage and self-regulate, although the success of co-dependence is somewhat problematised by the immediacy increasingly expected by some. As a result, this sometimes challenges the controls sex workers impose on their time at work. Online communications can thus represent a site of competing interests in the expectations communicated by sex workers and clients. A sex worker who advertises as '*available now*' is evidently more willing to engage in this style of consumption and appreciates the increased earnings it can attract, although others prefer to sacrifice additional income to maintain greater control on time through limiting clients' impulsive consumption behaviours.

These trends in consumer culture are emphasised in the online reviews of clients. Several websites offer clients the opportunity to provide feedback and detailed reviews of their experiences with sex workers. Most often, there is an opportunity to provide a quantified rating or indicate whether the experience was positive, neutral or negative, with the further opportunity to provide feedback on specific areas, such as appearance, environment, services and behaviours. The tendency to review online is widespread across the economy and this, together with the ability to remain anonymous online, means that sex work clients can post reviews about their sex work encounters as they would with other services and experiences. This provides another example of the way in which sex work has aligned with mainstream businesses. That said, evidence shows that only a minority of customers write online reviews, although this does not necessarily diminish their influence as online forums

are still widely used in locating sex workers and arranging the encounter (Sanders et al 2018).

Online reviews allow consumers to voice their opinions and the internet enables consumers to interact with and influence the production and delivery of commodities (Pettinger 2011). As such, they still hold considerable weight for the earning potential of sex workers. This is evidenced somewhat by Natalie, who feels that online reviews are an attempt by clients to regain control in the transaction:

I think that's why the atmosphere on certain sites like that is the way it is: because they want to believe that they are the ones in control because they're the paying customer (Natalie).

Potential clients can engage with the feedback to determine whether the sex worker meets his expectations, and Pettinger (2011) argues that the reviews of these gendered exchanges judge the sex worker on what the consumer feels is good service based on the worker's ability to meet norms of femininity and the norms of service provision within consumer culture. This in turn constructs expectations for all clients based on their interpretations of the reviews. Online technologies are therefore used for sex workers and clients to communicate and set expectations for one another. While sex workers set out the expectations on their online profiles from the onset of contact, reviews enable clients to respond with expectations of their own.

7.3.2 Online Spaces as Forms of Centralised Power

Internet sites allow sex workers and clients to communicate, advertise and purchase services. Others have noted how these sites can contribute to safety through providing an avenue for communication of rules and expectations (Horswill and Weitzer 2016; Sanders et al 2018), as well as adding to exploitation through the charging of fees and prioritising the needs of clients over sex workers (Cunningham et al 2017). Further, these internet sites provide a site of regulation themselves, whereby expectations are set, rules are communicated, desired behaviour can be praised, and grievances can be raised.

Not only do we see sex workers and clients regulate themselves and each other via online sources, but the hosts of such sources impose regulation themselves. Lucy

describes how website hosts and moderators influence the way clients and sex workers can interact:

Before, you could go on forums and chat shit, but you could flirt on forums then, but they don't let you flirt on them anymore, which I think makes them really boring. You know, what are we supposed to talk about now, we'll just talk about the football then! (Lucy).

In mediating sex worker and client relationships, regulation is instigated by an external source, which may indeed help with the balance between regulation and pleasure, as the regulation is enforced externally, leaving the sex worker to focus more on the production of pleasure. The boundaries placed on the relationships between sex workers and clients by internet providers as a third party provides a civilising function among sex workers and clients, therefore. As Elias (2000:372) writes; "through the formation of monopolies of force, the threat which one person represents for another is subject to stricter control and becomes more calculable. Everyday life is freer of sudden reversals of fortune". Also, however, this regulation reduces the pleasure garnered from such interactions, and Lucy here talks about a reduction in enjoyment in her online interactions with clients since online moderators adjusted and increased the regulation imposed upon them.

With the growing differentiation and diversification of the industry, this centralisation of power is arguably very important and necessary, although it does open opportunities for exploitation which require monitoring [see section 5.3.2 for previous example of discriminatory powers exercised by hosting sites]. The danger in this is the lack of regulation imposed on online hosting of material. Yet while online advertising sites, and thus their owners, may shift some power away from the sex worker or client, in acting as a central power they also provide a mediatory role through offering routes for communication and setting rules and expectations, which act to temper emotional and violent impulses. The internet thus plays a crucial role in the civilising of the industry by acting as a centralised source of power, which is vital in the absence of a decriminalised policy model which recognises sex work as work and communicates behavioural expectations formally.

7.4 Synchronisation

The internet also provides an important function in the synchronisation of interdependent actors in the industry. The differentiation of roles and civilising of bonds requires greater regulation to synchronise activities. There was significant evidence of participants attempting to synchronise their work time with the leisure time of clients. This also required synchronisation with broader economic structures and activities because of the ways in which clients' work and income were organised. This demonstrates the integration and interdependency of the sex industry with the broader economy. There are tensions created through these processes, however, which I go on to discuss.

7.4.1 Synchronisation with Mainstream Economy

Participants' accounts shared in section 5.2.2 indicated that the flexibility of the work is a motivator to work in the industry. The organisation of sex work means it is flexible in the times worked and how sex workers can respond to demand. This is facilitated somewhat by communication technologies which allow and promote constant availability (Wajcman 2015), as this allows sex workers to attract custom at any time of day. Sex workers are afforded autonomy in comparison to employed workers and can subsequently determine their own working time.

This is not to say that sex workers remain impervious to mainstream schedules, however. Although they have the option to forego the traditional working day, workers need to ensure their availability coincides with demand. As most clients are employed in mainstream employment (Sanders 2008a; 2008b), this contributes to how sex workers structure their day also. As Elias writes, clock and calendar times "serve people as a way of regulating their behaviour in relation to each other and themselves" (1992:2). The necessary synchronisation between sex worker and client, and subsequent alignment with the mainstream economy could contribute to evidence to demonstrate the mainstreaming of the sex industry.

There is evidence that sex work is organised according to the temporal boundaries of mainstream employment. By planning their working day around the working day of potential clients, sex workers can maximise their income:

Lots of people seem to assume sex workers are vampires and I'm not. You get the guys on the way to work. It's a period of time when they can be unobserved, so I start usually around eight-ish and I don't like doing anything after around eight in the evening because pubs are chucking out. Once it gets into the evening you just get the drunk people. I will keep the phone on because occasionally you get the '*I just got to the hotel, I'm here on business*'. But I won't do in-calls because they'll likely be drunk. So, it's been trial and error, but generally between eight and eight. I don't really think – agency girls work all night – I don't really think you're missing that much... It's quite easy for people to build in half-an-hour or an hour because they can say things like I missed the train. I would say four until eight, it's the busiest but also when I work best. And you usually get people on their way home from work. I mean it's been quiet today, but it's August and I wasn't expecting it to be too busy. Usually there's a lunchtime rush as well but that's a bit of a pain because you're trying to work out how you're going to have your lunch. The four until eight one you often get nice clients as well because they kind of, I don't know, because they have lives and they're kind of fitting you into the way their lives are structured (Amanda).

By working at times that coincide with mainstream working hours sex workers also ensure they attract clients who have particular mainstream jobs. These clients are not only more likely to have a level of disposable income from work, but also a certain level of work time flexibility afforded to those in higher income brackets. Through working at times that match mainstream working hours, sex workers can screen, and effectively gentrify, their clientele. Of course, many women do still work in the evening and night, and two participants mentioned other colleagues who chose to work in the evenings. Participants did indicate that those colleagues had to deal more often with more troublesome clientele, but they were comfortable in doing so.

Working during mainstream working hours also means that independent sex workers – who increasingly work from privately-rented flats as a result of legal attention to brothels and the enabling capacity of online technology – can work more discreetly at times that their neighbours also work:

I can't afford to have men traipsing up and down. I've got the world's nosiest neighbour (Gabrielle).

I would never see more than one person a day because of neighbours (Mandy).

I stop working at about eight o'clock... And again, it's just because of the neighbours more than anything and people coming up and down (Deborah).

While independent sex workers have the freedom to define their working hours, especially those working alone, they are still influenced by mainstream time because of the timetables of those around them. The move towards working independently in privately rented premises means that sex work is often conducted in apartments or the sex worker's own home. As sex work happens in the vicinity of other residences, whose occupants will predominantly work in the mainstream economy, sex workers choose to work during the same hours of their neighbours' work to maintain discretion. As such, even those who have more control over the organisation of their time are still constrained by mainstream timetables and, therefore, "as long as we remain part of a society that is structured to the time of clocks and calendars our activities and interaction with others can only escape its pervasive hold to a very limited extent" (Adam 1990:107). The requirement of this regulation is a result of the co-dependence the sex industry has – not only between clients and sex workers – but the interconnectedness it has with broader social and economic life.

That this form of sex work is predominantly conducted in line with traditional mainstream working hours suggests a 'gentrification' of sex work more broadly, which complements the requirements of a civilising process. Not only are areas associated with street sex work subject to gentrification measures (Hubbard 2004), indoor sex work also undergoes similar changes; enabled through modern technologies and motivated by brothel closures. As such, this form of sex work should potentially be recognised less as forming part of the night-time economy and more in line with a *daytime* economy. Indeed, the working hours of participants of this study are certainly different to the findings of Brewis and Linstead (1998), as they surmise that "prostitution is inimically affected by the passage of natural time in that the busiest periods in the industry are at night, but also by cyclical time in that human sexual activity is known to increase in spring and summer" (1998:225). While sex work continues to occur at night, also, I am highlighting that there is a general move towards daytime work in independent indoor markets because these hours are more sociable for workers, they enable work to be conducted while children are at school or in childcare, and also simultaneously attracting a more affluent client.

As for Brewis and Linstead's (1998) claims regarding sexual activity in spring and summer, participants indicated that they struggled to identify patterns in increases in demand, although many hoped to identify seasonal patterns to financially prepare. While some participants felt that they had periods which were regularly busier, these often did not match the periods of busyness reported by other participants, suggesting that consumption in the sex industry is not generally seasonably predictable:

We've debated this... It's a bank holiday, it's a school holiday, People are back at work, the sun is shining, the cricket is on. There's no rhyme or reason to it. Sometimes it can be a bit quiet because it's holiday times or if the sun's out and it's beer and barbecue weather, but then, you can be really busy. So, there's no there's no logic to it (Deborah).

I'd say you get a lot of half-an-hours around Christmas because they're fitting you in with doing their Christmas shopping and things. Quick blow job and then back to it (Claire).

I find I get more people contacting me in the summer, starting from May onwards. I find the bit before Christmas not very lucrative; December is not very lucrative for me (Isobel).

I've been told this by other escorts that in the summer holidays every year everything dies a death because obviously men can't get away from their families in the summer holidays and people are saving for their holidays as well (Natalie).

I definitely don't believe in the pre-Christmas being busy. I don't think generally there are huge difference. August is always a bit quieter because people are on holiday, January is always quieter because people are skint, which I think generally in any bar work or shop work those times of the year are always quieter but other than that, no (Mandy).

While this unpredictability signifies a level of income insecurity, it also questions the extent to which sex industry activity corresponds to external events. While some participants find they have specific busier periods, overall there is a lack of pattern. These findings may reflect economic conditions of unpredictability more generally but may also result from a diversification in the population as well as a diversification in the sex industry, where different experiences may be sought throughout the year. There is, therefore, an increased need for civilising bonds within a co-dependent economy with unpredictable trade.

This is an area of conflict between sex workers and clients, because sex workers seek some stability in income but, in doing so, are reliant on the custom of clients. Participants have attempted to form temporal understandings and recognise patterns in client demand to weather this unpredictability. These attempts at temporal organisation are necessary for successful economic activity, particularly when there is significant emphasis on *productive* time. In a capitalist economy which demands predictability and reliability, sex workers attempt to achieve some reliability in their businesses to follow these principles.

Comparatively, clients – among a range of concerns (Manyukhina 2018) – act within a hedonistic consumer culture (Campbell 1987), which encourages instantaneous responses to spontaneous desires [6.5], which is facilitated by online technologies [3.2.2]. The values of such a culture are shaped and reinforced by clients' practices and, in turn, influence them. While sex workers wish to organise their work time, therefore, consumers do not necessarily require their consumption to be temporally organised in the same way. They are encouraged to consume according to their immediate desires, or so they have come to expect within this consumer culture. Of course, there are restrictions to this consumption since they also have time commitments for work, family and relationships, and limitations on their incomes, for example. These motivations cannot be predictable to the extent that sex workers need for income reliability. While sex workers attempt to secure a reliable income through advertising, interacting with clients on online forums and touring to work in new locations, sex work is essentially a fundamentally different commodity to water, food, or heat, for example, in that it is reliant upon the sporadic desires of clients rather than a constant and indispensable need. That said, humans do innately seek interaction and intimacy and by marketing their experiences in a way that appeals to this human need, sex workers potentially position themselves in a market which offers more opportunity for constant renewal.

7.4.2 Tensions in Synchronising

While sex workers attempt to maximise their income by working at times that coincide with demand, they do also receive calls and messages outside of their working times:

I'll have somebody after six o'clock if I've seen them many times before and I know the work circumstances or whatever. Anybody who just randomly rang and said, "*Can I come at eight o'clock?*" Probably I wouldn't even answer the phone any case after that time. My priority is safety (Gabrielle).

I'll always keep those time limits. And all of them have other commitments and lives and families or whatever so they'll want to go. And I think late night bookings are the dodgiest anyway (Claire).

All participants expressed hesitance in responding to messages outside of their standard working times. This was predominantly for reasons of safety, as more undesirable clients requested services outside of these times, but there are also attempts to rebalance power by making the client wait, which I discuss further in chapter eight. If sex workers respond too quickly or keenly to the requests of clients it suggests far greater dependence on them, which can be problematic:

At the end of the day you don't want to go down that road, and a lot of girls make this mistake, of letting them call the shots and texting you all the time... So, you've got to keep that professional boundary where you don't contact blokes unless they contact you, 'cause it's also a lack of discretion... and it smacks of desperation (Claire).

Unanswered requests for appointments renders the client as *waiting*. As consumers this challenges the notion that the customer is sovereign (Korczynski 2013) and enables sex workers to practice power because the act of waiting reduces access to power (Adam 1990; Schwartz 1974). While the endless wanting of consumers encourages constant demand, and therefore the sex worker's constant availability, there are still many moments within the sex industry encounter where both sex worker and client wait for the other to respond. The sex worker waits for enquiries and bookings; and waits for clients to arrive or to cancel, while the client waits for responses from the sex worker and waits between booking the appointment and the commencement of the experience. Both are subjected to, and subject the other to, waiting. The practice and resistance to power associated with waiting and making others wait are experienced by both in turn and reflect the co-dependence of the relationship.

Indeed, this waiting and the time that passes between each stage of arranging and enacting the experience is evidence of the slow experience of direct sex work. Where consumers can increasingly receive immediate sexual services online without having

to book or wait for responses, direct indoor markets are not diminishing within the sex industry, with evidence to suggest that they are indeed growing, as facilitated by online technologies (Pitcher 2014; Sanders et al 2018). There is still demand for this slow form of sex work which requires both client and sex worker to synchronise in time and space. While online services do represent opportunities for time-space compression, therefore, the appetite for physical, direct sexual services counter this compression. This confirms Sharma's (2014) identification of multiple temporalities.

In many ways, independent, indoor sex workers attempt to ward off the constant consumption inherent in other areas of consumption. As Ritzer (2010:134) describes, "the ultimate objective in a capitalist economy...is to allow people to consume around the clock, every day of the year". While independent, indoor sex workers are encouraged to offer constant availability through modern technology, the participants of this study provide evidence that this is resisted to protect safety and maintain power and control over time.

7.4.3 Co-Dependence and Synchronicity

The physicality of these experiences requires cooperation and coordination from both sex worker and client. In achieving this, demand and supply increasingly become synchronised. This sometimes results in particular clients synchronising with particular sex workers, as Lucy discusses with two other sex workers she occasionally shares premises with:

Lucy: I'm busier during the week, whereas you're busier in the evenings and weekends, aren't you?

Tina: I've always been busier at the weekends.

Joanne: I've always been more evenings and weekends. I've done weekends where I've done ten bookings in a night.

Lucy: I think it's because they get used to what you work.

Tina: I was gonna say, I think its them...

Lucy: And I've always been more Monday to Friday, and I've done a ten till five and then I've done half ten till six.

Joanne: Whereas I can sit on my ass all day and take no bookings and then come four o'clock I'll go crazy and do 'em back to back, I'll do like four.

Tina: They get used to when you work.

Joanne: Yeah, so regulars know that I usually work during the evenings, so I'll get the evening trade.

While it can seem simply a case of supply and demand, this is not always an easy process and there is often struggle and negotiation in achieving synchronicity. Potential clients must familiarise themselves with the expectations and implicit rules set by sex workers and the industry norms more broadly. Clients do not instinctively align their behaviours, but experience and information displayed on online portals and profiles enable clients to align their expectations and behaviours with the norms of the industry.

Still, some clients do attempt to engage in the industry in ways that do not align with these norms and sex workers must deal with this lack of synchronisation while maintaining boundaries and control:

A lot of it is down to availability as well, some people want you to be there when they want you and don't understand that you can't do it (Natalie).

Participants continually turned down clients who failed to conform to their desired norms and this contributed significantly to their workloads. As well as outlining expectations on online profiles, therefore, sex workers also outline expectations in their interactions with clients, including the instances where they choose not to reply to client requests.

Participants indicated that they expended particular effort in identifying and developing cooperative relationships, therefore, whereby clients were able to synchronise their demands and behaviours with the norms of the industry and desires of the sex worker. As Deborah explains, this synchronisation can take some investment:

Be strict with it, because hopefully if gents get to know that's your working day, they'll plan their time hopefully. And a lot of them can arrange meetings or shift patterns or whatever to be able to do that if they really want to come (Deborah).

Sex workers and clients adapt in attempts to synchronise, both in the expectations of behaviour, as described in earlier sections, but also in the synchronisation of timings of availability and demand. This requires self-regulation according to the needs and demands of those chains of dependency, although there is evidence of conflict and tensions in achieving this. These efforts reflect the tacit nature of civilising, whereby changes to relationships, behaviours and public consciousness are historically

conditioned and learned over time (Elias 2000). This will form the focus of the ensuing discussion, as well as exploring the conflicts in such civilising relationships.

7.5 The Civilising of Sex Industry Relationships

Expectations of behaviour are learned gradually through interactions such as those described throughout the preceding discussion, which reflects Elias' (2000) civilising process in the ways knowledge is passed between people over time. This has relevance for the generational differences I have referred to throughout the thesis thus far. By generational, I refer primarily to the length of time worked in the industry and workers' subsequently willingness and ability to adapt to newer market conditions. There are apparent generational differences in the working practices of sex workers in terms of working intensity [5.3.3 and 5.3.4], communication with clients [5.3.2], services offered [6.3.1], and temporal boundaries [6.1.2]. Participants also report generational differences in the services requested [6.3.1] by clients. Participants consistently recounted conflicts arising from generational differences, either when working with other sex workers or in their experiences with clients.

In exploring the broader economic conditions surrounding sex work, I have documented the dynamic structural influences on a changing market of the sex industry. In doing so, I have demonstrated that within this change, there are also conflicts between the old and new. While this chapter has acted to provide evidence of the civilising of sex industry relations, the apparent tensions demonstrate this as an uneven process:

During the earlier stages of a civilizing process, one might say, conscience-formation tends to be patchy – extremely strong and severe in some respects or on some occasions, extremely weak and lenient in other respects. Characteristic of the restraint-pattern of civilizing processes at the later stages is the tendency to be temperate and even in almost all respects, on almost all occasions (Elias 1992:147).

I believe the evidence suggests ongoing change in the sex industry, therefore, whereby a civilising process is occurring in the earlier stages, rather than the later stages Elias describes above. We can see this in the complementary and diverging concerns of sex workers and clients, in consideration of their personal and structural concerns. This represents the unevenness of conscience formation.

Further, within this period of change, individuals adapt at different speeds and have varying levels of resistance according to their personal concerns. Participants' narratives include accounts of clients' displeasure at forms of regulation, which could be read as a dissatisfaction of controls which outweigh and are detrimental to the pleasure balance, for example. This signifies the unevenness of civilising, as a condition that is predominantly in a constant state of negotiation.

There are significant societal and cultural changes since Elias' time of writing, however, which raise important questions for the modes of information sharing and learning between people and through generations. In particular, the internet instigates immediate and asynchronous forms of communication, and I have attempted to show in this chapter how online resources contribute towards the setting of expectations and encouragement of self-regulation in a civilising sex industry. This arguably enables a 'faster' social change, therefore, which is perhaps too fast as experienced by participants. This may be the reason for tensions in generational differences, because rather than a gradual change as represented in Elias' civilising process (2000), the indoor sex industry has experienced rapid change as a culmination of recent social, cultural, legal, political and economic moves. As a result, sex workers and clients may find it more difficult to adapt to changing conditions, giving rise to further conflicts.

7.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I evidenced the civilising of the independent, indoor sex industry. Having traced the differentiation of roles evident in the diversification of the sex industry, I also suggested that this differentiation had implications for the roles of commodified and non-commodified relations. In doing so, I develop the theoretical discussion I offered in chapter six, showing how commodified sex and intimacy differs somewhat from sex and intimacy in non-commodified relationships and it is thus unhelpful and unnecessary to directly compare power relations between these relationships.

The commodification of sex industry relationships requires emotions to be elicited in a regulated manner, and these restrictions act to temper emotions and impulses. This

is a site of conflict in an industry which centres on pleasure, and I explored how sex workers tacitly manage this, but also how the centralisation of power and regulation from external sources partially alleviates this conflict. The synchronisation of regulation and pleasure; and work and leisure; are developed in the next chapter.

With the diversification of markets and increased need for auxiliary services such as online advertisers, but also photographers, accountants, and drivers, for example, there is an increased need for regulation to coordinate larger chains of interdependency. Further the sex industry is increasingly interdependent with the mainstream economy, and sex workers attempt to synchronise their work with the schedules of clients but also broader economic schedules. To achieve synchronisation and co-dependency, the role of the internet is omnipresent in the regulation of the industry, thus contributing to processes of civilising in the industry. There are also implications for the speed with which expectations are communicated through online resources, however, which potentially adds to the unevenness of the civilising process and the success at which it is accepted and adapted to.

As a consequence of this civilising, regulation is needed to manage mutual interdependencies and expectations. Elias suggests that time provides a key form of regulation. To date, however, there is no evidence around the forms of temporal regulation enacted within the sex industry exchange. The following chapter takes this uneven process of civilising as its backdrop and discusses informalised temporal controls as a reflection of the power relationships in the independent escorting market of the sex industry.

8. Power Asymmetries Negotiated Through Temporal Regulation

Building on the preceding discussions, this chapter specifically explores temporal regulation, self-restraint and resistance enacted by sex workers and clients through the commodification of time, sex and intimacy. These forms of temporal regulation are tacit to balance the competing and potentially contradictory needs of pleasure and regulation within the experience. Of course, as the previous chapter concluded, the process of civilising is unevenly experienced, which gives rise to tensions and conflicts within sex industry relationships. This is particularly evident in sex workers' and clients' attempts to self-regulate and regulate each other, which reveals a complex balance of asymmetrical power within civilising commercial sex relationships.

This also develops the ideas presented in chapter six, which introduced the centrality of the temporal to commodification processes. I begin by exploring how temporal controls are used to protect appointment duration [8.1], which is important as it demarcates the sex worker's labour time. The practice of rhythm and repetition enables measurement but also predictability, which plays an important function in the safety of sex workers. Building on this, I explore sex workers' concerns around temporal regulation [8.2], suggesting that temporal regulation not only helps to achieve the commodity, but allows the commodity to be produced and consumed in an efficient and productive way, while also controlling emotional engagement and dangers [8.3]. This has relevance for the tempering of impulses mentioned in the previous chapter [7.2].

Clients also act within a web of personal and structural concerns, and while I am not privy to these accounts, I use the interpretations of participants in exploring how these concerns conflict and complement those of sex workers [8.4]. I argue that both sex workers and clients are motivated by pressure to achieve productivity in their time, although for sex workers this productivity is related to work and profit, whereas clients seek productive leisure. With this in mind, I discuss the ways in which consumer culture may shape the actions of clients. Ultimately, I suggest that conflicts occur because of the incongruities of work and leisure time; and the negotiations of these conflicts within the context of interdependent commodity relations reveal asymmetrical power chances [8.5].

8.1 Informalisation of Controls: Regulating Temporal Boundaries

Elias suggests that the difference between successful and unsuccessful civilising is the extent to which conflicts are resolved in this process:

After all the pains and conflicts of this process, patterns of conduct well adapted to the framework of adult social functions are finally formed, an adequately functioning set of habits and at the same time – which does not necessarily go hand-in-hand with it – a positive pleasure balance. In the other, either the socially necessary self-control is repeatedly purchased, at a heavy cost in personal satisfaction (Elias 2000:378).

As I concluded in the previous chapter, the civilising of the indoor escorting market is uneven, as there are signs of conflict in the differing levels of acceptance and adaptation to change. This is particularly apparent in the tensions felt when temporal regulations imposed, enacted and resisted, especially in consideration of the – sometimes opposing – concerns of commodity production and consumption. Commodification processes involve negotiations between individuals acting in accordance with their own personal and structural concerns, and this is evident in the temporal regulation both attempt to impose on the relationship.

8.1.1 Work Time Boundaries: Clock-Watching

To protect the extent of their labour, sex workers rely on clock time to bound the appointment. This is challenged by clients who attempt to stretch the duration of their leisure by influencing the culture of timekeeping in online communities:

There's this whole culture on the internet where they're paying for your time but then you get praised if you give them extra time, they'll say, '*She's not a clock-watcher*'. Well, why shouldn't we be clock-watchers? You've paid for an hour so why are you expecting an hour and twenty minutes? (Natalie).

Clock-watching is a term used by clients to denote a negative quality enacted by the sex worker within the experience. Instead of monitoring the time passing, sex workers should instead be consumed by the experience to the extent that the consumers are, which relates to the need for authenticity described previously [6.4]. Clock-watching, therefore, is seen as antithetical to the mutuality of the experience.

Sex workers subsequently avoid references to time and create work spaces without physical demarcations of time (Reith 2013), to alter the perception of the appointment time as *timeless* and endless and promote the simulation of mutuality. In some ways this contributes to the perception of customer sovereignty, as he believes the time is devoted to him and is seemingly endless.

Yet this fails to recognise that, for sex workers, this experience is *work*, and the labour must be subject to temporal boundaries. Sex workers must manage the need for authenticity with the need to protect their labour, and the need of income may also problematise their ability to challenge this. Clock-watching is a term potentially used to challenge sex workers' protection over their labour and, thus, control the behaviour of sex workers through pressuring the worker to give extra time through simulated mutuality.

Successful civilising entails an effective balance of pleasure (Elias 2000), and sex workers subsequently must tacitly regulate appointments. Regulation is viewed as antithetical to the pleasures sought by clients, and thus clock-watching, while required to protect the commodity's temporal boundaries, is reproached by clients. Instead, there is evidence to suggest the growing informalisation of regulation. Informalised controls are less visible and rely on increasing use of self-restraint, which is explored in the following cases. The nature of these forms of control also draw attention to the temporal nature of the commodity relations.

8.1.2 Timing through Rhythm and Repetition

Sex workers find ways to regulate the experience according to clock time without appearing to 'clock-watch'. The absence of the clock and disregard to clock time works to reinforce the simulation of authenticity demanded by consumers, and participants' accounts demonstrate that authenticity and 'genuine interest' are risked through overt clock-watching:

I don't rush, I don't clock-watch. I think some girls do. Some gents have told me and complained that they're all about the money and that they're always clock-watching, so I try not to do that (Deborah).

Participants acknowledged a range of techniques used to monitor and regulate the timing of appointments, although this differed according to working style, preference and experience. All participants, however, had devised methods that reduced the need to use visible signs of clock time, as they had learned the negative reactions of clients.

Many use their internal sense of time passing to regulate the timing of the appointment. This relies on the internalisation of clock time to our natural rhythms and, in a society that centres around clock time, it is likely that we have synchronised somewhat. This may be especially so when daily activities involve timing according to clock time without the presence of clocks (Reith 2013). As Adam describes, “the difference is one between *being* time and symbolising it. In other words, rhythmicity and body clocks are part of that which the mechanical clock symbolises” (1990:75).

The more experienced workers in the sample had developed tacit methods of measuring the passing of clock time without the presence of physical clocks. Lucy, Claire and Deborah used music and repetitive rhythms to regulate the timing of their appointments:

After a while you kind of know by what you're doing, like the rhythm, and by the music as well because you think, right, I've heard that song once and that's a 45-minute CD, so his time is nearly up. And then you offer him a shower and then he is up and gets dressed, then gone and then you're done. So, you know the rhythm, you know how it feels. In a half-an-hour it's usually one pop, so 20 minutes messing about, pop, five minutes and up (Claire).

The repetition of music playlists enables the discrete timing of the appointments' routines. Sex work encounters are regulated through clock time, although sex workers monitor this using natural rhythms, their ability to sense the passing of time and non-physical measures, such as music. The rhythms and repetitions are important to protect duration of labour, but also have purposes of safety, which I will discuss further throughout this chapter.

Two participants noted that they had difficulties in doing this, however, but these were also the least experienced workers in the sample, so they may be less practiced at tacitly measuring clock time:

I try to sense when the hour's up and I'll just say, '*I just need to nip to the loo*' and check (Isobel)

I'm not as great at passing the time as some people are but I have a general idea when somethings getting to the hour's mark, so I do try to finish it off or either I actually come, or I fake that I come, and then I say, '*I need a minute*' and then I'll go and get a drink and say, '*Oh is that the time?*' (Natalie).

In these cases, they do revert to using a clock but find ways to do this discretely, so the client remains unaware of any invasions of clock time and perceived authenticity is maintained. The practice of sex work is learned through experience, and those with relatively less experience were learning to monitor time tacitly through an internalised sense of time, rhythm and repetition.

Repetition is not the only temporal experience which helps to form and regulate the sex work encounter, however. A further method of maintaining the duration of the appointment is through tempo, which is used to ensure the appointment remains bounded despite pressures from clients to elongate the appointment. Much like tempo is used to simulate intimacy [6.5], it is also used to build and diminish sexual intensity to protect the duration of labour.

8.1.3 Maintaining Temporal Boundaries through Tempo

The sex worker must successfully manage the timing of the appointment to provide immediate intimacy but also to satisfy the clients' sexual needs within the allocation of clock time. Through the adjustment of tempo during the appointment, the sex worker can induce behaviours and feelings of clients to maintain the temporal structure of the appointment and manage duration boundaries:

Imagine porn, right? Then, imagine me. Now, imagine me doing porn really quick... Because I go from this [points at herself] to this [flicks hair and pouts]. I turn into Debbie Does Dallas. So, they're kinda satisfied with that... It is the girlfriend experience, but instead of spending ages just kissing them and that, it's more the *dirty girlfriend* experience... I just do it dead dirty and kinda drop the girlfriend bit. So, I think it's that they go from having this sweet, innocent, sweetheart-type person to then flicking to it being kind of porny and they can probably cope with that for around ten minutes and then they're done... I do think it's the intenseness all of a sudden that seems to, that seems to bring them there (Lucy).

Lucy does not offer the pornstar experience on her profile, but she nonetheless uses the techniques involved in providing such a service to increase the tempo at critical moments to 'excite' the client and increase the intensity of feeling. This also serves to reduce the duration of her labour, as she describes how this technique can sometimes shorten the appointment significantly.

There is further evidence that sex workers adjust the tempo of their behaviour and the timings of the sex acts in to manage the client's sexual satisfaction and protect her labour:

If I want them to hurry up I'm a bit more active which probably makes them feel like I'm enjoying it, but you can do things like... like some men think they can tell when a woman's orgasming, but really if a person has strong Kegel muscles you just make the noises and then you clench a few times and then if they're getting close then that makes them come (Natalie).

But if it's somebody that I don't like it does drag and I start to put on more of a role and I just start being a bit more porn star-ish and making noises that are not natural to me. I think just to make it go a bit faster (Isobel).

Importantly, this regulation must not interfere with the perceived authenticity of the encounter. While sex workers attempt to alter the tempo of the appointment and regulate the behaviour of the client, they do so with actions that contribute to the perceived authenticity rather than threaten it. Natalie's description of how she uses her Kegel muscles to manipulate the client's timings also points to the need to seem authentic, as she describes how most male clients look for, and can tell, when a female reaches orgasm. This reciprocation forms part of the bounded authenticity expected within the encounter, whereby clients feel they take part in a reciprocal sexual and emotional experience which the sex worker mutually enjoys for the duration of the encounter (Bernstein 2007).

The temporal relationship can be managed through simulated intimacy at varying tempos, therefore, to speed up the levels of familiarity and the completion of the sex acts, but also to slow down those acts to provide a different experience. While the participants of this research did not advertise offering the pornstar experience they used similar techniques in the production of their girlfriend experience, or *dirty girlfriend experience* as described by Lucy. This demonstrates how sex workers manipulate the tempo and style according to the needs of clients, but also how these

same techniques act to protect the intensity and duration of the sex worker's labour. Tempo forms a significant tool in the tacit regulation of the encounter while maintaining the incitement of pleasure, therefore.

The consideration of clients' needs in setting the tempo and adjusting it to regulate appointment timings demonstrates the need to balance pleasure with regulation. This manifests in the informalisation of regulation, using non-physical forms of timing and subtle ways of keeping appointments to time, which encourage self-restraint rather than externally imposed restraint. Clients and sex workers subsequently negotiate on tempo and style to regulate the appointment; adjusting according to the timing of the sex worker and the desires of the client. This demonstrates how, with growing informalisation, "dominant modes of conduct symbolizing institutionalized power relationships, came to be more and more ignored and attached, leading to growing negotiability and leniency in the ways people oppose and cooperate with each other" (Wouters 1989:105-6). While there are many examples of this co-dependence in the enacting of sex worker-client relationships, however, there are also tensions in the desires and requirements of each actor because of differing structural and personal concerns. This increases the need for discreet and informalised controls, which reduces resistance and conflict (Elias 2000). That this is a site of conflict, however, demonstrates the divergence in what sex workers and clients are regulating *for*.

8.2 Regulating for Productivity in Work Time

Conversations with participants revealed a process of temporal rewards and punishments they imposed and received in return. In identifying this process and the occasions which incited reward or punishment, it revealed how sex workers and clients view and define each other as either good/bad client and good/bad sex worker according to levels of self-restraint. As mentioned in the previous chapter [7.2], emotional impulses are screened out through a process of civilising and so, too, is poor self-restraint of disrespectful behaviours, such as time-wasting and barriers to achieving productivity. This communicates expectations of the self-regulation required of civilising relationships.

Tensions are experienced according to the reflexive concerns of the individual actors in commodity relations, however, which I argue is a result of both complementary and conflicting concerns. In this section I look at the ways that time-wasting is dealt with by participants to highlight some of the common concerns of sex workers. This is followed by an exploration of the dynamic structural contexts surrounding consumption behaviours, which has implications for the concerns of clients.

8.2.1 Cancellations and Delays

Sex workers are dependent on clients for income and the loss of productivity through waiting thus results in a loss of earnings. A recurring topic in conversations with participants was the proportion of 'timewasters'; a term used to describe clients who call to ask questions without intending to make an appointment; or make appointments and fail to arrive; or do arrive but significantly later than the agreed time. All participants experienced this to a lesser or greater degree, but those who had worked in the industry for a longer period felt that the problem was worsening:

Any given day you'll have at least three or four calls from timewasters. I don't answer the ones I've got stored in my phone, but you will get new ones (Claire).

[The internet] seems to have bred a set of cretins [*sic*] who don't turn up, don't confirm. Some girls text them to confirm but I'm not wasting my time doing that. And you get the odd regular who is like that now (Lucy).

Delays and cancellations impact sex workers' income and subsequently represent an imbalance of power and a threat to a cooperative relationship. Through not turning up or arriving late the client renders the sex worker as *waiting*, and therefore as powerless to the client who may or may not arrive (Schwartz 1974).

Clients exercise power in forcing sex workers to wait for their attendance and sex workers try to regain ability to enact power by blocking clients who attempt to submit sex workers to waiting. Punishments and rewards are given in the form of time penalties for poor temporal control or time rewards through extra time for loyal custom, which acts to correct the client's temporal behaviours. As Schwartz writes: "to make a person wait is, above all, to possess the capacity to modify his conduct in a manner congruent with one's own interests" (1974:844). Both sex worker and client

attempt to correct the other's temporal behaviours in line with their own expectations, and in doing so demonstrate how power fluctuates between them through their interactions. There is not necessarily a superordinate and subordinate, as both is able to exercise power through enforced waiting:

By effecting a wait the server demonstrates that his presence is not subject to the disposition or whim of another and that access to him is a privilege not to be taken lightly...the imposition of waiting expresses and sustains the autonomy as well as the superiority of the self. While the imposition of delay allows a superordinate to give expression to his authority, waiting may also be imposed in protest against that authority (Schwartz 1974:863-4).

While sex workers also impose periods of waiting upon clients, clients' 'timewasting' signifies the ability to make the sex worker wait, thus reducing the level of power she is able to exercise during that period. Moreover, sex workers view this waiting as *wasted* time; or unproductive time, as the time that would have realised financial reward is rendered unremunerative. Having addressed the ways sex workers experience vulnerability through the social, cultural, legal and economic contexts in which they work in chapters two and five, their control over time and the productivity of their time is important in terms of resilience against vulnerability.

8.2.2 Regulating for Economic Security

Late arrivals, cancellations or missed appointments without notice represent a loss of earnings for sex workers, which is problematic in relation to sex workers' dependency on clients for income. Sex workers find it difficult to financially plan because of the unpredictable nature of the work [7.4.1], and clients' poor temporal controls can exacerbate this. To assert the expectation of reliability, sex workers block clients who fail to adhere to these regulations. Sex workers deploy 'punishments' and 'rewards' according to clients' behaviours:

I'll speak to cancelled once but if they've cancelled twice, it depends on what mood I'm in, but if I do answer them, I'll make a point of saying are you sure you want the booking because you have cancelled twice. If they cancel three times, then they just get put in the phone as 'no' because they're just dicking you about and it's not worth it. You turn down other bookings for them to cancel at the last minute (Claire).

It depends on the cancellation and why and how they've done it. If they've let me know just before and they've been sufficiently apologetic about it, I sometimes give them a second chance – things can happen with people. I would say that cancelling 20 minutes before is unacceptable, I would say the minimum to cancel would be at an hour before because everybody knows within an hour, unless it's something like I've been in a car accident or I' stuck in traffic and I'm never going to get there in time, I've had that a couple of times and I'll say *'What time do you think you can get here for?'* or *'Shall we rearrange for another time?'*... And sometimes they'll say *'Yea, that's fine'* and sometimes you'll realise that they're just still sat in bed (Natalie).

Participants showed some degree of flexibility, but if clients were repeatedly late, according to the temporal limits they individually set, they would be punished in the form of refusal for further appointments.

The extent to which 'time-wasting' is viewed as a problem often related to the participant's experienced pressure to earn, with those more reliant on their sex work income viewing the time wasted as more significant than those who were less so. In sex work, time holds a financial value and failure to sell units of time represent a loss of earnings. Timewasters thus reduce sex workers' control of temporal commodification and productivity, which has a significant impact on participants who are reliant on longer working durations to secure an income.

To provide a comparative example, Gabrielle feels she can live comfortably from the income of one booking per day and subsequently feels more in control of her time. The one booking means she is less dependent on clients for timekeeping and she can screen for more reliable clients, which increases her feelings of control at work.

I think I'm in control at all times, that's how I feel. That's how I feel taking a booking over the phone or online. It's my decision, it's within in my control. When they come and even going through the booking, I'm in control (Gabrielle).

Here we see that levels of economic vulnerability, as described in chapter five, have a direct bearing on participants' experiences of temporal relationships with clients. Specifically, economic vulnerability has implications for the pressure to be productive through time. This reinforces our understanding of how sex workers act within the conditions of their structural and personal concerns. The extent of vulnerability or flourishing sex working women experience as a result of the layered

contexts discussed in chapter two has implications for the power they practice in negotiations with clients. Sex workers, especially those experiencing greater levels of economic vulnerability, attempt to mitigate this and achieve productivity and profit by regulating clients' temporal practices.

8.2.3 Sex Workers' Productivity and Experiences of Duration

The perceived productivity of time at work is imperative, therefore, which influences sex workers' experience of time. Participants, like other escorts, sell clock time in units of half-an-hour to 24 hours, and participants described the appointments quite differently according to how much time was sold. These descriptions related to their own experience of that time and how they felt the time passed within them. Many participants looked to increase the productivity within the duration of work:

Half-hour GFE... bish, bash, bosh, adios (Gabrielle).

Half-hours I prefer, get them in, get them off, get them out. I prefer half-an-hours, the majority are half-an-hours. I'd rather see a few new clients rather than be in the same room with the same one for a long time. Not because I don't like them, it's just hard to draw it out with the same person. Half-hours are easy, they're normally done in 20 minutes and you have a quick chat while they have a shower. They're just easy (Claire).

For most, shorter half-an-hour appointments were preferred. In both Claire's and Gabrielle's descriptions they refer to the systematic and efficient process of dealing with a half-an-hour appointment; reflected in their language which emphasises the more rigid structure of moving the client through the process. Consequently, both Claire and Gabrielle cite half-an-hour appointments as their preference: they can systematically work through the necessary processes and rhythms to complete their work. In these instances, time is experienced as productive, primarily because these faster and more efficient appointments allow time as a duration to become more lucrative.

This is testament to the extent that we have internalised the value of productive time in today's economy. Time is promoted as a resource; as a container to be filled efficiently and as an opportunity for value that must be maximised. Half-hour appointments epitomise these values, whereby workers feel that the shorter duration

of clock time can be most efficiently filled to provide maximum profit. As a result, most participants felt *productive* within this duration of time. Our preoccupation with productivity leads to the importance in the value and regulation of time.

Conversely, the same was not felt for shorter appointments of 15-minute duration. Overall, there has been a growth in requests and availability of 15-minute appointments, for instance, and while most participants cited having sold 15-minute appointments previously, all had ceased to do so because of poor experiences of time within these shorter appointments and the need for greater regulation to manage their time:

I started to see a few 15-minutes, but at the end of the day it's not worth it, because either it takes half-an-hour to get ready, and then I've maybe turned a half-hour away just to see a 15-minute (Emily).

These descriptions of experiences according to units of clock time suggest that the shorter appointments contain a cruder relationship and service, with workers expected to practice acts and intimacy with very little to no foreplay or conversation, while the longer appointments contain more conversational and emotional engagement on the part of the worker and client. All participants cited dislike for 15-minute appointments, which suggests that the need to generate intimacy within such a short duration of time is problematic for the worker. While participants were happy with the productivity of the duration of half-an-hour appointments, they felt that shorter appointments were less productive and challenged the control they exercised over the duration and intensity of their labour.

Appointment durations were experienced differently according to productivity, therefore, with most preferring half-an-hour appointments because they represented a productive appointment duration, which acted to reduce the worker's 'in-work' time. Ritzer (2010) and Bryman (2004) suggest that this increasing capitalist drive for standardisation and efficiency pervades commodification processes. For many reasons I believe this is too simplistic an explanation, however, especially as there is also evidence of resistance against capitalism's drive for efficiency. While participants seek to maximise efficiency to protect their labour duration and intensity, this is not to say that sex workers are solely concerned with profit at the expense of their clients' experiences. Participants reported a level of emotional connection to their work also, which suggests that the focus on personal connections in sex work is

somewhat resistant to the emotionless profitability found in many capitalist organisations. All participants indicated job satisfaction from reading their clients' needs and achieving client satisfaction, and many found meaning in their work (Sanders et al 2016).

8.2.4 Balancing Productivity with Emotional Protection

The rewarding nature of emotional connections through work is particularly evident in experiences of bookings of longer duration, which often required greater investment of labour on the part of the sex worker, but also offered the opportunity of greater rewards and potentially greater levels of job satisfaction. Both Natalie and Isobel, for instance, preferred longer appointments which allowed a more in-depth relationship with clients:

I think it's both about the quality of my service but also the way that I feel. At least when you do that emotional investment thing it's been something a bit genuine, even though it had been paid for it felt like there had been a level of genuine connection. Whereas with those guys that I went in without doing the emotion stuff, it did not feel genuine, I just felt like a body, so maybe it is for me as well that I do it (Isobel).

Longer appointments require greater levels of co-production to extend intimacy. For Natalie and Isobel, this also meant that they achieved a greater balance of pleasure and productivity, which was important for their job satisfaction. They demonstrate that the intensified need for emotional intelligence in achieving extended intimacy acted to regain dignity for both client and sex worker. This emotional investment demands greater levels of emotional intelligence and emotional labour and, while this is often understood as more demanding work (Hochschild 1983), the emotional connections forged through this work also provides value to the worker through adding authenticity to the exchange. These participants communicate a greater desire for bounded authenticity through their work, as proposed by Bernstein (2007), which may reflect their belonging to a newer generation of worker who is more accustomed to this mode of capitalist consumption and cultural model of sexuality.

Authenticity offers a protective role for the worker also, therefore, in addition to its commodification purposes. Sex workers have different preferences around the levels

of emotional engagement they prefer to offer, but contrary to emotional labour as being necessarily demanding and damaging, some participants valued the connections achieved through emotional labour. Korczynski (2013:40) refers to 'touching moments', whereby those involved in body work (including sex workers) can protect their own and their clients' dignity through engaging in emotion work to mediate tensions. Similarly, emotion work and emotional intelligence are used by participants to add value to their work and provide protection to the worker's dignity. Moreover, this can act as an equalising force in the power relationships between clients and sex workers:

Conversations and chats reframe the interaction away from the superior being adorned by the inferior to an interaction between two parties who share forms of interest... The extended conversation is one of the key ways in which the body worker holds tight to his/her dignity (Korczynski 2013:39).

Emotion work can be more taxing for the worker, but it can also be more rewarding in the form of job satisfaction and in equalising the power balance between worker and consumer. In a relationship of fluctuating power, this is one aspect of the commodification process that some found empowering.

While Natalie and Isobel certainly found dignity in rebalancing the relationship through emotional connection, other participants (Lucy and Amanda in particular) felt they achieved a rebalancing through the distancing of emotions at work. They still demonstrate emotional intelligence through their work but prefer to personally disengage from emotion-based conversation. As such, longer appointments were problematic because they encouraged a greater emotional connection, while shorter appointments enabled greater control and protection over emotional engagement:

In some ways I'd rather be doing the sex stuff because then you don't have to talk... I think it got harder for me as I did my counselling training. It's harder for me now not to genuinely listen to what they're saying, and I don't really want to get to know them as people... but yeah, just do the sex. Sex is easy, brains are hard (Amanda).

Deeper engagement with clients, which is often facilitated by longer or repeated appointments, encourages emotional connections, therefore. For some, this was useful in rebalancing power within the relationship, while others felt vulnerable through the opening of opportunities for emotional engagement. This demonstrates

the importance of emotional protection as well as economic protection, which is of increased significance within stigmatised work.

8.3 Regulating Stigma

Participants felt that a minority of clients lacked respect for the worker's time boundaries because of the lower status and stigma associated with sex work. While occasional delays are common and understandable, participants indicated that extreme tardiness or frequent failure to attend is linked to disrespectful attitudes:

I think in some cases it's because they've actually booked a few girls in case one cancels, and they don't think we're important enough to be courteous with and let us know... But really it comes down to they don't have respect for us, so they do stuff like that... And I'm never late for bookings and I never cancel or don't show so they're not doing it to me (Claire).

As defined in section 2.3, sex work stigma is a reduction of status resulting from cultural understandings of sexual morality in relation to sex work (Weitzer 2017). Stigma thus contributes to the vulnerability experienced by sex workers. Sex work stigma manifests in a 'discourse of disposability' (Lowman 2000), which is evident in the increased risk of violence and exploitation by those in the sex industry (Sanders and Campbell 2007). This discourse of disposability can translate to the disposability of sex workers' time, which results in sex workers experiencing more timewasters than other professions which are similar in terms of their reliance on customers' temporal reliability:

I think in any job, be it gardening, hairdressing, whatever, you get no shows, people making appointments and not turning up and not cancelling, it's probably the same but different. There's probably more chance of somebody cancelling, whereas because of what it is... you're *just an escort, just a prostitute*. It doesn't have the same importance to them to cancel it. Something else comes up and they can't be bothered; it's not important. It's not seen as a proper job. They don't credit it with the same respect that they'd give somebody else (Deborah).

Stigma already challenges the level of control sex workers feel they have over their work but also contributes to clients' interpretations of the status of sex workers and their ability to 'waste' and exercise power over their time. The presence of stigma

acts to disempower sex workers in commodity relations, therefore, which provides an additional motivation for temporal regulation.

Sanders (2005a) suggests that sex workers screen for clients who appear as safe, reliable and respectful of sex workers. This is problematised by the legal status of sex work, which impacts the amount of information that clients and sex workers are willing and able to exchange prior to meeting. Nevertheless, participants indicated screening for respectful views, which they perceived to indicate reliability. In particular, participants agreed that a signifier of cooperative, egalitarian and humanising qualities is the language used, and to identify this it necessitates a time investment to speak to clients prior to the appointment. Some participants indicated that they prefer to make this investment to build a stronger idea of the potential client:

I keep them on the phone for more than five minutes which is different to a lot of people. It gives a good impression because they think I have a lot of time for them, but also most weirdos make themselves clear in five minutes; they can't last five minutes without saying something bizarre, so your best screening is talking to someone on the phone. If you can't talk to them for five minutes, chances are you're not going to have a good booking with them, although some do slip through the net... I talk to them about their requirements and what they're expecting because some of them after you've talked to them it transpires they haven't read your profile and they're expecting random things and when you talk to them you can hear their wording as well because that can be important, like somebody can be talking about wanting oral, if they start talking about wanting to facefuck you and stuff like that and they start getting really excited. you're like 'no', so I turn them down at that point (Natalie).

Clients who demonstrate respect for the time boundaries of workers and are willing to work cooperatively by investing time in reading profiles prior to contact, but also who limited their demands of the workers' time display qualities of respect for the sex worker as a person. Respect through temporal boundaries corresponds to humanising qualities, which helps the sex workers to navigate stigma and avoid the risks associated with it. Sex workers look to be treated as equals by their clients and look for temporal controls as a signifier of this. Ultimately, therefore, there are risks that conflicts occur, or disrespectful or violent people pass any screening process. However, participants' accounts describe how temporal self-control and language is used as a signifier of a cooperative relationship. The increased danger as a result of

stigma is also managed temporally within the appointment, as I will now go on to discuss.

8.3.1 *Regulating for Safety Through Repetition*

Participant accounts indicated how repetition is used to regulate the appointment. Claire provides an account of a typical appointment below, and most participants reported similar routines and time structures in their appointments. In this description the level of structure and familiarity with the routine is clear, which demonstrates the highly regulated nature of the experience. Claire is well-practiced in enacting this experience, so she can judge the passing of clock time through the repetition of routine:

A typical routine, as it were, a bloke that's booked an hour for five PM, I'll give him a juicy big snog as he comes in the door because that not only sets the tone but if they're a reporter or a plod they haven't got a leg to stand on. Get them in, I'll hang their coat up and offer them a drink and say just put your pennies in there my love, so I'll get the money up front. I'll ask them if they want a shower because they might want a shower, they might not. You do your kisses and cuddling, and I slowly undress them, and I'll kiss down their body and stuff and they might want to get the puppies out, so that's normally a good ten minutes past, and then I'll say '*do you want to lay on the bed?*'. Or what I usually do is get them laid on the bed and then I'll get in between their legs and I'll start kiss down, start on the balls, start the blow job and that. They might want me to turn around so they can play with me a little bit, and then they'll either have a blow job or hand job to completion or they might say '*Can I give you some oral?*' and yep, that's fine, that's another half-an-hour up, and then we'll normally go for first come by either sex or a blow job and then we'll have a couple of minutes rest and have a chat or a cuddle, and then there's about 20 minutes left, and then I might give him a go at round two, usually a hand job to get it going again, you sort of push down and that makes it go hard and then that normally does the job or they might want to put a condom on and go again or they might not get the second come, most times they do. That gets you to about ten to six (Claire).

In participants' accounts there is a strong sense of routine and rhythm to help them time and regulate the appointment according to clock time. This would suggest that appointments are standardised to aid the regulation of time.

In the previous chapter [7.2.3], I outlined evidence to demonstrate that there is room and necessity for innovation within the appointment to provide fresh experiences (Carbonero and Gómez Garrido 2017), however, which is carefully managed by the sex worker. Appointments could be both standardised and personalised according to the demands of the client, and participants were required to use emotional intelligence to read the needs of the clients and respond to them. This often happened 'live' within the appointment time and participants would need to be ready to innovate accordingly. Though activities follow a rhythm, therefore, Adam (1990) reminds us that rhythms only produce similar recurrences rather than the same. This allows for change and innovation within the appointment to account for individual client demands.

The cyclical practice of enacting heteronormative scripts develops into habit through repetition, and Young (1988) in his exploration of our 'metronomic society', suggests that habits have many advantages. Firstly, "habit increases the skill with which actions can be performed" (1988:82) and "habit diminishes fatigue" (*ibid*). Sex workers become more skilful in producing the experience through habit, which allows her to build knowledge and experience in producing an experience and achieving sexual pleasure with ease. He also documents how habit allows the "economizing of memory" (1988:84), which would allow sex workers and clients to move through the experience with familiarity because sexual scripts themselves are built on habits or customs. Importantly, however, Young (1988:83) documents how habit "spares attention for the unforeseen. A capacity for attention is held in permanent reserve, ready to be mobilized to deal with the unexpected". This is important for sex worker's safety. Through developing a habitual rhythm, workers can focus on any unpredictable behaviours from clients and spot dangers if they arise. Much like the civilising of bonds require temporal regulation, Young (1988) demonstrates how temporal regulation through repetition and habit increases safety.

These habits both complement and contradict the concerns of clients. Particularly within the commodification of experiences (Pine and Gilmore 1999) rather than standardised services, sex workers are expected to *read* the clients' needs and address them in a seemingly individualised and authentic way. This poses problems for the regulation of time within the appointment, as sex workers also manage the services and acts within an allocation of clock time. That said, while the style of the

service may differ to some extent, there were reports that suggested sex workers were able to standardise certain elements of the service, so that the acts were still temporally measurable but still allowing room for individuality:

There is a routine to it but it's... you kind of get experience, and I guess my maturity. You'd be able to read almost what they want. It's very rare that I get it wrong in that respect. It just seems to flow. Everybody's different, don't get me wrong (Gabrielle).

I'm saying they are different, but they do kind of follow a thing, getting undressed, get him hard and then do oral, and then have sex... so in that way they are quite similar, but sometimes you will have been speaking and they want something quite specific (Isobel).

There are some aspects of the encounter that are pre-formed, which allows the worker to temporally regulate, but there is also room for innovation to respond to clients' individual requests. Further, the experience is co-produced with the client, and while repetition and rhythm allow sex workers to regulate the behaviour of clients and the timing of the experience, the input of the client also shapes the rhythm to some extent and encourages innovation in the production of the experience. Pre-formed rhythms aid the regulation of the appointment for the sex worker, but they also speak to the production and consumption of the experience by the client. For both sex worker and client there are benefits for the repetition of experiences, therefore, and, in achieving this level of familiarity and comfort, a safe space is generated for experimentation and innovation. Sex workers can regulate for safety while addressing clients' individual needs. There is, however, also a need to regulate the extent of client demands.

8.4 Regulating Consumer Demands

8.4.1 Expectations of Immediacy: Enacting Power Through Enforced Waiting

Through changing commodification and consumption processes, clients are increasingly encouraged to expect instant availability [7.3.1]. Communication technologies enable synchronous and asynchronous contact, generating pressure for constant availability (Wajcman 2015) and challenging the separation of personal and working activities, spaces and times. Participants indicated that they were conscious

of such pressures and sometimes responded sometimes to consumer demands, while also finding ways to enact resistance to them. Some participants avoided booking appointments on the same day or with little notice, for instance, to resist the demand for instant and constant availability. Instead, sex workers maintain temporal boundaries and maintain control over their own time by insisting that clients wait to see them.

This reversal of waiting also offers potential for reversals in power balances:

I don't like the fact that they ring up, '*Are you available now?*' and I have to kind of go '*No I'm not really available now but you can see me in half-an-hour*'. So, I'm still, instead of telling them '*Yeah come along, whatever*', because I can't do that kind of happy-go-lucky thing and go '*Yeah, just turn up*'... so to me I'm still trying to go '*Right you can come on this time*'. (Natalie).

Natalie works in a way that she is comfortable with by insisting on a notice period before bookings. This has many benefits for her, including giving her rest between appointments, enables her to plan income levels, and ensures she maintains control over her own working times. While she may compromise with clients on the notice with which they can make appointments, she still insists they wait for a period and that she is able to specify the time of availability. This ensures that Natalie exercises power over her own availability. The enforcement of waiting is also an act of power, in that clients are forced to wait before pursuing their leisure activities, as I documented in section 7.4.2. The period of waiting serves to halt clients' fulfilment of consumption and reduce the productivity of their time, which shifts power towards the sex worker as enforcer of the waiting.

Participants also indicated that the majority of pushes and pulls on their time did not come from clients' ill-intentions. Primarily, clients were longing for the experience and were attempting to communicate this excitement:

I think some do. But some I just think they get excited by it, and they'll say, '*I've bought some panties and got some stockings coming*'. And they might not have done anything like it before, so it is exciting. It's out of the ordinary and they go home and go to work and get excited by this secret thing going on (Deborah).

This suggests that clients have somewhat internalised a culture of immediate and endless consumption; making consumption decisions in the context of their

structural and personal concerns, but not necessarily with the intention of disempowering sex workers. Clients will also have intersecting concerns and the sex workers' temporal boundaries may not always be prioritised. The interactions between sex workers and clients reveal how the concerns of each are negotiated.

Just as sex workers experience powerlessness in waiting for clients to arrive, therefore, clients also experience powerlessness in not being able to access the experience outside of its temporal bounds. There are tensions in the expectations of the relationship and both parties attempt to communicate their expectations of a 'good' worker or 'good' client by rewarding attitudes and behaviours that meet expectations and punishing those which do not. This indicates that clients seek to achieve something from the time allocation that is incongruent with the aims of the sex worker.

8.4.2 Productive Consumption

Sex workers regulate to protect their own emotional investment and workload, but also to manage the emotions, intimacy, and authenticity produced and experienced during the consumption of the commodity. For sex workers and clients, there are many points of convergence in the motivations for regulation, such as the preference for a bounded commodity:

I think it feels safer to do it like this and I think that's one of the reasons people might do it. You get a shot of companionship, a shot of youth, a shot of escapism, a shot of wild sex, but you don't need to worry about everything around it, you don't need to worry if we are together now or what's going to happen tomorrow because then it's just done (Isobel).

Isobel cites the ability to distance thoughts about the past or future through the bounding of the commodity in temporal form. This serves to protect the emotional investment from clients too, which demonstrates their desire to self-regulate emotional involvement. That said, Isobel also describes how clients attempted to separate their engagement in the industry as a time for 'escapism'. Part of the experience, therefore, is to become immersed and lost in the present moment forsaking concerns from outside of that time and space. As such, for the client, too,

the temporal boundaries are important, which form one motivation for self-regulation.

There are times, however, where clients are driven by the need to maximise value within a duration of time. This can produce conflicts in the interactions between sex workers and clients, and participants reported attempts to find compatibility with particular clients according to their self-restraint and attitudes:

I very rarely take half-an-hour bookings, maybe one or two if I have a cancellation, I only get those if I am trying to fill a time slot because they're always same-day bookers and guaranteed they'll be my worst ones of the day because I will always think to myself '*Why is it that these are worth less money than the longer ones?*' It's because of their attitude, it's because they think '*I'm going to get this for £70 and I'm going to get as much as I can*' (Natalie).

As Natalie's account demonstrates, she feels that her 'good' clients are those that book longer appointments while she personally takes issue with those who book shorter appointments. She feels that clients who book shorter appointments are more focused on achieving 'value for money', which involves altering the commodity and its value to boost productivity. While this contrasts with the majority of participants preferring half-an-hour bookings (apart from Natalie and Isobel), the perceived attitude of those who book shorter appointments could also go some way to explain why all participants disliked 15-minute appointments and why they chose not to offer them. They are unable to offer an experience they enjoy within this time duration and feel that clients are trying to spend less money to achieve the same experience as would be found in a half-an-hour duration. Nevertheless, the introduction of 15-minute appointments could represent a response to relative economic hardship with clients subsequently looking to reduce spending while still engaging in the industry. This has implications for the balance of power between sex workers and clients, as client attempts to boost productivity signify an intensification of labour for the sex worker.

As I demonstrated previously [5.3.4], clients have likely experienced a reduction in disposable income, which potentially diminishes spending on leisure pursuits such as engaging in the sex industry. This subsequently leads them to seek value for money, which manifests in pushing at the temporal boundaries and definitions of the commodity:

I think a lot of clients now the money is a lot of money for them, and they're trying to get their money's worth so they're trying to squeeze every last drop out of it and sometimes that can be quite frustrating (Natalie).

Consequently, clients increasingly look to push the boundaries of the temporal limits of their appointment time and resist controls imposed by sex workers. This often materialises in a dissonance between the time limits of services provided by sex workers and the expectations of endless consumption by clients:

They'll just try and stay that bit like, *'I don't have to rush today'* and I think *'you might not have to rush I want to go to the bank'* or *'I need to go to Tesco'* or something like that. Just trying to eke out that bit more time with you. I get it from their point of view because if they enjoy your company, I can understand that wanting to stay a bit longer 'cause they're comfortable (Gabrielle).

The worst ones are the ones who book you for an hour and then think for 55 minutes of the hour that they're going to be shagging straight. Generally, they want doggy and you're just lying there and thinking *'Well, I'm getting paid two pounds a minute for this'* and *'Yep, I'm definitely buying that food processor today, I deserve it, this isn't going into the bills money'*, and thinking *'And Dad said I'd never use my drama GCSE'*. But sometimes it can feel really long, and your eyes are flicking trying to see where the clock is and thinking *'Oh god, there's another 30 minutes of this nonsense'* (Natalie).

Some of them they'll get to 29 minutes and I'll go to 'em *'Your time's running out, better hurry up or you'll be going home with your balls full'* and then, miraculously, they just come then, straight away (Lucy).

The resistance to temporal controls could also be symptomatic of clients seeking intimacy and mutuality, whereby time in the experience would be unlimited. This is reflective of endless wanting: clients believe that they may be able to purchase authentic mutual intimacy, but this cannot always be satisfied within these bounded commercial relationships.

Campbell's (1987) insights on changes in consumption provide a useful context from which to explore the pressures on sex worker's time and client's resistance to their temporal controls. Consumers are encouraged to expect more from their encounters which is often experienced as 'endless wanting', whereby consumers are unable to satisfy their desires. What this potentially results in is clients who push to achieve

more in terms of quality or quantity within the duration of their appointment. This hedonistic approach to consumption challenges the control required for civilising economic relationships and must be managed by sex workers and clients as producers and consumers of the experience. Lucy's quote also demonstrates that, while sex workers attempt to achieve bounded authenticity, their control of time and temporal boundaries can take precedence and occasionally the authentic experience is sacrificed to end the appointment time.

Some clients' inclination to stretch the appointment time reflects the tensions between the endless longing produced through this sort of consumption and the regulation required within co-dependent society. Subsequently, sex workers also feel frustration as a result of clients expecting *more* from the experience and destabilising the temporal controls by pushing for longer appointments or for more to be included within the appointment:

And one of those forums I was talking about there was a thread where someone was asking '*Should shower times be included in that half-an-hour?*'. And of course, they should be included! You go to see the doctor, you get a ten-minute appointment, you're in, you're out, and that's it. He only gives you ten minutes because it could be something really bad, usually its five minutes and that's it, you're in, you're out, same as at hospital. Well, come and see me, it's the same rules. All that time getting dressed and everything, that's all your time. Well, basically, their time starts as soon as they ring me up to say they're downstairs. If they've booked an appointment from two, say, then it begins at two. They don't see it like that, they see it as starting as soon as they've got into the room, and they can fuff around getting to the room, believe it or not. And then they wanna start chatting to you and you say, '*I'm just gonna put my money away, wanna get a shower?*' so we can move this on (Lucy).

For the sex worker the duration of time should include all aspects of the service. Comparatively, there is evidence that some clients think the duration of time should only contain the sexual components of the service. This suggests that clients believe the intimacy and sexual acts to hold value but not the additional aspects, such as showering and getting dressed: these practical aspects are supplementary rather than contributing to the experience. Both sex worker and client push for productivity within an allotted time but productivity means different things for each, which potentially results from differing perspectives on what is commodified and what holds value. There is dissonance between the needs of regulation for the client, which

aims for maximising pleasure and experience within an allotted time, and the needs of regulation for the sex workers which acts to protect her labour.

Having not invited clients to take part in the research it is difficult to ascertain their interpretations of this process and they may or may not agree with the influence of contemporary forms of consumption on sex industry relationships as presented here. Indeed, I believe consumers act with a range of structural and personal concerns and will manage a range of consumption trends in their decision-making (Manyukhina 2018). Nevertheless, participants' interpretations of client behaviour suggest that, while most clients are understanding of the expectations and norms, there continue to be struggles between clients as consumers and sex workers as producers of the bounded experience. As I mentioned in the previous chapter [7.3.1], online technologies have provided an avenue for consumers to communicate expectations to the producers of commodities, however, although there are both benefits and difficulties in the role of the internet. This communication of expectations can also act as a form of punishment or reward.

8.4.3 Clients' Rewards and Punishments: Online Reviews

There is a system of reward and punishment through time and both sex worker and client define the other as good or bad based on temporal behaviours. These temporal behaviours reflect the internalisation of time controls (Elias 1992), which allow us to regulate our own and others' behaviours to live and work co-dependently, which thus functions to regulate a civilising economy. Clients reward or punish for perceived good and bad temporal controls such as clock-watching and extra time through regular custom or, for some, through online reviews.

Online reviews can act as a form of regulation because clients can comment on the aspects of the experience that they liked and disliked, which communicates clients' expectations of the relationship. Pettinger explains that in taking part in online reviews, clients do so with understanding of their customer sovereignty and "about their rights and their legitimacy in extracting enchantment" (2011:229). Engaging with online reviews is a way of legitimising their rights to service, therefore. Where reviewers feel they have received 'good' service they reward the worker with a

positive review but where they feel entitled to more, they punish the worker with a negative review, which has the potential to impact future demand and income.

Subsequently, poor reviews can influence the behaviour of the sex worker: participants were alert to the potential for client reviews and sometimes adjusted their behaviour accordingly. Many cited having monitored their working styles and modifying temporal behaviours to generate positive feedback:

You want positive feedback by being relaxed, not watching time. It's like any business, you're only as good as the last client you've seen (Deborah).

If someone made an online booking and even if I was tired or thinking I've made what I've wanted to make today, I probably wouldn't cancel. I can think of loads of times that has happened. But that's where professionalism and it is a job comes in... and if they hadn't made a booking, if it had just been a text I'd have probably just text back saying sorry I can't make it, but because I know they can leave negative feedback online I don't cancel (Mandy).

These forms of communication offer an exemplar of the way in which regulation is exerted and resisted in a civilising sex industry. Most online advertising portals also have a reviewing function and there are additional sites which offer forum and review boards. While some online communities involve both sex workers and clients in conversations, some others do not allow input from the sex workers themselves, which means that sex workers have very little power to challenge the information and opinions shared within them.

Because of the differences in the way that online portals operate, some sex workers encourage reviews on certain sites but not others; preferring sites where equal contribution is allowed:

I ask people not to leave reviews. On the main site I like because you can respond and if a guy is new and he wants to get some feedback I'll always do that because I think it helps other sex workers... the other site is misogynistic trash. I'm banned on there actually... so, no, I don't want reviews, I don't like reviews. They don't tell you anything, they're one person's subjective experience. But most of the time they're either a guy having a wank or a guy having a bitch. You can say everything you need to say on the main site's feedback, looks like photos, on time, good experience. You do not need to know anything other than that (Mandy).

If it's booked through the main site, I ask them to put me a review on. It's obviously been nice feedback as well. Yes, just on that. For that other national site, no, leave me out of it, I'd rather not. I have to be honest; it is always at the back of your mind. I think with or without it, I'd always give 100%. Yes, I do have to be honest and think, this could be a guy who uses that national site. Do you know something, I guess it's quite healthy in saying that; it does drive you as well to give a good service (Gabrielle).

Sex workers avoid review sites which prioritise the client as the consumer and purchaser of experiences, which contributes to imbalances of power. These sites influence consumer culture in this sector and subsequently pressure workers to offer experiences in particular ways. Sex workers respond with resistance also: they do not encourage reviews and screen clients according to attitudes around temporal controls. Participants indicated that only certain 'types' of clients who are often avoided used these sites and existing research suggests that clients who often review are a minority (Sanders et al 2018). Further, these form only one type of review site and many others allow equal contribution by both clients and sex workers, which goes some way to rebalance power exerted through reviews.

Conversely, Natalie uses internet reviews to generate business. Here, she refers to 'playing the game' for her own benefit:

I think thanks to the internet because they all talk and they all rate and they all compare I don't think maybe escorts that have been working for a while understand a lot of it is a popularity game. And a lot of it is if you wanting to pile the bookings in, you have to... it's about how you present yourself. And some of that is playing the game a little because if I, because I usually work out who it is when they come in because they've got a different manner about them. And it's like if I give them an extra ten minutes, they will write a review about me on the internet and tell everybody that I'm wonderful and then I'll get like another ten bookings off the back of that one booking where I gave him ten minutes (Natalie).

Natalie also poses herself as different to those who have been working for longer than herself, which again relates to generational differences in workers in the industry. Those who have worked in the industry for a longer period, often when online hosting sites and reviewing practices were less prevalent, are more resistant to newer market conditions in the sex industry. This also includes the lack of engagement with online reviews.

When comparing attitudes across these generations, differences are apparent, as Claire and Lucy, who have worked in the industry for considerably longer, suggest they do not considerably change their behaviour or encourage reviews to generate extra custom:

I'm not one of these that worry if I'm going to get a shit report because I'm past caring about any of that. I've never really cared about reviews anyway. When you first start you think every booking has got to be perfect and worried about if you get bad reviews nobody will book me but then as you go on you realise that people still book you either way. You don't actively try to have bad bookings but equally you don't beat yourself up if they go that way (Claire).

I used to sort of make everything last and spin out, but I don't now. I used to make everything spread out because I was more worried about what somebody would put on the internet, like our Jenna is still worried about what they write and whether it's a good review or bad review and I couldn't give a fiddler's fart, you know, 'cause it don't matter if you've got a good review or a bad review, they still come see you anyway... I don't usually encourage reviews. Reviews are usually done by those who have seen me for the first time or maybe a second time, and those I sort of do try to last a little bit longer (Lucy).

While Lucy claims indifference to reviews she still tries to screen for potential reviewers and monitors her behaviour accordingly, and Claire suggests that she more provides a consistently good service regardless of the potential for online reviews. While they appear dismissive of online reviews, therefore, they still value the quality of their service and show signs of considering the impact of reviews.

A consumer culture which encourages endless wanting and promotes customer sovereignty has also opened opportunities for the communication of expectations, which facilitates a civilising process. While this threatens the power exercised by sex workers in their work, this corresponds to broader changes of interdependence through civilising, whereby co-producers of the experience commodity must communicate expectations and simultaneously respond to expectations through self-regulation. This leads to constant fluctuations of power in the interactions between sex workers and clients. In attempt to correct poor temporal attitudes and behaviours, both sex workers and clients deploy temporal rewards in the form of extra time or positive online reviews and temporal punishments in the form of

waiting or blocking, or negative online reviews. This negotiation of power has significant implications for the practice of co-productive commodification.

8.4.4 Customer Sovereignty: Challenges for Co-Production

The evidence suggests that many clients increasingly expect constant availability, immediacy and immersive experiences and therefore demand more from the producers of those experiences. Simultaneously, a growing portion of clients fail to attend appointments or arrive late. While most clients expect temporal reliability, then, some are not necessarily willing to return it. This could result from a belief in customer sovereignty (Korczynski 2013), where clients believe they hold greater power, which is likely exacerbated by sex workers' stigmatised position. This contributes to tension in civilising and interdependent sex industry relationships.

As I have argued, both sex workers and clients are responsible for co-producing the experience to varying degrees, but this is often enacted within a guise of customer sovereignty. Customer sovereignty is a feigned ideal upheld by sex workers to derive satisfaction in customers (Korczynski 2013), which potentially leads to certain clients feeling unaccountable regarding cancellations or delays. The increase of this behaviour suggests that while sex workers push towards more temporal control to achieve a more co-dependent relationship, some consumption behaviours are somewhat restrictive of this in certain ways. The belief that customers hold power over service providers through the act of payment is possibly internalised by clients to some extent, which may prevent them from viewing the relationship between sex worker and client on equal terms.

Clients who have internalised the myth of customer sovereignty to a greater degree could interpret the purchase as a means to gain some control over the experience, rather than it being subject to negotiation within the limitations of the worker, as it indeed is:

Guys are pretty much like I've paid for this (Isobel).

These tensions are reflective of the struggles for power between clients and sex workers in their interactions, which is especially pertinent during service and

experience commodities where the production and consumption of the service or experience occurs simultaneously.

It is important to consider that time is viewed as a currency; valued according to "status, wealth, and authority" (Adam 1990:114), although Adam notes the worker's time is often deemed more important "except in cases where the status, wealth, or authority of the latter exceeds that of the former. In these situations, the recipient may buy the time of the professional or be conceived as having the right to structure or dispose over the time of the service giver" (Adam *ibid*). While I argue that this relationship is far more complex in the sex industry than posed by Adam; demonstrated by the amount of controls imposed by sex workers in their management and regulation of time, this does contribute to a discussion of power relationships within these commodified and co-dependent relationships. In consideration of the myth of customer sovereignty, these views could have been internalised to an extent by some consumers, and together with the status of sex workers being held down by stigma, contributes to a difficult and complex battle for power.

The problem with not inviting clients to participate in research is a limited understanding of their motivations and experiences in consumption. Throughout this thesis I have used secondary evidence to make up for this shortfall, but it would be useful to explore client's accounts in the same way as I have explored sex workers', and in consideration of structural and personal concerns (Manyukhina 2018). I have attempted to provide an account of clients' consumption that accounts for both structural and personal concerns, using Archer's (2007) model of reflexivity, including economic contexts and practices of consumption. What is missing, however, is a full exploration of their personal concerns and how they experience the negotiation of these contexts. Instead, I have relied on the interpretations of sex worker participants to account for the actions of their clients, which is problematic in many ways, but also quite revealing in terms of the way sex workers perceive clients' contribution to processes and the relationship.

It is through these accounts that I argue the predominant conflict stems from the dissonance between production and consumption. The sex work experience represents consumption within leisure time for the client and production in work

time for the sex worker: these experiences occur simultaneously which causes friction within the relationship, which is evident in the demands made by each party. We seek and expect different experiences through production and consumption or work and leisure, which problematises service and experience work because the two uses of our time occur simultaneously.

8.5 Work Time and Leisure Time: Implications for Power

8.5.1 Distinctions and Similarities in Work Time and Leisure Time

Through the pervasive economic function of clock time in a capitalist system we have become accustomed to the precise temporal regulation of work and productivity. Work time represents a duration to be filled with purposeful activity, which has been internalised by participants to a certain extent. I have shown throughout this chapter how the worker looks to improve the productivity of work time and regulate to protect labour duration and intensity.

For clients, the sex work experience signifies a period of leisure time:

From the client's perspective, it is also important to acknowledge the modern commodification of pleasure and the recognition since the mid-19th century of the right of individuals to enjoy at the very least a specific and sectioned part of their lives in leisure, as a respite from possibly degrading and demeaning work (Brewis and Linstead 1998:224).

The separation of work and leisure is a consequence of the commodification of time and the practice of giving value to time spent at labour (Adam 1990; Thompson 1967; Tuckman 2005). Leisure is thus presented as 'free' time and different to the regulated time of work. This may lead some clients to purchase experiences they hope will occur outside the restraints of an economic clock time; signifying a dissonance between work and leisure.

This presentation of leisure time as *free* is problematic, however. Definitions of leisure time have changed throughout the decades according to societal conditions (Aitchison 2010; Bramham 2006), but there is consensus that leisure represents

more than freedom, or the residual time left after paid work (Gratton 2013). Rojek (2009) posits the question of what and who leisure time is free *from*. As such, the differences in meaning and experience of work and leisure time may be blurred.

A further complication to the power in these relations is that increasingly we turn to consumption activities for leisure (Bauman 2004), which necessitates economic engagement. The increasing fulfilment of leisure through consumption problematises the distinction between economic and leisurely activities, which renders leisure time as subject to the same regulation imposed on all economic activities, especially when the commodity is such that it relies on the synchronous labour time of another. Indeed, I have shown that in a civilising and increasingly self-regulating society, both sex workers as producers and clients as consumers desire regulation in the activities for which they are co-dependent.

Evidence demonstrates that clients seek the temporal bounds of the commodity (Bernstein 2007; Prasad 1999). During the experience clients want to *feel* that the simulated relationship is unbounded by time as a genuine relationship would, while simultaneously requiring the temporal limits imposed within a commodified exchange. Leisure time, while often limited by clock time, lacks the structure imposed through time at work. Sex workers present the space to reflect this; reducing many temporal cues from their working spaces and relying on non-physical forms of timing to regulate the appointment. Nevertheless, clients still seek to be limited temporally and to purchase a bounded experience. This represents a conflict between the demands of civilising and the character of endless consumption.

This conflict results in some clients pushing for the experience to be extended and untimed even by non-physical forms of timing. This potentially represents resistance to the symbols of an economic form of timing. Through purchasing the experience commodity, they engage in an economic activity, but because this consumption represents leisure, they wish to disguise the regulation imposed within economic activities. Economic time has become dominated by the symbol of the clock, and leisure represents the rejection of the structured measure of activities and resistance to clock time.

In relation to the separation of work and leisure, Marx (1976) demonstrates how under capitalism, rather than labouring to produce satisfaction for others, in later capital economies the labour time continues to produce surplus. This may offer some explanation for clients' seeking to gain 'extra time' and value for money within their appointment. In an economy which demands ongoing labour and surplus of profit, some clients attempt to achieve the same for their leisure time through consumption behaviours. Clients may seek to extract value by extending the appointment, whereas sex workers may wish to seek productivity by limiting the appointment.

I argue that we look to achieve productivity in leisure time as we do for work time, therefore. This can be seen in the celebration of busyness (Wajcman 2015) and the need for 'disciplined freedom' to achieve such busyness (Shir-Wise 2018). Productive leisure often has conflicting needs and demands to productive work, however. For sex workers, productive work necessitates achieving client satisfaction while protecting her own labour. Productive leisure, on the other hand, places additional demands on the labour time of the sex worker whereby clients seek fulfilment of desires and also attempt to achieve value for money. This recognises the complexity of leisure experiences (Aitchison 2010) and is both similar and disparate to arguments made by Rojek (2009) – albeit with a different method of arriving here – in that leisure represents the further practice of labour:

Leisure is not consumption activity, since this is ultimately driven by the capitalist goal of ceaseless accumulation. Nor is it activity designed to distract one from the cares and predicaments of work, since this merely reinforces the domination of work ethic by condemning leisure to a subsidiary, compensatory function. Leisure is a school for life. The end of schooling is to maintain and enhance competence, relevance and credibility. The successful attainment of this end requires perpetual emotional intelligence and emotional labour (Rojek 2009:189).

While I find that the evidence presented here does heavily implicate the role of consumption and accumulation in leisure, and therefore disagree with the sentiments presented in the first half of the quote above, Rojek's recognition of the labour involved in achieving leisure is somewhat similar to my own findings relating to the productivity of leisure and co-production of commodities. While I refer to productivity and regulation in leisure, Rojek describes schooling to satisfy the increasing necessity of emotional intelligence and emotional labour.

Rojek quickly dismisses Elias and Dunning's (2008) thesis on sport (or leisure) as a quest for excitement in a civilising society for not offering a complex account of leisure. Rojek has himself received criticism for overstating the distance between leisure and freedom (Snape 2011) and failing to engage with existing theories which already recognise the labour of leisure (Aitchison 2010). In light of this, I suggest a new interpretation of this general recognition of the labour and push for productivity involved in leisure time, taking account of Elias' civilising process (2000). I suggest here that the emotional intelligence and emotional labour Rojek refers to is increasingly necessary because of growing interdependencies and requirement to temper impulses. Chains of interdependency are ever-increasing in a globalised world and so, thus, is the need for regulation. This has extended the need to self-regulate by reading, interpreting and acting appropriately to, and with, emotions.

Importantly, in the sex industry, the requirements of leisure occur simultaneously to the requirements of work. As leisure has increasingly taken on the values of work; through the increasing need for emotional intelligence (Rojek 2009) and, as I have suggested, the need to achieve productivity in leisure time; there are many complementary regulatory features between work and leisure, which helps in the interactions between sex workers as producers and clients as co-producers and consumers. Productivity in work and productivity in leisure often have different motivations, however, which causes tension in a complex and dynamic balance of power.

8.5.2 Power and Co-Dependence in Leisure and Labour

There is thus a need to explore these relations of power in more detail and this processual approach which recognises change and flux is significant for existing theorisations of power in the sex industry. Both Adam (1990) and Elias (1992) ascertain that the powerful hold control of time, but only do so through the submission and self-regulation of the less powerful:

These strata are ceasing to be merely 'lower' social strata. The highly differentiated social apparatus becomes so complex, and in some respects so vulnerable that disturbances, at one point of the interdependency chains which pass through all social positions inevitably affect many others, thus threatening the whole social tissue ... But as the social functions and power of the masses take on greater importance in this way, these functions require and permit greater foresight in their execution. Usually under heavy social pressure, members of the lower strata grow more accustomed to restraining momentary affects" (Elias 2000:381).

Co-dependence in a civilising society depends upon those with less power to maintain its complex functioning, therefore. This should act to rebalance power to those lower strata, although self-regulation is so promoted that this acts to restrain their control of time.

In many ways, the co-production required for the sex work commodity increases the interdependency experienced by sex workers and clients, which potentially acts as an equalising force within their relationship; to a certain extent. Elias documents how, in a civilising society, "the dependence of all upon all becomes more evenly balanced" (2000:381) and I believe this balance is also relevant for the interactions of sex workers and clients. This chapter has attempted to demonstrate how power is asymmetrical and subject to fluctuations within the interactions between independent sex workers and their clients.

Accordingly, previous theories which attempt to ascribe power solely to the client as purchaser of a body (Barry 1995; Farley 2004; Jeffreys 1997) or to the sex worker as empowered through her ability to exploit the needs of clients (Califia 2000; Chapkis 1997; Rubin 1992) are problematic because they fail to acknowledge fluctuations of power between agents. I have demonstrated that the negotiations of regulation, power and resistance between clients and sex workers represent power relationships which are far more complex. Both sex workers and clients hold agency and are subject to structural limitations and opportunities. Through this, they both actualise power and resistance in different ways and in different moments. Power is thus enacted within these interactions, rather than being held entirely or predominantly by one party. In making this claim, I attempt to add to the theoretical discussion I begun in chapter six, which demonstrated the level of agency and control sex workers hold over the production and consumption of the commodity.

Marx's views on the development of leisure and labour time is potentially relevant in identifying the structural influences of capitalist consumerism. Looking historically, Marx highlighted the ways ancient Greek economies rested on the control of labour to provide leisure for another (Marx 1976), as Booth (1991:10) elucidates, "time was taken from one class in order to provide it to another; that is, the leisure of the latter rested on the bound time of the former". This gives the person afforded leisure time a certain status (Marx 1976). While this status may partially rest on the power afforded to those who purchase labour power, it can also be read that there is power assigned to those afforded leisure through the labour of another, in which case, the consumer is afforded power over the worker. This provides the basis for conflict in service and experience commodities where production and consumption of the commodity occur simultaneously.

Indeed, possessing the resources to access leisure time is a privilege (Rojek 2009). Debates around leisure time have often centred on the role of gender and class in accessing leisure spaces, for example (Bramham 2006). Sex workers thus labour to co-produce leisure with clients and, thus, arguably the client exercises privilege and enacts greater power through this practice. The expectations I have associated with our consumption culture could arguably be amplified by gender relations, also, in that male consumers are accustomed to access to leisure through the labour of women. As Brewis and Linstead suggest:

Most encounters are between men (clients) and women (prostitutes), which raises the question of whether men's time and women's time are commensurable, but also relates to how the division between work and leisure is achieved with regard to the relative investments of self-identity in the interaction – especially with regard to the motivations of the male client (1998:227).

Accessing leisure is afforded to some groups more than others as a result of the unequal distribution of resources and responsibilities, which has implications for gender and power. Indeed, the gendered nature of work and leisure problematises the distinction between the two further, as much of women's unpaid time is still obligated for domestic work (Henderson 2013). It would be useful in future research to compare the relationships of interdependency and power between sex workers and clients of different genders, and to seek male clients' interpretations of gendered power relations in these encounters.

Notwithstanding gendered power relations within the exchange, I have argued that clients act as co-producers and consumers of an experience commodity rather than acting as employers. Subsequently, they do not specifically hold control over the time and labour power of the sex worker, which leads to an interpretation of Marx's writing in relation to self-employment, rather than employment. While Marx's (1976) account of labour relations and time has been a useful starting point in many ways, his account is limited on relations associated with self-employment. This brings a different set of interests which also challenge the agency and power exercised by sex workers, but it does mean that clients cannot *dictate* the activities undertaken within a period of time, which necessarily alters power relations from employer-employee to producer-co-producer/consumer.

Sex workers must labour for the leisure of the client to receive an income, but clients also must labour to achieve leisure. Both actors seek to achieve the commodity through regulated interactions. I have demonstrated how both sex workers and clients contribute to this regulation and how both enact power and agency in regulating the appointment. There are competing interests, therefore, but the interdependence between sex workers and clients require them to negotiate these competing interests to achieve the aims of their work and leisure. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the process of civilising is uneven, and this exposes those involved to increased conflict because expectations of the relationship are yet to be fully communicated. It is through the forms of regulation I have discussed within these chapters that communicate expectations of self-restraint and the evidence suggests frustration when self-restraint is absent.

8.6 Conclusion

This chapter has documented the forms of temporal regulation used in the negotiations between sex worker and client; contributing further to the discussions of previous chapters around how commodification in the sex industry is temporally shaped. These forms of regulation are tacitly learned and enacted to maintain a balance between pleasure and regulation, which is paramount in an industry which synchronously involves work and leisure. Of course, as the previous chapter concluded, the process of civilising is unevenly experienced, which gives rise to tensions and conflicts within sex industry relationships.

This reveals the often-incongruent aims of the sex worker and client, and I have argued that the sex worker predominantly regulates the temporal bounds and productivity of her labour, while the client seeks to maximise the productivity of his leisure. While these aims are disparate, both confirm the extent to which time and money are economically equated: whether money is being earned or spent we have increasingly come to seek productivity through time. In contradiction to this, however, time is shown to hold much more than monetary value in the exchanges between sex workers and clients.

I have argued that fluctuating power is enacted and resisted in the negotiations of temporal regulation by sex workers and clients. This refutes existing arguments that consumers hold power through the act of payment for time (Adam 1990; Keat et al 2005), or through their access to leisure (Marx 1976), and also that sex workers are powerless through the sale of their body or *selves* (Barry 1995; Farley 2004; Jeffreys 1997). Crucially, through clients co-producing and consuming an experience they subsequently do not hold rights over the sex workers' labour or time, but the two parties are indeed co-dependent. I have suggested that this is a somewhat equalising force, but only to a certain extent. Exploration of the range of structural and personal contexts of the actors involved in these interactions demonstrate the challenges to this equity. Ultimately, there are opportunities for fluctuations of power throughout these interactions in varying and dynamic contexts.

9. Time Is More Than Just Money: Temporal Understandings of Commodification Processes

Time, in its polysemic understandings, acts as the anchor of this thesis; reflecting the centrality of time to work and, thus, the sex industry. Despite this, time is given little attention in sex industry research. This is especially pertinent given the extensive research on sex industry spaces (see Aalbers and Sabat 2012; Ashworth et al 1988; Hubbard 2004; Hubbard and Prior 2012; Hubbard and Sanders 2003, for example) and in consideration that space and time must be understood together (Harvey 1989). This thesis has attempted to redress this balance.

Through the course of this thesis, I have explored the temporal practices of independent escorts, using a multifaceted conception of time in recognition of its key role in work, and the lifecourse more generally. Having defined my use of time and the temporal in chapter three, a foundation was laid for the various forms of time investigated and discussed throughout the methodology and analysis. Pasts, presents and futures were analysed in consideration of their intrinsic connections to each other, which aided an understanding of vulnerability and flourishing through time in the trajectories and working decisions of participants. This provided a useful foreground to the exploration of the processes of commodifying time and its role in regulating the sex work encounter to produce specific sexual, intimate and emotional experiences as negotiated between sex workers and clients. Temporal practices act to regulate these increasingly interdependent but asymmetrical relationships and, as such, are a site of fluctuating power. This account of power contributes to, and challenges, existing theorisations of sex as work.

This concluding chapter reviews the evidence and claims presented throughout the thesis to reflect on the key themes and implications of the research: reminding the reader of contributions to understandings of agency and structural contexts; vulnerability; commodification processes; and power. Time is fundamental to these ideas, primarily in that processes occur through time as well as time being used to enact them. I begin by outlining the research methodology and approach [9.1], before considering the limitations of the study. This leads to a summary of the findings in response to the research questions [9.2], which acts as an overview of the arguments made throughout the thesis, contextualising the ensuing discussion. Lastly, I consider the main themes addressed through the thesis and discuss the implications these

have for future research, the sex industry, and the broader economy [9.3]. Ultimately, I contend the significance of temporal practices for understanding processes of work, commodification and power in the dynamic contexts of a capitalist and civilising society.

9.1 Temporal Approach to Research

9.1.1 Researching Time Through Time: Rationale, Research Questions and Temporal Methodology

Participants' contribution to the direction of the research led to an exploration of commodification, regulation, vulnerability, agency, and power. Crucially, time was vital in participants' accounts and I began to understand temporal practices as central to these processes. The research subsequently addressed the following research questions, which prioritise a sensitivity to the temporal:

- What shapes sex workers' experiences of 'vulnerability' and 'flourishing' through time and how does this influence working decisions?
- What processes of commodification are undertaken within the sex industry and how is this negotiated by those involved?
- How are temporal practices implicated and experienced in the regulation of sex industry relationships and encounters?

Time is used both conceptually and methodologically throughout this research, with each facilitating the other. In the methodological sense, researching temporally and longitudinally provided valuable and rich insights into the pasts, presents and futures of participants' lives, but also generated an understanding of how trajectories map onto, and contribute to, broader dynamic contexts. This was aided by the research methodology of time maps, which encouraged a rich investigation into time; eliciting memories and providing a tool for future projections. This methodological engagement with time necessarily roused consciousness of the role of time in work and the lifecourse, and I was able to witness change and continuity as it happened as well as identifying critical turning points in participants' recollections. Data was analysed using the casing methodology proposed by Emmel (2013), which enabled longitudinal and cross-sectional analysis of participants' narratives.

Taken collectively, this approach contributed to the identification and exploration of historical and ongoing shifts in the indoor sex industry and highlighted the responses of participants to changing economic contexts. This provoked a theorisation of generational differences in the sex industry as they have evolved through time. Cross-sectional analysis between the participants also illustrated how intersecting concerns influenced experiences of vulnerability and altered the decisions made by each participant through their trajectories. A focus on the temporal also illuminated the ways in which time and temporalities are practiced by actors in the sex industry, which allowed the development of a complex and nuanced account of power as it is practiced through time. Not only do the temporal understandings offered throughout the thesis contribute to theorisations of sex work, but the approach also exemplifies the synthesis of temporal methodology and explanations. Here, I detail how a feminist-figurational approach was effectual in achieving this temporal account.

9.1.2 Theoretical Approach

My understanding of sex workers' agency exercised through work was reflected in critical feminist standpoints (O'Neill 2001), which prioritise the narratives of sex workers while also engaging with the full range of structural and personal contexts which shape their lives. Developing this, the incorporation of figurational sociology's focus on historical understandings of dynamic processes allowed an exploration of such through time. A figurational approach is instrumental in understanding pluralities of experience within dynamic interdependencies, whereby relations of power can be explored. This approach gives original insights to theoretical debates which pervade the industry.

The incorporation of feminist and figurational concerns is not without problems, however, and I addressed feminists' concerns at the perceived failure of figurational sociologists to prioritise gender in their analyses [4.2]. Some have achieved synthesis by advocating for figurational sociology's ability to explore the constraining and enabling conditions of gender as they are developed through the interactions of individuals. That figurational approaches also look to the breadth of other processes does not preclude the role of gender. I thus proposed that a feminist-informed figurational approach addresses feminist issues through the exploration of a broad set of relations, which, in turn, informs feminist engagement and action.

Further synthesis was sought through the use of 'involved-detachment' (Manswell 2008). A figurational approach assists in this level of involved-detachment through 'forcing' the researcher to explore personal histories and broader contexts to understand processes through time. This was also achieved through an abductive strategy, which involved periods of withdrawal from fieldwork. Because of this continued immersion and withdrawal, the theories presented here are bound with the accounts of participants but critically engaged with and developed upon in order to offer explanations for complex events (Emmel 2020). I propose that the approach and methods used in the course of this research are of value to studies of the sex industry. Consequently, this thesis offers theorisations of the complex nature of processes in the sex industry over a period of time, although there are some limitations to these explanations which should be considered.

9.1.3 Limitations

My failure to recruit migrant and more BAME sex workers is of detriment to the study, but also to the imperative of listening to a broader spectrum of narratives. As I discussed earlier [4.7], I believe it difficult to recruit migrant sex workers as a result of general mistrust caused by the conflation of migrant sex work with trafficking (Connelly 2016). Exploring the accounts of these groups would be valuable, however, because of the potential differences in structural and personal concerns and experiences of vulnerability.

A further limitation of this research is the lack of engagement in client's perspectives and experiences. I have thus attempted to explain commodity relations using evidence from only one agent in this process. While participants were insightful and reflexive in offering their understandings of clients' actions, the theoretical arguments of this thesis, regarding processes of commodification and civilising would have potentially gained valuable depth from the narratives of clients. Researchers have usefully explored client motivations and narratives in relation to engaging in the industry (Bernstein 2007; Monto 2004; Pettinger 2011; Prasad 1999; Sanders 2008a; 2008b), which have been valuable resources in addressing exclusions in this research. It would nevertheless be useful to gain greater understanding of clients' accounts of co-production, consumption, regulation and power in sex industry

encounters, which represents an opportunity for additional analytical avenues and research engagement.

Participant accounts and their perceptions of client engagement were still useful, however, and the findings contribute to understandings of independent indoor sex work from the perspective of those working within it, despite not necessarily having relevance for migrant sex workers' experiences. Participants' insights led to the development and refinement of the research questions and, in what follows, I directly address the findings in reference to the questions posed.

9.2 Findings and Key Contributions

The findings addressed here are a product of the research design and decisions made throughout the research process, and in answering the research questions I demonstrate how the temporal methodology facilitated the gathering of such knowledge. My combination of figurational sociology, feminism and Marxism provides a new perspective from which to understand practices of work, time and power, and a qualitative longitudinal, temporally focused approach to research prompted rich data of value to the study of work, and sex work, in particular. A feminist-figurational approach, together with a Marxist understanding of economy, allowed an understanding of sex workers' experiences of work, which accounted for the broad spectrum of influences shaping their lives as well as an understanding of how their decisions and practices contributed to such contextual influences.

In accordance with the concerns of participants they speak to issues of vulnerability and agency; commodification processes; and the regulatory role of time in sex work. Time was heavily implicated in participant accounts, which reflects the centrality of time to economic activities and, subsequently, the role of time became an overarching point of investigation. Here, I discuss the findings that are presented throughout the thesis in direct relation to the research questions posed, which provides a useful framework for the discussion that follows.

9.2.1 What shapes sex workers' experiences of 'vulnerability' and 'flourishing' through time and how does this influence working decisions?

In accordance with the work of Emmel (2017), I discussed vulnerability in relation to agency, power and resistance to show that vulnerability does not remove agency but does form a concern of the actor, which thus shapes the ways they can enact and resist power [chapter 5]. Some valuable evidence on applying vulnerability narratives to sex workers already exists (Brown and Sanders 2017), and I have used this to frame participants' accounts. This recognises how experiences of vulnerability are influenced by contextual conditions but are proactively resisted through the actions of sex workers. As a result, experiences of vulnerability fluctuate through time according to the individual's personal and structural concerns.

In gathering these accounts, I have added to understandings of sex workers' vulnerability as it is experienced through time (Emmel 2017), promoting the value of longitudinal research in the sex industry. A longitudinal approach allowed me to witness change as it happened, in addition to providing an avenue for participants to explore change through pasts, presents and futures. This analysis demonstrated how experiences of vulnerability or flourishing influence our temporal perspectives, and the extent to which individuals were willing and able to plan in the longer-term. Subsequently, those with greater experiences of vulnerability, whether in the past or present, exercised less control over time overall, compared to those with greater experience of flourishing feeling relatively more in control of their time [5.4.4].

Participants' trajectories framed within an account and critique of vulnerability contribute to our understandings of the effects of capitalist practices on those working in the sex industry [5.1.3]. Participants who identified as middle class and who had enjoyed relative economic stability were more impacted by recent 'austerity' measures than those who identified as working class and had longer-term trajectories of vulnerability. Those who more directly ascribed changes to recent economic decline (Deborah, Gabrielle and Natalie) had experienced changes in their work as a result of their mainstream employment organisations implementing cost-saving efficiencies in the workplace. These practices included redundancies, falling wages, underemployment, work intensification and flexibilisation. This reflects the declining conditions of the labour market over the past few decades (Shildrick et al 2012), which reinforces how austerity measures imposed by the state and private

organisations are designed to exacerbate inequality (Hall et al 2013) and represent a further entrenchment of capitalism (Di Bernardo 2016). Other participants had experienced hardship and so it became clear that continued poor economic conditions had already influenced economic trajectories before the recent financial crisis (Emmel and Hughes 2010).

For the latter participants, their trajectories were marked by continued vulnerability as a result of classed and gendered experiences, which reflects the broader structural concerns produced through capitalist and patriarchal processes. In addition to the capitalist labour conditions detailed above, many participants were exposed to vulnerability through problematic interpersonal relationships and debt [5.1.4] and found that they were discriminated against at work because of their childcare responsibilities. Through gendered practices, therefore, participants were at increased risk of economic vulnerability both in the labour market and at home (Fuchs 1989; Scott et al 2008).

The levels of vulnerability experienced by participants influenced working decisions. In particular, participants' accounts demonstrated how reflexive decisions were made to enact agency to overcome vulnerability. I demonstrated that all participants, apart from Isobel, had decided to enter the sex industry after experiencing poor economic conditions in the mainstream labour market. For most participants, engaging in sex work was a proactive attempt to mitigate vulnerability and achieve flourishing, as sex work represented a higher financial value of time [5.2.1], as well as offering greater flexibility in working hours [5.2.2], and independence and control over time [5.2.3].

Participant accounts indicated similar demands and demise to their time at work within the sex industry [5.3], however, and the mirroring of such shifts support evidence demonstrating the mainstreaming of the sex industry (Brents and Sanders 2010). Despite entering the industry to gain greater control over time, sex workers still experience vulnerability as a result of capitalist temporalities practiced in work and consumption. Demands for immediate and constant access are increasing among clients [8.4], which threatens the cooperation within interdependent relationships and poses a challenge to sex workers' control of time. This influences sex workers' decision making, and some are encouraged to work more frequently and intensely to

meet demand. This has implications for the health and wellbeing of the sex worker, which, subsequently, shapes experiences of vulnerability.

The mainstreaming of the sex industry has also done relatively little to combat the stigma experienced by sex workers through the course of their work. Stigma exacerbates vulnerability through prohibiting future work prospects outside of the industry, for example [5.4.2]. While sex workers develop methods to avoid or manage stigma, participants' accounts demonstrate how their stigmatised position undermines their control of time and encourages poor temporal behaviours among clients [8.3]. The detrimental impact of stigma upon temporal regulation further contributes to experiences of vulnerability in the sex industry, therefore, and sex workers impose temporal punishments for clients who demonstrate such attitudes. Yet, the lack of legitimisation for sex work as a form of work prevents sex workers using more formal temporal controls, such as taking deposits for advanced bookings, for instance, which would somewhat protect the value of their time. The internet nevertheless acted as a useful tool to mitigate potential vulnerability as a result of poor temporal behaviours through the communication of expectations prior to the encounter [7.3]. In this way, it contributes to safety and security measures, but it also introduces vulnerability through the risk of identification or discriminatory practices towards sex workers [5.3.2].

Working practices, experiences of mainstreaming, and stigma will vary across sex industry markets. Engaging with women working in different markets of the industry may also reveal further effects of declining economic conditions on the industry, particularly as more economically vulnerable groups are likely to have more engagement with support services and need for accessing welfare. I would not, however, claim that the sample presented here are privileged, and despite evidence of greater numbers of middle-class sex workers (Bernstein 2007), the participants of this research, and also my own experiences during recruitment, suggest that while there may be more middle-class workers in the industry, there is a greater proportion of working-class sex workers in Northern England, at least. All participants experienced varying levels of vulnerability in some form. Regardless of economic backgrounds, all were subject to the effects of stigma and the demands of consumer practices, which were managed in different ways among participants. This suggests that we should proceed with caution when defining indoor workers as

'relatively empowered' in terms of their safety, as this may act to conceal their varying and textured experiences of vulnerability (Brown and Sanders 2017).

This is relevant for policy makers and support services of sex workers. Policy narratives frame sex workers as vulnerable to regulate behaviours (Brown and Sanders 2017). This is often conducted by focusing on the circumstances and needs of street sex workers, at the expense of those working in other markets of the industry. This also frames the priorities of funding bodies, which subsequently influences the focus of support services (Connelly 2016). Research which highlights the circumstances and needs of indoor sex workers can act to challenge this, therefore. Participants' narratives highlight issues of safety, stigma, financial management and self-regulation, which take place in their places of work – either at home, in hotels or in privately-rented premises – or in online spaces. This indicates a need to respond to these particular circumstances to provide support to indoor sex workers. Simultaneously, however, these narratives should also recognise the agency possessed and used to resist vulnerability, and interventions should not assume that vulnerability removes agency (Emmel 2017). Importantly, accounts need to reflect nuanced experiences in the sex industry as produced through the practices of sex workers and clients. This research addresses this through an investigation of commodification processes, which is the focus of the ensuing discussion.

9.2.2 What processes of commodification are undertaken within the sex industry and how is this negotiated by those involved?

Using a relational account of commodification processes (Marx 1976), I identified sex workers as self-employed producers of the commodity, in that they have a significant level of agency to direct and bound their labour [6.1]. This should be understood within the contexts of their structural and personal concerns (Archer 2007), however, which influence working decisions and, thus, necessarily shape commodification processes and relationships with clients. In particular, the sex industry has been shaped by capitalist values of productivity and efficiency [8.2], heightened consumer choice [6.3], a prioritisation of authentic experiences [6.4] and changing constructions of gender and sexuality corresponding with a shrinking separation between what is considered public and private (Bernstein 2007). These broader contexts shape levels of vulnerability which influences working decisions

and, likewise, processes of commodification. Importantly, practices in the sex industry also shape the contexts in which they occur.

Correspondingly, I explored participants' accounts of commodity relations to refute that clients act as employers of the sex workers' labour. Instead, particularly in this market of the industry, participants' accounts represented clients as consumers and co-producers of the commodity [6.2.3]. Clients purchase an allocation of time, but they have limited demand over the content of that time; being able to only request services within the boundaries of the sex workers' offer (Korczynski 2013). Commodification processes are thus a product of the negotiations between sex worker as producer and client as consumer, who both act within the contexts of their personal and structural concerns (Archer 2007; Manyukhina 2018).

In asking participants to describe their appointments and how they are temporally managed, I proposed that although the indoor sex industry predicates on the sale of time, the content of that time entails a complex experience using sexual, bodily and emotion work to achieve the sexual and emotional satisfaction of the client. The efforts towards the commodification of time undertaken here acts to bound the experience, but also to enact it, through various forms of time, such as timing and tempo to manipulate the experience towards an immediate or gradual commodified intimacy according to clients' preferences [6.5]. The commodification of time also took on different meanings to those involved in longer-term relationships with regular clients [7.2], where experiences are elongated but manipulated to balance familiarity and novelty. To define these processes of commodification, therefore, I distinguished between time, service, and experience to propose that sex workers and clients co-produce a temporally bound sexual and emotional experience [6.4]. This reflects how the sex industry has reacted to broader shifts towards experience commodities in consumption practices.

The commodification of experience demands greater engagement from the consumer, which has further implications for the definition of commodity relations. Clients' role in co-producing the experience (Campbell 1987) increases levels of interdependence. This is not to remove the responsibility of production from sex workers, however, as they are still responsible for providing the framework within which the experience can be simulated, and the repercussions of an unsuccessful

experience are more detrimental to the sex worker, with potential impact to her income, wellbeing or safety. Further, as I have mentioned, both sex worker and client act within the contexts of their structural and personal concerns and these may not always align. The extent of co-production is limited, therefore, although both are dependent on the other in undertaking the production and consumption of the commodity. This shift towards co-production is indicative of increasing co-dependence required of civilising relationships, which is echoed throughout Western society (Elias 2000).

This has implications for relations of power in the sex industry which I discuss in more detail shortly [9.3.3], but it also has implications for sex workers' working practices and conditions. I identified a number of contextual changes surrounding commodification processes, including increasing differentiation of social roles, which leads to greater individualisation but also greater interdependence between the individuals and parties involved in the sex industry [7.1]. This is also marked by a centralisation of power, and I demonstrated how the increasing role of the internet in mediating and coordinating commodity relations contributed to the centralisation of power through the external communication of expectations [7.3]. The mediating role of online technologies contributes to the maintenance of the pleasure balance in commodity relations, which is especially important considering the sex industry relies on the sale of pleasure and emotions [7.2]. This highlighted significant tensions in civilising, not least because the increase need of self-restraint acted to dampen the enjoyment of interactions (Elias 2000). The conditions of particular consumer cultures and stigma were also shown to challenge the process of civilising in the sex industry. The conflicts that occur throughout the process of civilising signify the unevenness of this process, which is reflected in sex workers' and clients' temporal practices.

9.2.3 How are temporal practices implicated and experienced in the regulation of sex industry relationships and encounters?

Importantly, time is required to regulate behaviour in these conditions (Elias 1992). Time is heavily implicated at work and this is evident in the way the sex industry is organised around the sale of time, and how sex workers and clients regulate their increasingly interdependent relationships through temporal controls. Time acts to

bound the commodity, which was demanded and practiced by both sex workers and clients to protect the intensity of labour and the boundaries of consumption. Previous evidence had shown that both sex workers and clients benefitted from the boundaries of commodified sex and intimacy (Bernstein 2007; Prasad 1999) and the evidence presented here confirmed this. To date, however, there were no detailed understandings of how time and temporality were practiced in the sex industry, which forms the crucial contribution of this thesis: demonstrating how the sex industry exchange is necessarily and crucially regulated through time.

In addition to the bounding of labour, time acts to create and regulate specific forms of experience, which manifests in the use of repetition, rhythm and tempo [6.5]. Temporal perspectives are manipulated and negotiated in the creation of the simulation, and sex workers simulate intimacy by hinting at longer- or shorter-term relationships and experiences. This takes the form of producing familiarity through temporal behaviours with clients to create intimacy and speed up the experience, but tempo is also used to slow experiences to create levels of comfort. Temporal manipulation is also used in the management of longer-term, regular relationships with clients, where clients may expect deepened familiarity alongside 'fresh' experiences, while protecting the level of emotional connection and boundaries. Further, the perception of time is shaped through the presentation of sex work spaces; removing demarcations of time as a means of resembling timeless leisure and endless consumption (Reith 2013). Sex workers are skilful in their manipulation of the temporal to manage the commodity relations.

In the form of rhythm, repetition and routine, time is also used to regulate the relationship for safety [chapters 7 and 8]. By building routine, or habits, into the encounter, sex workers maintain greater capacity for the awareness of danger (Young 1988). This also has relevance for the control of impulses as a condition of a civilising process (Elias 2000). To successfully civilise, expectations of behaviour must be communicated and subsequently self-regulated, and participants' accounts demonstrated that temporal behaviours were central in the regulation and civilising of relationships with clients, as in all increasingly interdependent relationships within a civilising society. The internet has also become a key site of communicating temporal boundaries and expectations [7.3 and 8.4.3], allowing the communication of definitions of 'good/bad' clients and 'good/bad' sex workers based on their self-

regulation of temporal behaviours. These definitions represent the increasing regulation imposed on behaviours and emotions within interdependent relationships, as a result of an ongoing process of civilising.

Expectations of temporal behaviours are communicated through temporal rewards and punishments, which act as demonstrations of power and resistance within the relationship [8.2, 8.3, 8.4]. Rewards such as extra time, positive reviews and greater intensity were offered for 'good' temporal behaviours, such as arriving and leaving on time and repeat custom. Punishments such as enforcing periods of waiting were used for poor temporal self-regulation such as poor synchronisation, disregard for temporal boundaries, and enforcing periods of waiting through late arrivals, for example. In these interactions I identified how power is enacted and resisted through temporal regulation, self-restraint and resistance; speaking to existing theories which demonstrate how power is enacted through time (Elias 1992; Schwartz 1974; Sharma 2014). In the exercising and resisting of regulation and power, as evidenced in participants' accounts of their relationships with clients, I argued that power is fluctuating and negotiated between agents.

Importantly, the structural and personal concerns of sex workers and clients are both complementary and conflicting: both want to achieve the undertaking of a successful experience commodity, but for one this represents work and for the other it is leisure [8.5]. This creates a dissonance in the motivations and behaviours of those involved in commodity relations. Both seek to achieve productivity through their time, therefore, but with differing motivations. The consideration of this relationship through the lens of time makes an important contribution to existing theorisations of sex industry relationships. The findings presented here highlight key themes for consideration, which contribute to theorisations and understandings of work in the sex industry.

9.3 Discussion: Key Themes and Implications for the Sex Industry

9.3.1 Time is Money: The Commodification of the Indoor Sex Industry

The quantification of time in the form of clock time allows for its commodification (Adam 1990): it is denoted an economic value and ceaselessly traded in the form of

purchasing and consuming labour, services and experiences. Quantified time also introduces a means for the measurement and control of productivity in our daily lives; at work or leisure. In our current economy, the idea that time *is* money is promoted: the two constructs are positioned as intrinsic to each other; each measured against the other. This is reflected in the sex industry, which increasingly behaves in the same ways as the mainstream economy (Brents and Sanders 2010) and is evident in the quantification and measuring of productivity in the daily lives of sex workers, as described by the participants in this study. Sex workers sell a symbolic time unit in exchange for money, and they measure, monitor and regulate time for productivity in an attempt to protect the extent and intensity of their labour while achieving customer satisfaction. Clients, too, act to commodify time through purchasing units of time and seeking productivity in leisure time. For both, productivity through time is paramount whether that time is shaped by money earned or spent.

Despite these intrinsic values of productivity, however, I have shown through this thesis that time represents far more than economic value, which is evident in practices and experiences of commodification. Through the commodification of time – which involves the manipulation of time, timing, tempo, rhythm and repetition – a specific and individualised experience is produced and consumed. The sex worker and client manipulate these forms of time in their actions and interactions to negotiate an experience in consideration of the client's desires and the sex worker's boundaries. Experiences are diverse, therefore, but there is often an element of repetition through which the sex worker can regulate for safety [8.3.1]. Significantly, the experience is also bound by time which protects the extent of the sex worker's labour but is also beneficial to the client in bounding his leisure.

These negotiations and the shared aim of productivity through time speaks to the levels of interdependence within these economic relations and I have illustrated how sex workers rely on clients to co-produce the experience. These interdependent civilising relationships are asymmetrical, nevertheless, and expectations and responsibilities in commodification processes are constantly renegotiated by sex workers and clients. Indeed, as the 'service provider' in pursuit of financial remuneration, sex workers maintain primary responsibility for satisfying clients and so I have argued that they play a more significant role in commodification processes.

This has implications for sex workers' experiences of time and any negative effects of commodification.

The commodification of the personal or intimate, in particular, is often perceived as having higher costs to the workers' self than commodification of other types of labour (Anderson 1993; Radin 1996). Subsequently, the commodification of the body and intimacy, and the industries which capitalise on it, have received considerable criticism because private spheres should not be tainted by capitalism and should remain reciprocal. As I have argued [6.2], however, these arguments are founded upon the flawed separation of emotions and rationality (Goleman 1996), whereby emotions are rationalised through payment. This leads to the moralist-driven perspective that the rationalising of emotions through payment alienates and objectifies the worker and represents her exploitation. I argue instead that, while sex workers do experience a level of alienation, objectification and, subsequently, exploitation (as do all workers), they reflexively negotiate these conditions and, in some examples, use them to their advantage.

Indeed, van der Veen (2001) proposes that clients' desire for the commodity leads to their increased labour to purchase it, thus rendering the client to the status of commodity, also. In my account of commodification processes the client indeed labours to co-produce the commodity, which implicates the client further. The dependence clients have on the sex work commodity, as well as their role in co-producing it, suggests that any effects of commodification may also be experienced by clients. This problematises accounts which suggest that commodification is inherently objectifying and alienating for the sex worker and we must instead explore experiences of work and commodity production and consumption with more nuance (van der Veen 2001). This provides us with the opportunity to recognise and explore levels of both exploitation and enjoyment through work in different ways.

To develop this further, Bernstein (2007) identifies historical contextual shifts towards bounded authenticity in the sex industry, which recognises the primacy of commodified intimacy in post-industrial consumption practices. I have questioned the extent to which the indoor sex industry in Northern England requires the same level of authenticity as displayed among Bernstein's sample in San Francisco – particularly among the sex workers, themselves – but this only serves to demonstrate

the uneven nature of processes. The findings presented here nevertheless confirm a shift towards bounded authenticity in the form of bounded authentic experiences. The limitations placed on such experiences are beneficial to both the sex worker and client, and I proposed that clients distinguish between such regulated relationships and non-commercial relationships. Indeed, I demonstrated how ongoing shifts towards a civilising society indicates a differentiation between commodified and non-commodified relationships [7.1.2], whereby meaning is found in both and participation in one does not necessarily diminish the role of the other. Comparisons between the two are futile and ineffective, therefore. This is significant for theoretical debates surrounding the sex industry, particularly in relation to levels of exploitation and choice, and the extent to which prostitution is considered 'work'.

9.3.2 Sex Work as Work: Contribution to Theoretical Understandings of the Sex Industry

Weeks (2011) posits that we give considerable attention to the comparisons of different forms of work and this thwarts accounts of the practice of work in general. We should therefore look to develop accounts of work which highlight the complexities in experiences of work itself, rather than arguing that one form of work is more exploitative than the other. Within this thesis I have responded to such criticism by exploring the contexts which shape the reflexive decisions of participants in the labour market more broadly, as well as the sex industry specifically. In these experiences, both enjoyment and exploitation can be found (van der Veen 2001), within the broader economic context of increasing individualisation, efficiency and privatisation, encouraging declining labour conditions both in the mainstream economy and sex industry. It is thus unhelpful to solely consider sex work as distinctly exploitative in comparison to other forms of mainstream work.

This is pertinent for the sex industry, which has been plagued by a binary debate between choice and exploitation. It is unfortunate that these debates continue because they hinder our understanding of the sex industry (Connelly 2016; Maher 2000; Weitzer 2012) and continue to influence policy decisions (Kantola and Squires 2004), and we should instead investigate the breadth and depth of experiences; exploring the dynamic contexts of a diverse sex industry. Indeed, my exploration of the interactions between sex workers and clients, for example, reveals the ways in

which commodification processes are undertaken in negotiation of each actor's personal and structural concerns, which leads to an account of power relationships which problematise existing theorisations.

I have argued that feminist perspectives on the sex industry are often driven by the ways in which they have defined the sex work commodity, and at times these definitions are erroneous or reductionist. For this reason, I am particularly critical of some of the propositions offered by those who define the sex work commodity as the sale of the body or the self (Barry 1995; Farley 2004; Jeffreys 1997). While the body and being of the sex worker is used to evoke feelings and sensations within the sex industry encounter, the sex worker maintains control and ownership of her body throughout. Further, such reductionist perspectives fail to consider the changing contexts, practices, and meanings ascribed to commercial sex. Through a historical perspective, Bernstein suggests that radical feminists fail to recognise broader shifts from the prioritisation of companionate and romantic sexuality in modern-industrial sexual commerce, towards the prioritisation for bounded authenticity in both commercial and non-commercial sexual relationships in the post-industrial sex industry. For Bernstein, then, feminist debates centre on the changing meanings ascribed to commodified intimacy. In agreement with Bernstein, I have documented changing contexts and practices in the indoor sex industry in Northern England to demonstrate how sex work is practiced *as work*.

Conversely, there is also a tendency to temper the challenges which arise through prostitution in an attempt to achieve recognition of sex work as work (Doezema 1993, cited in Chapkis 1997:8). This can be seen in some accounts of sex-positive feminists (Califia 2000; Chapkis 1997; Rubin 1992), who argue that sex work is empowering in that sex workers can exploit clients' desires for economic gain. Once again, while there may be truth to this for some in certain sectors of the sex industry, this view fails to recognise the nuanced experiences in diverse and dynamic contexts. In the same way I contend that enjoyment can be found in exploitative work practices, so can exploitation be found in enjoyable work, therefore.

Others have offered a more nuanced account of commodification in the sex industry, defining the commodity as a service consisting of emotional labour and body work (see Cohen et al 2013, for example). These accounts prioritise the narratives of sex

workers and recognise the complexity of the sex work commodity in many ways. Largely, they argue that there is nothing inherently immoral or exploitative about the commodification and sale of sex and intimacy *in particular*. Instead, they look to structural conditions to highlight sources of oppression. A legal system which acts to exacerbate vulnerability and entrench stigma is particularly problematic, which compels activism in support of decriminalisation (English Collective of Prostitutes 2016).

The findings presented in this thesis also recognise the detrimental impact of structural contexts, such as the legal and economic contexts in which sex work occurs. Alongside existing calls for decriminalisation, I, too, advocate that changes to legal definitions of sex work will act to reduce the stigma and subsequent vulnerability experienced by sex workers in the course of their work, which will remove barriers to exercising power through commodity relations. As I illustrated in section 8.3, sex workers attempt to temporally regulate against stigma as they perceived clients' disrespectful attitudes and subsequent poor temporal control a result of the stigma they experience. Recognising sex work as work would encourage a reduction in stigma, respect for the temporal boundaries of their labour, and more cooperative commodity relations, therefore.

Marxist feminist approaches contribute further by looking to capitalist and patriarchal systems to understand sex workers' experiences, which lends itself to analyses of the exploitation inherent in these contexts. In theorising the complexity of commodification processes through the interrogation of the roles of sex workers and clients in commodity relations, I have built on this by distinguishing between time and labour in the sex industry. A unit of time is purchased, but the content of that time is negotiated according to the offer and limits of the sex worker and the desires of the client. This leads to an account of fluctuating power. In exploring the temporal controls and agency enacted I have suggested that the client purchases an experience bound by time, rather than purchasing labour time itself. In doing so, the client in these transactions acts as a consumer rather than employer, who is thus unable to *hold* control over the labour of the sex worker. Instead, sex workers and clients negotiate to commodify an experience through time in consideration of their needs and boundaries. This approach recognises how control and power is negotiated, rather than held by one or the other: a point which I return to shortly [9.3.3].

Influenced by critical feminist perspectives (O'Neill 2001) and explored through a figurational approach (Elias 1987), the account presented recognises sex work as work and demonstrates how this work is practiced. Drawing on Archer's (2007) model of reflexivity and a model of fluctuating vulnerability through time in recognition of agency (Emmel 2017), I have demonstrated that sex workers are not passive victims nor impervious to structural inequalities. Instead, I have suggested we take account of the broad range of contexts influencing the lives of sex workers to understand their work. This approach reveals findings that are important for our understandings of the sex industry more generally. An understanding of why sex workers make the working decisions they do, which describes the ways reflexive individuals act within the context of structural and personal concerns, could aid our understanding of why sex workers often collectively or instinctively act in ways to protect their interests, as well as why they sometimes act outside of best practice guidelines. More broadly, this approach encourages a progression from comparisons of sex work to other forms of work, and rather to examine the exploitation and enjoyment found in sex work in the same ways as it is found in work more generally (Weeks 2011).

Further, in consideration of the exploitative conditions of work, I propose that sex work researchers and activists look beyond calls for decriminalisation and extend critique to the discriminatory and detrimental impact of capitalist practices on the sex industry. While decriminalisation is important in achieving legitimisation for sex work, a decriminalised model alone may not relieve sex workers of the exploitative conditions experienced by workers throughout the economy. Legitimation would be achieved through securing worker rights and benefits, health and safety standards and unionisation, and only through this can we achieve a working model which allows for greater equality through work. As Bernstein argues:

The existence of gender equity policies within the workplace and of more general social and economic remedies to assist low-wage and migrant workers (such as living wage policies, training programs, and the extension of basic labor protections to informal-sector employment) would certainly render women's decisions to engage in sexual labor, at all class levels much more meaningful (2007:186).

As I demonstrated earlier [9.2.1], the vulnerability experienced by sex workers as a result of capitalist and patriarchal processes influences working decisions. Challenging such processes acts to confront the vulnerability experienced by women through the course of their economic participation, which has implications for the levels of choice sex workers are perceived to exercise in their engagement in sex work. This approach also has implications for relations of power in the sex industry, which is the focus of the ensuing discussion.

9.3.3 Power in Civilising Sex Worker-Client Relationships

The discussion thus far has demonstrated how commodification processes are undertaken through the interactions and negotiations of sex workers and clients in consideration of their personal and structural concerns. This co-production reflects the extent to which sex workers and clients are reliant on each other and seek similar aims: to produce and consume a bounded experience. This increasing interdependence reframes the discussion of choice and exploitation in regard to sex workers relying on clients for income and assuming clients lack the same dependency on sex workers. Both are interdependent in commodification processes to certain – albeit fluctuating – extents, which problematises accounts which render either as ‘holding’ greater power.

While this interdependence signals the potential for a more even balance of power, a range of structural and personal contexts influences the power exerted and resisted on a micro level. Power is fluctuating and changeable in the negotiations between sex worker and client: in sex workers’ and clients’ ability and willingness to make the other wait [8.2], for example, they demonstrate that both exercise power at various times (Schwartz 1974). The concerns of individual sex workers and clients will certainly conflict at times which, among other things, are shaped by experiences of vulnerability over time (Emmel and Hughes 2014), and these varying concerns are negotiated in the interactions between sex workers and clients. Expressions of power manifest in these negotiations.

I have identified a range of the structural and personal concerns of participants in this thesis, including experiences of vulnerability created through labour conditions, living arrangements, and childcare responsibilities on a personal level, for example,

and the legal, cultural and economic contexts at a structural level. Practices of power are influenced by these concerns, although, as I have shown, a disadvantaged position does not preclude inability to access power. Indeed, a structural condition is produced through the actions of individuals and the relations they have with each other, and so processes such as capitalism or patriarchy certainly shape experiences but do not determine them.

Consequently, imbalances of power do correspond with gendered experiences of vulnerability as produced through the relationships between men and women. Most of the female participants presented in this thesis had experienced vulnerability through gendered practices [5.1.4], and these experiences of vulnerability influence reflexive decisions in attempts to achieve flourishing. Women's positions in the labour market is one such example, where poor conditions resulting from discrimination, childcare requirements and flexibilised work, for example, could increase the risk of exploitative conditions and subsequently impact levels of choice made through work. As such, these actions also shape the power enacted through relationships. To fully understand these gendered relations, research with male clients would provide further information on their concerns and how these shape commodification processes and the expressions of power inherent within them.

Further, I presented evidence that the sex work experience is often based on heteronormative scripts (Sanders 2008b), which contributes to gendered relations and, arguably, inequalities. This is done within a simulated and temporally bound experience, however, and does not necessarily signal a level of oppression. Previous evidence has shown how performing femininity in this way demonstrates sex workers' ability to use agency and power in exploiting their femininity as a resource (Carrier-Moisan 2015; Sanders 2005d). It is likely more appropriate to explore the range of meanings actors give to their gendered practices, as they should be considered in light of all structural and personal contexts. These practices nevertheless demonstrate the need to consider gendered relations in accounts of power within the temporally bound sex industry experience.

Within a temporally bound experience, sex workers can control the extent to which they capitalise on their gender, as well as protecting the temporal boundaries of labour more generally. Temporal boundaries are also sought by clients in their

preference for sex and intimacy in commodity form (Bernstein 2007; Prasad 1999). This recognises the limitations placed upon the commodity through the sale of time. I have demonstrated the levels of power sex workers exercise over time which negates any positioning of them as passive victims whose bodies and selves are bought and sold. Sex workers sell units of their time within which to co-produce an experience with clients, who predominantly act within the boundaries set by sex workers. This negates their ability to 'command' the sex worker in any way during the allotted time: the work is undertaken through negotiations between the two.

Although clients are purchasing the experience, it is the time which is given value and so both the labour power and the experience commodity are bound together. This creates tension as production and consumption occur simultaneously (Korczynski 2013; Tregenna 2009), which is tacitly managed by the sex worker through discreet temporal controls to maintain a balance between regulation and pleasure. Conflicts arise from the sometimes-contradictory aims of productivity through work and leisure, therefore. Both sex workers and clients wish to achieve the production and consumption of the experience commodity, but as this synchronised activity involves the work time of the sex worker and the leisure time of the client, they seek different outcomes from their productivity. Clients seek to maximise pleasure and value for money, which results in pressuring the temporal boundaries of the experience. Sex workers, meanwhile, are looking for efficiency in their work to protect their labour. I argue that we are witnessing an uneven process of civilising in sex industry relationships, therefore, and the uneven nature of this process is marked by the conflicts between simultaneous work time and leisure time, and the different expectations we have for labour and consumption practices.

To navigate these changing expectations, both sex workers and clients use internet hosts to coordinate and synchronise meetings and communicate expectations, which represents an extension of chains of interdependence. This signifies a form of centralised control, whereby the expectations of self-restraint are communicated externally, which helps sex workers and clients to manage the pleasure balance in their relationships. This centralised control could act to displace power from sex workers to internet hosts, but in taking on a regulatory role, it also acts to increase safety for sex workers (Sanders et al 2018). The civilising of the sex industry is also evident in the focus on self-regulation and the tempering of impulses. Sex workers

and clients look to secure reliable and restrained relationships in their encounters in the industry; screening those who fail to comply with these standards. In screening and self-regulating, they contribute to the civilising of the industry. Of course, I have only investigated one market of the industry, and one that I think is most likely to have experienced civilising because the decentralisation and greater need for coordination demands interdependence and civilising bonds. With this in mind, findings may differ in other markets.

The generational differences identified within the working practices of participants and consumptive practices of clients represent a further tension of the civilising process. With specific reference to cultures of consumption, participants who were newer to the industry appeared to be more accustomed to and readily engaged with the increasingly capitalist demands of consumers. This can be seen in their greater investments in online technologies, willingness to communicate with clients outside of the appointment times, seeming leniency in the temporal boundaries of appointments, and greater focus on the experiential requirements of commodities. This has relevance for the ways that sex worker support projects engage with independent escorts as much of the current advice for maintaining safe boundaries centres on temporal limits and non-negotiation with clients (see UKNSWP 2019, for example). It also has implications for the ways that sex workers work with each other, as some participants found it difficult to work in cross-generational groups because of the conflicts in working practices.

Additionally, as seen in some clients' disregard for temporal controls, sex work stigma acts to limit the power exercised through work and thus threatens the co-dependence required in civilising relationships. Stigma could be reduced by reviewing the legal status of sex work (Weitzer 2017), as the law currently stands to problematise the working practices of sex work and force the covert nature of the work. Further, the legitimisation of sex work through worker rights and benefits, health and safety standards and unionisation would allow sex work to operate within the structures of work, which would improve working conditions in the industry. As I have contended, this requires ongoing critique of, and interventions to remediate, exploitative capitalist practices shaping the formulation of work.

9.4 Closing Remarks

A longitudinal exploration of participants' pasts, presents and futures contributed to a comprehensive understanding of participants' work decisions in the contexts of their personal and structural concerns. This temporal approach is central to understanding change and continuity in dynamic processes, which allows a nuanced account of sex industry relationships in flux. The temporal methodology prioritised time as a methodological tool and a theoretical crux from which to analyse experiences of work. Time is central to the formulation of work and is, thus, invaluable as a mode of studying practices and experiences of the sex industry.

A temporal approach was vital in defining and understanding dynamic commodification processes undertaken through sex worker and client relationships. Both increasingly work cooperatively, or co-produce, a sexual, intimate and emotional experience through the commodification of time. These temporal practices are a site of fluctuating power, where sex workers and clients self-regulate and impose expectations of temporal behaviours. Both seek productivity through time and do so using forms of temporal regulation for effective cooperation; to not only bound labour and consumption practices, but to produce an effective experience and negotiate balances of power. These negotiations reflect the increasing interdependence in, and civilising of, sex industry relationships, which mirrors broader civilising in society (Elias 2000).

I have acknowledged the limitations to this co-production, however, in that the intentions and expectations of sex workers and clients are not always aligned. Sex workers undertake labour to co-produce an experience for an income, while clients co-produce an experience as part of leisure. Further, consumption activities sought in leisure time problematise the perceived freedom from economic demands gained through leisure. Consequently, both seek productivity in this time, but the objectives of productive work and productive leisure are sometimes incongruent. In these instances, I have shown how temporal regulation undertaken by sex workers and clients conflict; with sex workers seeking to counteract clients' 'endless wanting' (Campbell 1987) and some clients pushing the boundaries of leisure time. These misaligned expectations of behaviours cause tension in relationships and challenge the co-productive nature of commodification processes in the sex industry, which is

symptomatic of the uneven nature of civilising. The communication and acceptance of these expectations are conducted through the practice and resistance to temporal controls, but also facilitated through online technologies. The speed in which these technologies facilitate processual change can be problematic, however. Within these contexts, sex workers and clients struggle to adapt and self-regulate in the way that an increasingly interdependent and civilising relationship requires them to.

While there is evidence of greater co-dependence in sex industry relationships, therefore, this process is uneven and subject to fluctuations of power. This is evident in the power and resistance enacted through temporal practices, which is problematised by the dynamic contexts in which sex work is conducted. This theorising of agency and power problematises existing theoretical accounts of the sex industry that determine sex work as exploitative and oppressive through the male client's purchase of a female body. My argument is that the male client does not purchase a body; he co-produces a bounded experience through a cooperative process of commodification. My account of participants' vulnerability and flourishing in varying dynamic contexts contributes to theoretical accounts that recognise a level of choice exercised through work in the industry; understood within the context of structural and personal concerns. In this way, I have demonstrated that both choice, enjoyment and exploitation are present in experiences of work (van der Veen 2001; Weeks 2011).

In this thesis I have proposed that understanding commodification processes in the sex industry is crucial to these theorisations. Despite the centrality of time in the sex industry exchange, most theorists have concentrated on the content of the encounter to the detriment of our temporal understandings. The evidence presented throughout the thesis demonstrates the complex nature of experiences which are produced and consumed through the commodification of time. Time is manipulated to produce particular experiences according to the needs of sex workers and clients. I have also demonstrated that these temporal practices are a site of fluctuating power, which progresses debates in recognition of the complexity of processes and relationships in the sex industry. In consideration of the dynamic capitalist, civilising and patriarchal processes in the 'West', these findings are potentially relevant for temporal practices undertaken in all forms of work.

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Appendix I: Participant Invitation

The following was sent electronically via Adultwork to a selection of female sex workers in Northern England who offered sexual services to men:

Dear _____ ,

Please forgive the uninvited email – my name is Laura Jarvis-King and I'm a researcher at the University of Leeds. For 4 years I have been researching changes to the economy and working conditions with independent sex workers and having interviewed a number of sex workers in Leeds, I am now looking for new participants and was hoping you would be interested. More information can be found on my blog site: sexworktimeresearch.wordpress.com and my university profile is available here: www.sociology.leeds.ac.uk/people/recent/laura-jarvis-king. I can also send more detailed information like what an interview would involve via email. There is absolutely no obligation to take part if you do contact for more information.

The request is genuine, the study has full ethical approval and other participants have enjoyed taking part. I attempt to reimburse participants for their time by offering gift vouchers as a token of appreciation. For more information or to express interest, please email me at l.jarvis@leeds.ac.uk. Again, there is absolutely no obligation to take part if you do contact me and your contact details will not be held.

Thank you,

Laura

Appendix II: Participant Information Sheet & Consent Form



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Sex Work, Recession and Time

You are invited to take part in a PhD research study. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please do not hesitate to ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Thank you for reading this.

Researcher: Laura Jarvis-King

Supervisors:

Dr Nick Emmel and Dr Kahryn Hughes who can be contacted for enquiries about the study on 0113 343 6958.

The Project

The research aims to identify how indoor sex workers have experienced the financial crisis and austerity measures; exploring how they worked before and how changes in economic conditions have affected their working decisions and practices since. In particular, as time becomes more and more important for our working lives, I am interested in hearing about how you manage your time at work and in preparation for work. Also, the research is interested in changes to the relationships between sex workers and their clients. It is hoped that the research will identify whether there have been any changes in the negotiation and transaction between sex worker and client, such as different services being requested, different pricing systems, changes in the time spent with each client and changes to advertising practices.

I would like to meet research participants 3 times over a period of 12 months to discuss the issues above. Each meeting will take between 1-2 hours. During these meetings, participants will be asked to draw, write and talk about experiences of their finances, client requests, how they advertise and the time they spend at work.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen to participate in the research project as you have had significant experience of the issues under study, such as client negotiations, transactions, and advertising, and these experiences are important to the research. Your opinions and point of view are considered crucial to the validity, legitimacy and thoroughness of the research.

Do I have to take part?

It is entirely up to you to decide whether or not you wish to take part. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

What does the research involve?

I will ask participants to develop a timeline based on experiences over a time period between 2006 to the present day. This may mean that you weren't sex working at the time, and that is still very relevant for the research because it is important to understand why and how you started or returned to sex work.

I will bring pens and paper to the meetings and ask you to try to draw or write about what you have been doing over the last 10 years. There is no right or wrong way to do this, and I can help you get started if you need to. I expect that they will last between 1-2 hours in length and during this time we will talk about the issues over the period of time. Questions are likely to be related to the following:

- Where were you working before the financial crisis (before 2007)?
- How has this changed since the financial crisis (2007 onwards)?
- How do you manage your time at work?
- How do you manage the time within appointments with clients?
- Have there been any changes in clientele or the services being requested?
- What are the differences between regular and new clients?

With your permission, these interviews will be audio-visual recorded using a camcorder, but your face will not be in the frame for the filming. This is so I can track how the map was created and I will transcribe the discussion for research purposes. You can ask for the recording to stop at any point. You are able to watch these recordings at any time, and can change, amend, take out or add to what you have said. After completion of the map, this information will be securely stored in a locked filing cabinet and electronically in a password-protected, private file. Any identifiable information will be removed and replaced with codes in order to protect your anonymity. These recordings will not be publicised in any way.

Who has reviewed the study?

This study has been reviewed by the University of Leeds Research Ethics Committee.

It is being supervised by Nick Emmel and Kahryn Hughes in the School of Sociology and Social Policy.

Contact for Further Information

Laura Jarvis-King

School of Sociology and Social Policy

University of Leeds, Woodhouse Lane, Leeds LS2 9JT

Mobile:

E-mail: l.jarvis@leeds.ac.uk

Thank you very much for reading this and for hopefully agreeing to participate in the project.

