

**OTHER VOICES: ASSESSING THE
PHENOMENON OF THE STIGMATISATION
OF FORMER PROSTITUTED WOMEN**

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Masters of
Research at Waterford Institute of Technology**

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You have to act; if you were yourself you'd be destroyed. That's what they like is when you're being yourself – when they sense you're being yourself. They like that cos they don't want to fuck a "thing", they want to fuck a person, but the problem is if you're being yourself then you're just gonna hurt yourself emotionally so yeah, you have to protect yourself by acting for sure.

(Ava)

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Abstract

Rebecca Beegan

Other Voices: Assessing the Phenomenon of the Stigmatisation of Former Prostituted Women

Research acknowledges that stigma affects women in prostitution and impacts on their lives, yet there is an assumption that this stigma is a personal attribute, that derives from their 'profession'. Moreover, this body of work has not given sufficient voice to the women who have had the 'lived experience' of prostitution. As a result these voices and experiences of stigma remain underrepresented, especially stories from women who have left the sex trade.

Following an examination of Goffman's concept of stigma, I will describe the process of the stigmatisation of the prostituted woman in Ireland. The efforts involved in managing a stigma will be examined, and provide examples that will highlight that the process of stigmatisation of prostituted women is a result of a historical legacy of women's oppression. Taken together this affects the individual, the structures and the people that surround her. Emphasising the essential voices of former prostituted women, this dissertation aims to explore if stigmatisation has affected their identity in their present lives and present a qualitative narrative methodological response and will story the lives of two women who have exited prostitution. By including the voices of women who had the lived experience, scientific knowledge of the researcher will be contrasted with the experienced based knowledge of the participant. This approach offers rich new perspectives on social issues that affect women in our society and ensures that research is responsive to the needs of those who most need it, as it fully considers their experiences and their voices centrally in the research process.

Declaration

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Signed:

Rebecca Beegan

Date:

5th June 2015

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Definition of Key Terms

No single term covers the full range of practices or experiences that exist in prostitution (Harcourt and Donovan 2001). The views, findings and conclusions expressed in the literature are those of the author/s of the materials refereed to and should not be taken to reflect any stance on the part of the researcher. Common terms and language used in literature include:

Independent worker: Women, men or transgender who advertise online, escort agencies, individuals who place advertisement in newspaper/magazine or work on the street. They also keep the entire fee they collect from the client and have their own clientele without the intervention of a third party, e.g. pimp (Koken 2012).

Indoor prostitution: Those who sell sex in brothels, indoor venues, escort agencies, women, men or transgender who work from home.

Outdoor prostitution: Street prostitution.

Prostitution: The exchange of sexual services for monetary gain, money, drugs, shelter, food or clothing, other material goods or survival (Nelson et al 2010; Ditmore Vol 1 2001; Moran 2013).

Sex Industry: Activities which people pay money to have sex or see sex such as pornography, films or prostitution.

Sex work: Prostitution is recognised as an occupation and / or work and the individual's choice and right to engage in sexual commerce (Oselin and Weitzer 2013).

List of Abbreviations

CCM: The Critical Communicative Methodology

FSWs: Female Sex Workers

PAR: Participatory Action Research

TIP: Trafficking in Persons Report

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1: Problem Statement

Members of marginalised groups face economic, political and psychological consequences as a result of stigmatisation (Crocker and Major 1989) which essentially plays a major part in limiting life chances (Link and Phelan 2001). However, despite research showing that stigma adversely affects the prostitute (Crocker and Major 1989) and impacts on women's lives (Sallmann 2010) most research, whilst acknowledging that stigma exists, largely ignores this as many believe that stigma is a condition that derives from their profession (Tomura 2009). Furthermore, most research has used a quantitative method which limits our understanding of the experience of prostitutes from their subjective point of view (Tomura 2011). As McCray and colleagues (2011, p.745) highlight "studies of sex workers and prostitutes' experiences of stigma remain underrepresented".

There are numerous studies which have shown that women enter prostitution for a variety of reasons in Ireland and elsewhere and these factors include, family dysfunction, childhood sexual abuse, poverty, addiction, homelessness and financial necessity (Nelson et al 2010; Kelleher et al 2009; Potterat et al 2004; Farley 2004; Valiulis et al 2007). Moreover, there is a wealth of literature available that documents the experience of 'sex workers'. However, whilst current research and literature adds to the understanding of prostitution and stigmatisation (Farley 2004; Tomura 2009; Ashforth and Kreiner 1999; Sanders 2005; Goffman 1963; Brewis and Linstead 2000; Sallmann 2010) there are gaps, as these works have not adequately included the voices of women in the research, or highlighted sufficiently the impact of stigmatisation *after* her exit from prostitution.

1.2: Purpose statement

Jeffreys (1997, p.225) argues that stigma is just one small part of prostitution and is "a problem that goes far deeper than stigma". Nevertheless, I believe that this issue requires attention. Stigmatised groups such as those who are involved in the sex industry are well aware of their stigmatised status and work hard to resist the level of stigma and oppression (Tomura 2009; Sanders et al 2009). Whilst such groups are far

from passive the effects of stigma on the individual are not inconsequential. So for this research I wanted to find out, specifically from women who have exited prostitution, if they have experienced stigma and aim to establish if this has impacted on them in their post-prostitution lives.

Therefore, this research aspires to give a voice to women who are survivors of prostitution as they have endured the worst conditions and have withstood and battled oppression in remarkable ways (Raymond 2013). This study will offer a narrative approach where both the women and I will engage, as much as possible, in the research process together. Using this approach, two women and I will describe their individual experience of prostitution and stigma in the story of their lives (Creswell 2009; Gómez et al 2006).

1.3: Central Research Question

The research question to be addressed in this research is,

‘Does stigmatisation affect the identity of former prostituted women in their post-prostitute lives?’

1.4: Aims and Objectives

In order to answer the primary question, there are a number of aims to be achieved.

These are as follows:

- ***To explore stigmatisation and its impact on former prostitutes in Ireland.***

There is a large volume of research completed internationally with ‘sex workers’/ prostitutes, however little research is available with *former* prostituted woman internationally and no research that focuses exclusively on the subject of stigmatisation of the former prostitute in an Irish context. This aim will allow the participants to give voice to their experience of stigmatisation and prostitution in the story of their lives. This will be done in three distinct phases: before the woman entered prostitution, during her time in prostitution and after a woman has left the sex industry.

- *To collaboratively engage with women who were former prostitutes in the research process, to give them a voice in telling their own story.*

The participants will be invited to collaboratively engage in the research process. This will include critically assessing the literature on prostitution and stigmatisation and contrasting it to their own experiences. Further issues to be considered are the factors that contributed to their entry into and exit from prostitution and an evaluation of the extent of choice and agency in their decisions.

- *To investigate the potential theoretical connections between stigmatisation and prostitution.*

However prostitution is framed, either as sex work or as sexual exploitation of women, those engaged in it are stigmatised. Having a stigmatised status and living with a stigma, can lead to devastating consequences and have an impact on a woman's life chances. It is widely accepted that leaving prostitution is fraught with unique challenges, with many women needing several attempts at exiting (Bindel et al 2012). Some of these barriers include, lack of housing, addiction, history of childhood sexual abuse, domestic violence, poverty, criminalisation and stigmatisation (Bindel et al 2012; Farley 2004; Nelson et al 2010; Moran 2013; Kelleher et al 2009; Tomura 2011). An expected outcome in this research is that the barriers such as stigmatisation that hinder a woman's exit do not necessarily end once a woman has left prostitution. By exploring the experiences of the participants it should be possible to draw some conclusions about how women successfully negotiated this exit as well as the exclusionary or transformative dimensions that assisted them. This research is particularly interested in investigating the role of stigma in this process.

1.5: Structure of this Thesis

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This chapter shall provide a critical summary and analysis of the relevant literature in relation to the research question: *Does stigmatisation affect the identity of former prostituted women in their post-prostitute life?* The literature that will inform my research will be set out under the headings as follows:

1. *Goffman's Concept of Stigma*
2. *The Process of the Stigmatisation of Prostituted Woman in Ireland*
3. *Stigma Management Strategies and the Consequences of Coping*

Chapter Three: Methodology and Research Design

In this chapter, I will demonstrate how I came to research the experiences of two women who have exited prostitution, the difficulties I encountered and I will set out the methodology, values and beliefs that have guided and informed my research. I will explore the emancipatory character of my philosophical worldview and the basic propositions of participatory and action research that have shaped my research. Next, I will discuss the qualitative approach used in this thesis, its emergence, validity and procedures which have allowed me to interpret and understand the meaning from the data. Narrative inquiry was the method used in this study. I will describe in this chapter the procedure and processes that I undertook; from the selection of participants, the process of the in-depth interviews and the process of content analysis which has allowed me to interpret two women's experiences of prostitution and stigmatisation in the story of their lives.

Chapter Four: Voices of Participants

The reader will be introduced to two women 'Siobhan' and 'Ava' who have agreed to participate in this research. Their individual interviews will be presented chronologically, re-narrated and developed into dominant themes that capture their lives; before, during and after each woman's exit from prostitution.

Chapter Five: Analysis of Findings

In this chapter I will merge the major themes that have arisen from each woman's individual story in the findings chapter. I will focus specifically on their cumulative experience of prostitution and stigmatisation *after* the women have exited and analyse their experience with reference to the literature.

Chapter Six: Discussion and Conclusion

This final chapter will conclude and highlight the main findings from this study. I will also provide a summary of the analysis, present my thoughts and reflections on what has emerged. Finally, I will offer some ideas for future research, especially research that can

be collaboratively engaged *with* women who are marginalised and oppressed in our society.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2:1: Introduction

This chapter shall provide a critical summary and analysis of the relevant literature in relation to the research question: *Does stigmatisation affect the identity of former prostituted women in their post-prostitute life?* The literature that will inform my research will be set out under the following headings as follows:

- 1. Goffman's Concept of Stigma*
- 2. The Process of Stigmatisation of the Prostituted Woman in Ireland*
- 3. Stigma Management Strategies and the Consequences of Concealment*

Each section will be examined and highlight a number of points. Firstly, I will argue that prostitution is an inherently violent and exploitative practice that is predominantly experienced by women and just one form of exploitation and domination of women by men. Secondly, whilst research shows us that stigma adversely affects the prostituted woman, the concept is vague and requires further analysis in order to fully understand the impact of stigmatisation for prostituted persons and why it exists. Thirdly, research shows us that many women in prostitution are aware of the stigma associated with it and can in some instances negotiate and deal with stigma by using various coping and stigma management techniques. However, whilst many women in prostitution use these stigma strategies, the effort required to manage and to conceal a stigma can affect her life in various ways, impacting her life chances. Finally, it will be highlighted that although some research has explored the impact of stigmatisation of women in prostitution, no research has been conducted in an Irish context that explores either the stories of woman who have left exclusively, or their experience of stigmatisation and if this has impacted them in their current lives.

2.2: Goffman's Concept of Stigma

"Why do feminists pick on me?"

(Goffman to Deegan 2014, p.76)

Introduction

Stigma, according to Goffman is "an attribute that is deeply discrediting" (1963, p.13) and has since his essay on the subject led to the elaboration and refinement of the negative impact on those who are stigmatised (Grattet 2011). Its validity as a theory can be seen in the extensive literature on the concept (Link and Phelan 2001). However, despite research showing that stigma adversely affects the prostitute (Crocker and Major 1989) and impacts on women's lives (Sallmann 2010), most research largely ignores this due to the belief by many that stigma is a condition that derives from their profession (Tomura 2009). As a result "studies of sex workers and prostitutes' experiences of stigma remain underrepresented" (McCray et al 2011, p.745). Therefore this chapter shall begin with an exploration of Goffman's early influences and his school of thought, symbolic interactionism. Discussed also will be his early work on impression management (1959) and his subsequent writing on Stigma (1963) where he observed the dramaturgy of everyday life and exposed the harsh realities and the epidemic of oppression women face in the social world (Deegan 2014). Following this I will discuss some of the criticisms of Goffman as an individual and of his theories. I will particularly focus on Deegan (2014) a feminist pragmatist, who had a series of intense exchanges with Goffman between 1978 and 1980. Deegan discussed some major intellectual points with him, most commonly his use of irony and his views on women and feminist assumptions. Criticisms that Goffman's perspective perceives the stigmatised group as helpless victims (Link and Phelan 2001) will be highlighted to show that prostitutes and "deviant population's" do challenge their "derogatory reputation" with social movements (Mathieu 2011, p.46) and work hard to resist the level of stigma and oppression (Sanders et al 2009). However, it will be shown that the amount of power that one group has over the other, effects their level of resistance (Link and Phelan 2001). Finally, other criticisms will be examined, such as Link and Phelan's (2001) who argue that the definition of stigma has become so widely used it has become

vague and with the assumption that stigma is a personal attribute, has “resulted in a gap in the scholarly literature on stigma” (McCordic 2012, p.70).

Even though he was hesitant to lend his name to his innovations and described himself as “no rampant situationalist” (Williams 2008, p.195) Erving Goffman’s (1922-1982) influential work on Symbolic Interactionism has invoked a geographical affiliation with the Chicago School of the same name. This school of thought focuses on the endless flux of emerging human experiences (Plummer 1979) and maintains “that despite the need for the self to be individualised, the individual continues to be fundamentally a relational being that is anchored in social and emotional connection to others” (Coates 2013, p.294). Its origins stem from German philosopher George Herbert Mead (1863-1931). However, it was his student Herbert Blummer (1900-1987) who coined the phrase *symbolic interaction* (1969) to show how individuals interpret and define each other’s reactions, rather than reacting to other’s actions (Pfohl 1994). For many Blummer was symbolic interactionism and many accepted his classic three principles of the theory: “that we know things by their meaning, that meanings are created through social interaction, and that meanings change through interaction” (Fine 1993, p.64, emphasis in original).

From the beginning of his sociological career in 1952 to his death in 1982 Goffman produced work that studied ‘interaction order’ and “that part of social order that occurs when two or more individuals are in one another’s response presence” (Goffman 1958, cited in Williams 2008, p.184). He wanted to clarify the previously unclear and closely analysed face to face interaction and what people do when they are in the company of others (Williams 2008). His microanalysis of social life was heavily influenced by Durkheim and Simmel (Williams 2008). However, whilst Goffman borrowed ideas from both, he differed in that he believed that morality and idealisation occurred in everyday face to face interaction and not in the abstract entity of society (Williams 2008). His writings have become incorporated with general ideas of Giddens and Habermas and whilst he was criticised for being light weight his work and his concepts have been thoroughly developed and have impacted on, sociology, political science, philosophy, and psychology (Johansson 2007).

An outstanding theorist, Goffman analysed and observed the dramaturgy of everyday life (Deegan 2014). In attempting to understand how humans in ordinary situations

control and sustain others' impressions of him Goffman (1959) felt it necessary to approach the study of the self as a social institution (Williams 2008). In his first book, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Goffman (1959) gives a 'two selves' version of the self: character and performer. He argued that 'the self' is shaped and moulded by status, roles and social situations (Turner 2013). The self, whilst an active agent in this process also seeks to influence how others respond to his or her performance (Turner 2013). Writings from Goffman provide examples of how people exhibit certain behaviours that signify competence in order to conceal carelessness. Apologies, greetings and other remedial interchanges are some examples that demonstrate unstated rule obligation. The collaborative nature of humans' attentiveness to such rules, knowledge and obligations are essential. However, Goffman was keen to describe what happens in each interchange and to show how they are susceptible and dependent on the individual's decision-making and choice (Williams 2008). Goffman (1959) argues "that the self is a social construction or, more specifically, an interactive construction" (Johansson 2007, p.276). In other words, what was once considered unusual or normal alters over times (Riley 2010). Interaction order is essentially unfinished and competent individuals continually repair, reshape and rearrange it and are usually expected to adhere to such rules, if not are at least capable of manipulation of such rules (Williams 2008).

The use of theatrical metaphors is a recurring theme in Goffman's writings as he worked hard to find in each its vulnerabilities (Williams 2008). Goffman's idea of social life as a theatrical performance it is argued is not a realistic one (Gouldner 1971). However, the idea of the stage is "make believe" (Goffman 1959, p. xi) and not meant to be taken literally (Raffel 2013). Nevertheless, the claim that people are likely to present themselves in a positive light is not particularly newsworthy and the idea of impression management has not been without further critics (Raffel 2013). Alvin Gouldner (1971), for example, was often hostile towards Goffman's ideas and claimed that he was "obsessed with the world of appearances" (cited in Raffel 2013, p.13). Notorious as having a volatile temperament and a self-proclaimed "son of a bitch" Gouldner also disliked, among other things, "vanguard parties and the sociological establishment" (Chriss 2002, p.213). In his book *The coming crisis of western sociology* (1971) Gouldner tore intellectual strips off Goffman's 1959 dramaturgical theory, illustrating Goffman's obsession with appearance, and recalls one instance where

... after a long negotiating session with a publisher for whom Goffman and I are both editors. I turned to Goffman and said with some disgust, “These fellows are treating us like commodities.” Goffman’s reply was, “That’s alright, Al, so long as they treat us as *expensive* commodities”.

(Gouldner 1971, p.383, emphasis in original)

Gouldner (1971) further criticised Goffman’s analysis as it makes us into superficial and amoral beings and argues that Goffman paints a picture of persons as “tricky, harassed little devils” (1971, cited in Raffel 2013, p.165). However Goffman (1959) argues that performers dwell more than we might think in the moral world, and are motivated to constantly manage positive impressions. As Raffel (2013 p.165) argues, Goffman’s portrayal of social life is plausible and not Goffman’s fault and that “perhaps it is just the (unattractive) way we are”. Whether we are moral or not, is not the issue, and what we are “motivated to do is only to appear to realize these standards” (Raffel 2013, p.165).

In *Stigma: Notes on Management of a Spoiled Identity* (1963) Goffman exposes the oppression epidemic and shows the reader how the social world treats the stigmatised (Deegan 2014). Like his first book, he continues his comparison of social interaction with theatrical roles (Pfohl 1994). Likened to actors on a stage (Goffman 1959), people carefully manage their performance in social interaction, creating a positive impression of who they are (Pfohl 1994). In our usual daily lives, Goffman (1963) noted that we take for granted the predictability and stability of our interactions with each other (Williams 2008). These interactions are usually stable and common rules, knowledge, and obligations guide us in how to act in each case (Williams 2008). As Goffman (1963) notes, these routines in social interactions are usually well established and we give little thought or any special attention to them. Whilst we can get ‘caught out’ by disorder and randomness, these usually normal patterns can both enable or constrain the individual to assess what he can achieve in any given interaction (Williams 2008).

However, in certain circumstances, evidence can arise in social situations where strangers possess attributes that can be undesirable, “thoroughly bad, or dangerous or weak” and as a result the individual can become reduced and discounted as an individual (Goffman 1963, p.12). Such attributes about a person are “a shortcoming, or a handicap” and other physical attributes that are incongruent with normative stereotypes (Goffman 1963, p.12). Other signs and attributes can also limit their ability to maintain a positive impression (Pfohl 1994). Such qualities in a person are

considered socially undesirable and become associated with “meanings of abnormality, inferiority, and marginalisation” (McCray et al 2011, p.744). Goffman (1963) refers to these particular attributes as a ‘stigma’ which can discredit an individual and can lead to a “spoiled identity” (Goffman 1963, p.12).

The term stigma therefore refers to “an attribute that is deeply discrediting” (Goffman 1963, p.13). To explain this concept, Goffman (1963) refers back to the origin of stigma which was developed from the Greeks, and a term used to refer to a sign that was cut or burned into the body to signify the bearer’s lower social class, such as a slave or prisoner. It was later used in Christian times, used to identify a sign of “holy grace” (Goffman 1963, p.11). Goffman (1963, p.11-12) however, refers to stigma not in its literal sense but rather to the “disgrace itself than to the bodily evidence of it” and also warned that we need “a language of relationships not attributes” in order to understand the concept.

Goffman’s work is controversial as he rarely explained his methods and was often hostile towards sociology and sociologists. Also, he did not explore the construction of knowledge, state his feminist assumptions, nor explain explicitly his use of irony as a social criticism. One contentious issue is his use of sexist language, more specifically, feminism and his views of women. Deegan (2014, p.72) a feminist pragmatist, who had a “series of intense exchanges” with Goffman between 1978 and 1980 discussed these major intellectual points with him. In her conversations with Goffman, Deegan (2014, p.76) found him to be civil, helpful and supportive of her as a sociologist, however he did mention to Deegan, more than once, “why do feminists pick on me?”

Deegan (2014) explains that feminists and Goffman do not always see eye to eye, particularly given his views on rape and irony. For example, Goffman expresses that rape is “not so much an indignity as part of the oppressive culture of virginity” (Deegan 2014, p.77). Goffman expressed to Deegan (2014) that an intelligent reader would recognise and appreciate this type of irony in his writings, adding, when used it diminishes the chances of a direct attack and also possible censorship. Furthermore, he noted *Asylums* (1961) did more to challenge and discredit mental health institutions, despite its ironic undertones (Deegan 2014). In discussing sexism in his writings, Goffman states that he intentionally sets up a “straw man” and that statements in his writings are meant to be ironic and he deploys irony to describe reality (Deegan 2014).

Goffman further explains the origins of his thinking, and mentioned in his interview with Deegan (2014) his youth, growing up above his parents business, that he often felt alienated by his Jewish heritage as he did not understand the lack of resistance among Jews during World War II. He did not understand why people did not retaliate or fight back; it seemed senseless to him (Deegan 2014). Similarly, he thought that men would stop being sexist towards women and refrain from calling women “honey” or “baby”, if women would tell men not to do so (Deegan 2014).

However, Deegan (2014) disagrees with Goffman on this point as such irony is based in humour and directed at women and serves as an oppressive tool that doubly victimises them. Irony is problematic in feminist analysis as rape, for example, is an invasive act of violence, and although Goffman meant his writing to be taken as a form of sarcasm which implies condemnation, such an attitude

does little to challenge outlandish and repressive behaviour toward women, which is certified as “normal” along with the “objective” gaze of the patriarchal world.

(Deegan 2014, p.79)

Furthermore, the ironic voice or meaning is sometimes lost in the written word and has more clout than the verbal which is used with tone, voice, and body language and overrides most common meanings. However, Goffman states that he strives for objectivity in his writing, placing his feet firmly in the shoes of all the participants, and whether or not audiences agreed with him was irrelevant. His job was not to coerce the reader to agree, but rather to let the reader decide for themselves. To do otherwise, he added “is to perpetrate oppression” (Deegan 2014, p.77).

However, there was a chronological shift in Goffman’s writing, especially after 1979 mirroring the realities that reflect the way societies are lived and worked (Deegan 2014). As Alferd Schutz (1962) suggests “Goffman embodied the natural attitude of a sexist society (cited in Deegan 2014, p.78) and Goffman’s concept of dramaturgy is especially apt given that he wanted to explore his sociological account of the person (Williams 2008). Nevertheless, Goffman agreed with Deegan (2014) that prior to 1979 he followed this reality and may have reproduced his bias of gender inequality through the process of writing. Goffman’s perception of women’s role in everyday life underwent a transformation during the mid-1970s, after there was increasing awareness that women’s participation in society was systematically impeded (Deegan 2014). He

accepted that he was a “MCP” (male chauvinist pig), especially in his early writings, but had since made disclaimers regarding his use of pronoun “he” as he could not find a suitable alternative (Deegan 2014). Regardless of the fact that he experienced a feminist shift he continued to use sexist language which ultimately legitimised the “gender-biased status quo” (Deegan 2014, p.79). Deegan (2014) also argued that Goffman has the tendency to lump women together, regardless of their class or ethnic differences and assign the same experiences on to all women. Nevertheless, Deegan (2014) argues that despite Goffman’s ironic writings on drama and dramaturgy they are directly related to feminist analysis and throughout his career he did expose the oppression epidemic of women in the social world. He also highlighted derogation ceremonies (1963) whereby one Mayfield Girl was accused of being a ‘common prostitute’ in court, the Mayfair girl explains,

Then they say those awful words: “Being a common prostitute...” and you feel awful, all the time not knowing who’s watching you at the back of the court. You say guilty and get out as soon as can.

(Garfinkel 1956, cited in Goffman 1963, p.106)

His writings on stigma as a discrediting attribute, gender advertisements, and the mortification process are other examples which illuminate how women’s lives are influenced and limited by conventions.

From a feminist viewpoint, Deegan (2014) remarks, sociological dramaturgy reveals the natural attitudes of society and argues that it is important to convey to the reader that his concepts mirror American patriarchal attitudes at the time. However, his concepts do permeate throughout his writings, not just those published after his feminist shift in the mid-1970s (Deegan 2014). Through his continued use of irony, Goffman usually brings women on stage in a subordinate role and although he uses irony again it is ambiguous and obscures real and oppressive practices. Although, Goffman does expose power structures, true feminist praxis must liberate knowledge from patriarchal language, metaphors, and theory that sustain women’s inequality in society. As Deegan (2014) argues, a feminist perspective confronts the patriarchal world and calls for social reconstruction that upends patriarchal profession.

Goffman’s perspective has been further criticised as it perceives that stigmatised group as helpless victims (Link and Phelan 2001). McPhil (1989, cited in Fine 1993) also comments that the theory drains the individual of agency, allowing the crowd to

transform actors. Mathieu (2011) similarly argues that research on stigmatised groups ironically tends to list the undesirable attributes and as a result reinforces stereotypical words such as passive or victim. However, such research suggests that people who are stigmatised work hard to resist such stigma, reminding us that there is a prevailing negative association with certain groups and powerful constraining influences at work (Link and Phelan 2001). For example, there is a wealth of literature on the history of prostitution which informs us that sex workers have campaigned and organised themselves as far back as 1790 to resist stigma and oppression (Sanders et al 2009; Mathieu 2011). However, as Sanders et al (2009) notes, the issues of oppression, discrimination and stigmatisation that sex workers and prostituted women faced remain much the same today. Decriminalisation, for example “continues to be at the heart of many sex workers rights organisation” (Sanders et al 2009, p.101). Mathieu (2011, p.30) states that those with a stigmatised status such as the prostitute, and other “deviant populations”, challenge their “derogatory reputation” with social movements but most have proved fragile, uncertain or disappointing (Mathieu 2011, p.46). One obstacle that hinders them is the existing laws that regulate or prohibit prostitution (Mathieu 2011). Mathieu (2011) mentions that some sociologists believe that sex worker’s inability to mobilise effectively, stems from their lower class social origin. This may be true given that the majority of those who engage in prostitution in Ireland and elsewhere are women, come from a lower socioeconomic background, have a history of childhood sexual abuse, poverty, addiction, homelessness, education disadvantage and social exclusion (Nelson et al 2010; Kelleher et al 2009; Valiulis et al 2007). Another factor that may affect women’s mobilisation is that many, especially women, in prostitution face a “lifelong continuum of sexual exploitation and violence” (Farley and Kelly 2000, p.2). A further possibility it may be suggested is that prostitution is a male dominated industry (Moran 2013) and that “male domination constructs prostitution” (Jeffreys 2009, p.317). Men dominate this industry: It is, therefore a ‘gender issue’ and one of significant unequal power relations (Moran 2013). Regardless, suggesting that those who are stigmatised are passive is inaccurate, as women in prostitution work hard to resist stigma and oppression. However, the amount of power that one group has over the other, effects their level of resistance (Link and Phelan 2001). In the power struggle between the stigmatiser and the stigmatised, to the extent that power is relevant, “resistance cannot fully overcome constraint” (Link and Phelan 2001, p.378).

A final critique of Goffman's conceptualisation of stigma is that despite research showing that stigma adversely affects the prostitute (Crocker and Major 1989) and impacts on women's lives (Sallmann 2010), traditional work on stigma is "unidimensional" and does not allow for the identification of consequences of stigma (Green et al 2005, p.197). Although Goffman's theory (1963) has been most used to examine mental illnesses, Link and Phelan (2001) argue that stigmatisation can be applied to more general groups who are stigmatised. According to Goffman (1963) the meaning of stigma can be observed in the relationship between "attribute and a stereotype" (Link and Phelan 2001, p.366). However, as Fine and Ashe (1988, cited in Green et al 2005) and McCordic (2012) argue authors assume that stigma is an individual trait difference, owned by the stigmatised, rather than an experience forced on them by prevailing social and cultural conditions. Link and Phelan (2001, p.366) also note the contrast between stigma and discrimination "which focus the attention of research on the producers of rejection and exclusion" rather on those who are the recipients of such behaviours. Furthermore, they add that the definition of stigma has become so widely used, its concept has become vague. The current understanding of stigma, tries to capture what a stigmatised group is. Rationally, any group can be stigmatised, however, some groups are more stigmatised than others (Link and Phelan 2001). Furthermore, according to McCordic (2012, p.70) the assumption that stigma is a personal attribute, has "resulted in a gap in the scholarly literature on stigma". Moreover, the differences in conceptualising stigma are important to understand as they can lead to "different understandings of where responsibility lies for the 'problem' and as a consequence to different prescriptions for action" (Sayce 1998, cited in Link and Phelan 2001, p.366).

To this extent, the following section shall develop Goffman's theory of stigma and Link and Phelan's (2001) process of stigmatisation and show how it affects the stigmatised person, specifically the prostituted woman in Ireland. This exercise will endeavour to explore, the process of stigmatisation, and as Deegan (2014, p.82) explains "challenge the social construction of reality sustaining a sexist society". After all, as Deegan (2014, p.82) suggests, the feminist sociologist task is to unmask oppressive structures, to find the power of knowledge that perpetrates inequality and to "explore systemically how sociological theory is formed, transmitted and embedded in history".

Conclusion

Goffman, an outstanding theorist, analysed and observed the dramaturgy of everyday life (Deegan 2014). His writings have been thoroughly developed (Johansson 2007) and his theory of stigmatisation as “an attribute that is deeply discrediting” (Goffman 1963, p.13) can be seen in the large volume of literature on the concept (Link and Phelan 2001). However, Goffman has been criticised for being light weight (Johansson 2007), obsessed with the world of appearances (Gouldner 1971), his use of sexist language, and his views of women in his writings (Deegan 2014). Deegan (2014) notes, that regardless of his feminist shift after 1979, he continued to use irony and sexist language in his writings. Deegan (2014) an admirer of Goffman argues that true feminist praxis must confront and upend the patriarchal profession and its use of language, metaphors and theory that sustain women’s inequality. Nevertheless, although Goffman brings women on stage in a subordinate role, through irony he has exposed power struggles and the oppression epidemic of women in the social world (Deegan 2014). The argument that suggests stigmatised groups are regarded as passive victims (Mathieu 2011) is inaccurate; as many prostituted women and sex workers have worked hard to resist the level of stigma and oppression they experience (Sanders et al 2009). Throughout history, ‘sex workers’ rights organisations and prostituted women have resisted the level of stigma they face and have campaigned against the violence and abuse they experience (Mathieu 2011; Sanders et al 2009). Yet, their resistance and social movements have proved fragile, uncertain and disappointing (Mathieu 2011) reminding us that there is a prevailing negative association with certain groups and powerful constraining influences at work (Link and Phelan 2001). Such constraining influences that impede their movements include prostituted women’s lower class origin (Mathieu 2011), prostituted women’s lifelong continuum of sexual exploitation (Farley and Kelly 2000), and that prostitution always was a male constructed, male dominated industry (Moran 2013).

Finally, it was highlighted by Link and Phelan (2001) that whilst the concept of stigma is valid the definition has become vague. This is because the current understanding of stigma tries to capture what a stigmatised group is and the assumption that stigma is a personal attribute has “resulted in a gap in the scholarly literature on stigma” (McCordic 2012, p.70). The following section shall expand Goffman’s theory of stigma by

exploring Link and Phelan's (2001) process of stigmatisation, and examine how stigma affects the person, specifically the prostituted woman in Ireland and unmask the oppressive structures and "explore systemically how sociological theory is formed, transmitted and embedded in history"(Deegan 2014, p.82).

2.3: The Process of Stigmatisation for the Prostituted Woman in Ireland.

...throughout history, socioeconomic status has had a robust association with disease and death: people with greater resources of knowledge, money, power, prestige, and social connections are generally better able to avoid risks and to adopt protective strategies.

(Link and Phelan 2006, p.529)

Introduction

In the previous section, stigma was discussed as "an attribute that is deeply discrediting" (1963, p.13). However, Goffman (1963, p.11-12) was keen to explain that we need "a language of relationships not attributes" in order to understand the concept. Link and Phelan (2001) also warn that the concept of stigma, whilst valid is in varied use and thus needs clarification. In their interpretation of stigma they revise its concept and determine that it exists only "where elements of labelling, stereotyping, separating, status loss and discrimination co-occur in a power situation that allows these processes to unfold" (Link and Phelan 2001, p.382). Stigma exists as a matter of degree they add, and the inclusion of the interrelated components allows one to examine the extent of the stigma and how it can vary from group to group (Link and Phelan 2001). This multidimensional model, as proposed by Link and Phelan (2001) offers a clearer understanding of stigma, arising from culturally specific attitudes, that are based on "biological differences within the context of social interactions" (Green et al 2005, p.212). Therefore, this chapter will develop Goffman's (1963) and Link and Phelan's (2001) theory of stigmatisation and apply it to the prostituted woman in Ireland and demonstrate how the complex nature of stigma operates. An evaluation of each component of the stigmatisation process, including the creation of differences, stereotyping, separating, status and loss and power differential, will be offered to show that the outcome for her is stigmatisation. It is the intention of this chapter to argue that the stigmatisation of prostituted women in Ireland is a well-established part of a historical legacy of women's oppression that affects the individual, the structures and

the people that surround her. This is not as a result of her individual trait or attribute, but occurs as a socio-cultural process (McCordic 2012).

The Creation of Differences: of women and the prostitute

The major sociological aspect in this foundation component of the stigmatisation process is determining how “culturally created categories arise and how they are sustained” (Link and Phelan 2001). The creation of differences requires oversimplification of the most obvious salient attribute of a person, such as man or woman, black or white, able or disabled (Link and Phelan 2001). Goffman (1959) argued that there are practical implications for acquiring information about a person; usually people will be interested in trust, worthiness and competence. However, when a person enters the presence of others, individuals glean clues from cues and draw from previous similar experience all enabling her or him to act in an appropriate way. Previously held assumptions, stereotypes, documentary evidence and certain psychological traits all contribute to the individuals understanding of the interaction (Goffman 1959). The difficulty however is that once a difference such as gender for example is identified; it becomes labelled and taken for granted, as just the way things are. However, labelling, involves the recognition that people are different and “the assignment of social salience to those difference” (Green et al 2005, p198). The labelling process then becomes bound up with shame and unnatural norm expectations and become embedded in society (Wong et al 2011). Although, categorizations of individuals that are deemed salient differ dramatically across time, place and culture, other differences do matter socially and show “just how social this social selection is” at least in the selection of human differences such as gender (Link and Phelan 2001, p.367).

Historical analysis of prostituted women in Ireland by writers such as, Luddy (2007), McLoughlin (1994), O’Brien (1982), Belknap (2010) and Diner (1983) shows us how Irish institutions operated from the 1800s onwards. Their analysis provides a compelling example of how women’s and especially the prostitute’s body have been understood depending on the social, political and cultural context in which the Irish institutions operated (Luddy 2007) and thus allows us to understand how culturally created categories arise and how they are sustained in society (Link and Phelan 2001).

Ireland's "sorrowful history" has been marked by the famines, dominated by Protestant England, grinding poverty, and failed uprisings that were all seared into the memories of the Irish consciousness (Diner 1983, p.4). Nothing remained the same after the 1845-49 Great Famine and its impact had a significant effect on those who were in the lowest stratum of society. Personal ties, family bonds and intimate relationships were all swept away (Diner 1983). Ireland saw seven hundred thousand people leave its shores between 1825 and 1844. However, these great upheavals only accentuated trends already present in more tranquil times (Diner 1983). In pre-famine times, religion was already a powerful personal identity, there was already a commitment to the Catholic Church and there was an ever decreasing population long before the famine ever occurred (Diner 1983). Gender division pre-dated the famine and segregation of the sexes was always practiced in the family home. After the famine, there was a further division between male-female relations and "a boundary even more pernicious than that between the North and South – the boundary between the sexes" (Arland Ussher 1953, cited in Diner 1983, p.20). Segregation of the sexes was carried out in various ways, from the churches to the salons, pubs and schools, men and women, boys and girls were all separated by gender. On the eve of the Great Famine there was a population of eight million people in Ireland. However, the population grew without an increase in industrialisation or economic opportunities (Diner 1983). Fifty years later just over three million people remained in Ireland (National Archives 2015) and their behaviour changed to adapt to the more economically un-stable society. In essence the men and women in Ireland were led to believe that,

the devastation and destruction of the late 1840s had in part been caused by irrational, carefree marriage and family practices that failed to treat conjugal life as a fundamentally economic enterprise.

(Diner 1983, p.6).

Irish demography changed post-famine and the stagnation in the population effected matrimony making it an economical calculation. It was the eldest son who now inherited the land and greater social significance was given to the dowry. Young women, when entering into a marriage were expected to be hard working, pleasant, traditional, fertile, and most importantly bring with her cows and money. The commodity of marriage was noticed by an observer who overheard two fathers bartering over a daughters dowry in the 1850s: "Not very purty,! 'faix, I'll make her purty with cows!" (Diner 1983, p.11). However, the money brought in to a family of one woman

was passed on to her sister-in-law allowing another woman to marry. Diner (1983) noted that by the 1870s Ireland had the latest age of marriage in Europe and a low level of sexual activity outside marriage. The Catholic hierarchy welcomed the traditions of sex segregation, celibacy, late marriage, and in particular the growth of service orientated female orders. Women responded in different ways, but still their options were limited. After the famine the number of women entering in to orders eclipsed even the male brotherhoods. However, if marriage was not an option, due to a limited dowry or a young Irish woman did not want to enter a life of celibacy with the nuns, she left, and by the end of the nineteenth century “Ireland was a place that women left” (Diner 1983, p.29).

Women who left the ‘old sod’ for America brought with them unique qualities from their Irish culture that enabled them to be successful in their new world (Diner 1983). However, for those women who remained at home the story for women in Ireland was quite different. In Ireland, in the 1800s, Luddy (2007) explains the stereotypes of womanhood; the nun, the mother, the spinster and the ‘fallen’ woman. The comparison between the “consecrated nun” and the “polluted prostitute” was described as “the spotless lily or the foul smelling weed”; all epitomising the extremes of womanhood (Luddy 2007, p.110). Similarly, McLoughlin (1994) suggests there were three aspects of the model characteristics of respectable women in Ireland. First was categorised as; a desire to marry and remain dependant and faithful in a life-long union (McLoughlin 1994). The second group remained in a domestic role and was re-productive and not productive. Finally, the sexuality of the respectable woman was fully contained within the limits of marriage. Women were constructed as morally superior, based on the idea that they did not possess a sexual desire. Men, on the other hand were driven by their indiscretions and if they did succumb to a “beguiling woman” it was more of a failing of the woman (McLoughlin 1994.p. 267).

Ireland as a sexually pure nation was rarely challenged. In 1924, for example, the Irish Christian Brothers proclaimed that “purity is the national virtue of Ireland” (Luddy 2007, p.2). There was hardly any “bastards” in Donegal and Irish Roman Catholic clerics proclaimed with pride that when it came to marriage women in Limerick rarely entered into it with a child (Diner 1983, p.21). The perception of low sexual activity of Irish women was observed by Hasia Diner who studied female emigration of Irish

women to America after the famine and concluded that Irish women in America rarely violated this ideal (Luddy 2007). The Celtic newcomers to America, known for their drinking, religion and strange family forms, were however also known for their purity-Irish girls were admired and set above even the German women. In America, Pat may have drunk and brawled, however, Brigit was always chaste; an indication of her commitment to her Irish roots (Diner 1983). A woman's place in Ireland was defined by her sexual activity and the 'ideal Irish woman' was constructed by the Catholic Church and the State, governed by men; nuns by priests and bishops, and prostitutes by police (Luddy 2007).

Ireland was set apart from its European counterparts as having a superior sexual discipline and a country full of virtuous virgins or celibacy (McLoughlin 1994). However, this belief became an "accepted fact and we became deluded by our own mythmaking" (McLoughlin 1994, p.268). Prostitution, Luddy (2007) remarks became a way of controlling the sexuality of all women. However, according to Luddy (2007), women who did not pursue this ideal came to represent the breakdown of traditional values and a threat to the morality and chastity of Ireland. The threat became the basis for sexual double standards that existed between men and women and influenced Irishwoman hood in particular, throughout the nineteenth century and onwards (McLoughlin 1994).

However, despite the prevailing belief that Ireland was a virtuous nation (Diner 1983) there was considerable knowledge of prostitution, throughout the land, as prostitution was ever visible (McLoughlin 1994). Luddy (2007) also remarks,

Contrary to public perception there is ample evidence to show that there was considerable discussion of sexuality in Ireland in the 1920s and 1930s.

(Luddy 2007, p.194)

The 1851 and 1861 census respectively shows 740 prostitutes in Dublin and 590 in Leinster (O'Brien 1982). In 1870, there were as many as 3,000 prostitutes throughout Ireland, not including the hundreds of Curragh Wrens who followed the military garrison from town to town (McLoughlin 1994; see Luddy 2007). Furthermore, O'Brien (1982) notes that 1890 reports show that brothel keepers escalated to 134 in Dublin alone. There was at this time a propitiation of discourse in sexual sermons and in-depth discussions on "things one declines to say, or is forbidden to name" (Foucault 1978,

p.8). Tom Inglis (1998) also argues that confessions and sermons were a way for the Church to gain control over women's sexuality.

Ireland was expected to be returned to complete purity after Independence, however, sexual behaviour and immorality appeared to increase rather than decrease (Luddy 2007). On 17 June 1930 a Committee was appointed by the first President of the Irish Free State, W.T Cosgrave, who led the new government to consider if the Criminal Law Amendment Acts of 1880 and 1885 required modification and consider if new legislation was required to deal with juvenile prostitution and the perceived lack of morals in Ireland (Kennedy 2000). Between the years 1926 to 1931, three influential reports were printed in Ireland: *Report of the Interdepartmental Committee of Inquiry Regulating Venereal Disease* (1926), *Report of The Committee on the Criminal Law Amendment Acts (1800-85)* and *Juvenile Prostitution* (1931). These reports, also known as the Carrigan Committee Report (1931) provide evidence of perceived fears of sexual activity of women (Luddy 2007) and a window into the Catholic perspective on promiscuity in Ireland at the time. They show us how the moral behaviour of its women citizens were taken with such seriousness which must be avoided at all costs.

The Carrigan Committee Report highlighted that since 1925 illegitimacy was growing at an unprecedented rate and contributed to "causes of the species of crime and vice" (The Carrigan Report 1931, p.26). The report alluded to possible causes of such behaviour as; motor cars and dance halls described as a "crying evil" and "schools of scandal" (The Carrigan Report 1931, p.26) resulting in the mixing of sexes (Luddy 2007). The report also provided evidence of an alarming increase of "criminal interference with girls" under the age of 10 years of age (The Carrigan Report 1931, p.7). However, there was also a difference of opinion between William Carrigan and the Minister for Justice on ways to tackle or curb this problem. Among the 21 recommendations Carrigan believed that the age of consent should be raised and favoured a tightening of the law to protect women and children from abuse and forced marriages. When the Carrigan Report was circulated, a memo was attached by the Department of Justice warning of its illicit content and damaging allegations about illegitimacy, child abuse, prostitution, venereal diseases, and deviancy (Luddy 2007; Kennedy 2000). It was also strongly advised that the report be suppressed and for it not to be published (Kennedy 2000).

In February 1932, Eamon de Valera succeeded Cosgrave as president, and appointed Mr James Geoghegan as Minister for Justice (Kennedy 2000). On 27 October 1932 a lengthy document was sent to the Executive Council criticising the Carrigan Report as exaggerated, one sided and underestimated the role of ‘loose women’. In essence, The Minister believed this was too severe on men (Kennedy 2000). Geoghegan stated that if the age of consent was to be raised it would increase blackmail of innocent men, and “produce an enormous increase in the number of crimes committed in the country of which only a small proportion will come to light” (Department of the President S5998, Memorandum: 10, 27 October, cited in Kennedy 2000,p.357). It was also explained in the letter that the “parties may be “reprobates” or “hussies” or both, but it is certain that the blame is not invariably on one side” (Department of the President S5998, Memorandum: 10, 27 October, cited in Kennedy 2000, p.357). The value of a child’s (girls) evidence in light of an accusation was also discussed in the letter and that children with vivid, colourful imaginations would be “unshaken in severe cross examination” (Department of the President, S 5998, Department of Justice memo, 27 October 1932: 10, cited in Kennedy 2000, p.358).

With the Carrigan Report suppressed, there was widespread fear of contagion and immorality, all discussed by academic men and women, priests, bishops, and the state (Luddy 2007). There was considerable discussion on the “ ‘syphilitic drama’ of the working classes” in the 1860s all carried out by medical professionals and published in medical journals used to disseminate their ideas (McDonnell 1868 cited in Luddy 2007, p.140). Medical men, armed with this new knowledge, discussed and debated the moral and social implications of venereal diseases, especially concerned with keeping the troops free of venereal diseases and keeping the prostitute ‘clean’ (Luddy 2007). The body of the prostituted woman became the site for such immorality and the source of venereal disease and infection (Luddy 2007). Belknap (2010), who examined early twentieth century academic journals, shows how women’s biological nature was portrayed as a source for prostitution and such journals, championed the incarceration of women for the “practice of debauchery” (Belknap 2010, p.1071). Indeed women who engaged in ‘indecent behaviour’ were portrayed as immoral and indicative of their biology and that their behaviour belonged “to the class of women who lead sexually immoral lives” (Davis 1913, cited in Belknap 2010, p.1071). Men, on the other hand

were not perceived to be immoral even if they employed a prostitute (Belknap 2010). In discussions and subsequent writings, the professionals were doing a number of things.

Developing their professional competence, marking themselves as the experts, disseminating information and knowledge, and adding to and creating a level of knowledge about the subject which they wished to share with their peers.

(Luddy 2007, p.140)

Since the 1800s societal attitudes towards prostitution were sustained by the prevailing stereotypical discourse at the time (Luddy 2008). Thousands of women, fuelled by drastic economic need, roamed the streets. Style of dress, the company they kept and physical appearance also determined who was labelled as a prostitute; the youngest girl labelled and detained was fourteen (Luddy 2007). However, it was their visibility that caused anxiety and fear amongst the general public, especially given the fact that many believed the popular idea that prostitution was both morally and physically contagious (Luddy 2008). However, whilst women were seen as a possible site for contagion they were also constructed as melancholy victims, an object of pity, and a source of amusement (Luddy 2007). Women, convicted of prostitution were often portrayed as villainous characters or abandoned females in local newspapers (Luddy 2008). Fanny Crowe, for example on being convicted as a prostitute, was described in *The Clare Journal* in 1842 as “a masculine looking woman with a Connacht accent” (Luddy 2007, p. 42). Articles written between the years 1910-1939, in the *The Journal of Criminal Law*, typically acknowledged such “offending women” as victims, however indicated them in a veiled manner, as highly marginalised, with limited education and poor health (Belknap 2010, p.1061). This powerful stigma and stereotype associated with prostitution caused hospitals to become reluctant to admit such ‘patients’ for treatment. From 1820s onward the government issued conditions on any grant given, that hospitals not only cure such women of physical ailments but also attempted to reform their moral character. The Westmorland lock hospital in particular became a place to treat prostitutes and became a site of “moral reclamation” (Luddy 2007, p.132). Luddy (2007) notes a case of moral judgment when one doctor treated a woman with a venereal sore, and immediately presumed she was a prostitute. Regardless, no attempt was made to make the same similarity when treating a male patient; signifying the double standards of sexual behaviour that existed at the time (Luddy 2007).

Of course this problem was of concern from a much earlier point in 19th century particularly in England. To curb the rise in “Disorderly Persons, and Rogues and Vagabonds, in that Part of Great Britain called England”, (*The Vagrancy Act 1824* CHAPTER LXXXIII) was originally intended for England *only* and enacted due to the fact that,

...the roads of England were crowded with masterless men and their families who had lost their former employment through a variety of causes, had no means of livelihood and had taken to a vagrant life.

(The Law Reform Commission 1985, 2.1: p.2)

Later, section 4 of the Act was extended to Ireland and Scotland by section 15 of the *Prevention of Crimes Act 1871* (The Law Reform Commission 1985). This was done to maintain the virtue of the Irish nation and used to arrest *any* woman who was deemed to be a prostitute (Luddy 2007).

... prostitutes, and beggars shall be deemed idle and disorderly persons, and may be imprisoned for one month with hard labour.

(Irish Statue Book: The Vagrancy Act 1924 CHAPTER Lxxxii)

Police were given discretion in this regard and women could be arrested without warrant. But as Luddy (2007) suggests, this law was directed at poor women, street prostitution, and singled out the lower class of prostitutes who publicly aired her wares on the street. For many women who were highly marginalised their survival behaviour was criminalised; offences for which men were never convicted (Belknap 2010). The ‘common prostitute’ and ‘the night walker’ were further prosecuted under the *Metropolitan Police Act 1839*; however, none of the key terms, such as night walker, common prostitute, public place or loitering were defined, again leaving discretion to the police (Valiulis et al 2007). *The Dublin Police Act 1842*, in particular section 14, stated that the opinion of the police officer was sufficient evidence for the court to determine if any woman was a prostitute (Valiulis et al 2007). *The Town Police Clause of 1847*, *The Town Improvement Act 1854* followed all allowing the law to criminalise women in various ways.

The full force of the law was brought down on prostitution and women alike, all accumulating in 1864 when the Parliament passed the first of three *Contagious Disease Acts* (CDAs) (Luddy 2007). As O’Malley (1996) argues there are few times in legal history where gender bias can be so clearly seen in an effort to regulate the sexuality of

women. The CDAs allowed for compulsory medical examination of prostitutes in ‘subjected districts’ where military camps were located, such as Cobh, Cork and The Curragh (Luddy 2007; McLoughlin 1994). Special Policemen were appointed to carry out the provisions of the Acts and women who refused or resisted were arrested and either forcefully examined in local hospitals or imprisoned for up to three months and later in 1869 for six months in a Lock hospital, derived from the medieval word, ‘Loke’, a house for lepers (Luddy 1995; O’Malley 1996). Men on the other hand were not subjected to such an examination. The purpose of this law was to protect the soldiers from venereal diseases and keep the prostitute “clean” (Luddy 2007, p.183). Dublin was however exempt in the CDAs, especially between the years 1866-1885 where “swell ladies...in pink wrappers” served the upper class citizens, and prostitution was ‘contained’ to certain areas without intrusion from the law (O’Brien 1982, p.190). Montgomery Street, Lower Tyrone and Mabbot Street, also known as the ‘Monto district’, in particular became the ill-famed home of prostitutes with figures estimated as much as four thousand (O’Brien 1982). Josephine Butler (1828-1906) an English feminist and moral reformer was particularly influential in repealing the Contagious Disease Acts in 1883. She argued that such laws were barbaric and referred to them as “espionage of enslaved wombs” and “instrumental rape” (Pheterson 1989, p.10). A point to note, however, is that women who were prostitutes were not allowed or invited to participate in Butler’s movement (Pheterson 1989). Nevertheless, Butler warned in 1897 against purity workers “(who are)... ready to accept and endorse any amount of coercive and degrading treatment of their fellow creatures” (Walkowitz 1980 cited in Pheterson 1989, p.11). By that time, however, many had already done so, and a campaign against child abuse and trafficking backfired as the government introduced *The Criminal Law Amendment Act* in 1885. This law not only allowed further policing of poor working class women but also made illegal “indecent acts” which became the basis for legal prosecution of homosexual men (Luddy 2007). Otherwise known as the Stead’ Act, this law penalised brothel keepers and recognised child prostitution as a “veritable slave trade”. However, according to O’Malley (1996) the inspiration for such reform was based on moral grounds not concerned with the socio-economic conditions that forced the girls into prostitution in the first place.

With moral outrage now directed at prostitutes and modern development taking place in 1950s, many tenements in the ‘Monto’ districts in Dublin were demolished, which made

way for corporate buildings (O'Brien 1982). Montgomery Street, informally known as The Monto, was swiftly renamed as Foley Street to redeem its *evil reputation* (O'Brien 1982, emphasis is mine). Ward (2010) notes that the 1960s saw a shift from on-street to indoor prostitution and a blind eye was turned within the Gardai, and suggests a tolerance of the trade. The tolerance however was based on hypocrisy, so long as the women did not conduct themselves in public or in middle class areas they were accepted (Luddy 2007). Kelly et al (2008) note that public 'concern' about prostitution also retreated somewhat and did not emerge again until the 1970s where it was reported that 'mobile prostitutes' served rural areas.

However, during this time there was the brutal murder in 1979 of Teresa Maguire, a former prostitute that increased the public's attention and brought about proposals for change but also a sequence of devastation for those involved (Ward 2010). There was a series of marches from 'Women against Violence against Women' which highlighted through the 1980s the violence that was present in prostitution in the capital (Ward 2010). Dolores Lynch provoked her pimp John Cullen by marching but also gave previous testimony against Cullen as a witness of a rape of another prostitute for which he served three years prison sentence (Caden 2008). However, once free, he exacted his revenge on Dolores and fire bombed Dolores's home, causing the death of her, her mother and her aunt (Caden 2008).

It was against this backdrop of death and violence towards prostituted women that the case of the King v the Attorney General (1981) brought the current legislation into play. A case was brought to the Supreme Court and held that Section 4 of the *Vagrancy Act* (1824) was unconstitutional. This was based on the fact that it could in effect be applied to every suspected person and was based on her or his character and the court simply had to prove that the accused person had previous convictions and therefore prosecuted for 'loitering with intent'. The Oireachtas enacted, under Section 7, the *Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 1993*. Today, whilst prostitution itself is not illegal, soliciting or importuning another person in a street or public place for the purpose of prostitution is illegal (Valiulis et al 2007). The offence, whilst gender neutral can prosecute the prostitute, the client or the pimp. But, "the way it is conducted tends to bring participants into conflict with the law", namely the prostitute, who are predominantly women (O'Donnell, ND, p.92). Whilst terms such as 'common prostitute' were omitted,

other terms such as loitering, soliciting and procuring were preserved (Valiulis et al 2007). Valiulis and colleagues (2007) argue that little attention was given to the effect such legislation would have on the prostitute, and that many objectionable aspects of the old 1824 law were kept. 'Prostitution', for example, is still not defined, creating "recognisable descriptions of 'the prostitute' constructed on the basis of appearance, time and place of presence" (Ryan 1997, cited in Valiulis et al 2007, p.56). In this case history has repeated itself, minimising the socioeconomic factors and the causes of prostitution (Belknap 2010). O'Malley (1996, p.182) also criticises the 1993 Act, describing it as "distinctly ambivalent" as it requires the prostitute, due to the very nature of her 'work' to operate on the very margins of it. It was put in place to protect the public from the nuisance it causes, forcing many women to work inside away from visibility (O'Malley 1996). However, unless the person has the financial capability to operate indoors they are forced to contravene the law by 'working' on the street, effectively making prostitution a criminal offence (O'Malley 1996).

To summarise this section, as Belknap (2010, p.1090) remarks, the old adage "the more things change the more they stay the same" is appropriate given the fact that the writings in historical journals on 'offending women' were often caught up in biological explanations. Such journals were highly sexist and deficient, not unlike the case today, particularly given that the law still criminalises poor, marginalised women who turn to prostitution for their very survival (Belknap 2010) and ignores the violence and abuse that many women in prostitution suffer at the hands of the male buyer and the general public. Legislation today shows us that the law and the system that is based on the recognisable differences between men and women are "set up so that women fail" (Belknap 2010. p.1093).

The Creation of the 'Prostitute Stereotypes'

The second component of stigma arises from its original source, the creation of differences, and has since come to be linked with stereotypes (Link and Phelan 2001). The link between stigma and stereotype was highlighted in Goffman's (1963) original work and has been evident in conceptualising stigma ever since (Link and Phelan 2001). The traditional concept of stereotype describes a fixed but often over simplified 'picture in the head' (Lippman 1922). However, this picture and belief system from society can also become internalised and exist in the mind of those who are being stereotyped

(Stangor and Schalter 1996). Simmons (1965;1966) also found that stereotyping of deviant individuals are mostly negative and they are often regarded as lazy and lacking self-control (cited in Bernburg et al 2006). The individual is often seen and defined by her or his behaviour and stereotypical images of the ‘criminal’ from society “are driven to the forefront of the person’s life” (Bernburg et al 2006, p.69).

It should be noted that not all labelled differences result in stereotyping. As Green et al (2005) explain, those with athletic ability may be stereotyped but not negatively valued or at least not an attribute that most people would dread acquiring. Furthermore, as Scambler (2007) explains, the ‘whore stigma’ whilst synonymous with attribute of shame can be in certain times and places accepted and even afforded special privileges. For instance, Munro and Giusta (2008) note, even in most primitive of societies prostitution is well documented and if not accepted, tolerated. Courtesans and Japanese geisha are seen as cultural treasures and are adept in the art of opera, ballet, Chinese and French literature and a practice viewed as an accepted aspiration for high cultural society (Ditmore 2006). However, this acceptance has been fleeting, and women who sell sex, more than men who buy it, have been subjected to stigma, shame and violence as a result (Scambler 2007). For example, the link between contamination and fear of the spread of HIV and AIDS in London has escalated since the 1980s (Scambler 2007). There was a misplaced fear that sex workers were the vectors of such diseases, even though it was reported that less than two percent of prostitutes (women) in London were infected (Walkowitz 1980, cited in Scambler 2007). Whilst this has not escalated into full blown moral panic (Scambler 2007), there is an echo of Luddy’s (2007) description of the association between cholera and prostitution in Ireland between the 1850s and 1900. There was wide spread coverage on issues of health and contagion and the presence of cholera and prostitution were intrinsically linked; there was no coincidence that words such as, fearful, dreadful and contagion were used to describe both (Luddy 2007, p.37).

The generalised stereotype of the prostitute compiled by Pheterson (1993) continues to have relevance: the list includes;

Having sex with multiple partners; taking sexual initiative and control and possessing expertise; asking a fee for sex; being committed to satisfying men’s lusts and fantasies; being out alone on the street at night dressed to incite or attract men’s desires; being in the company of supposed drunk or abusive men whom they can either handle (as ‘common’ or ‘vulgar’ women) or not handle (as ‘victimized’ women).

However, the term 'whore' whilst directed at prostitutes still points to women, not the men who abuse, and used as a stereotype to condemn all women (Tomura 2011). The term when used implies that women are immoral, dangerous, or weak and indicates that the person is not worthy of human rights, is a powerful source of social separation (Link and Phelan 2001) and a dominant tactic of male chauvinism (Tomura 2011).

The representation of women in prostitution in the media also has a significant bearing on generalised stereotype. Women in prostitution are still generally depicted in media coverage as 'a social problem', associated with 'illegal vice', and usually frames 'sex workers' as 'moral pollutants' with exaggerated words such as 'invasion' or 'swarms' to describe them (FitzGerald and O'Rourke 2012, p. 146). FitzGerald and O'Rourke (2012) for example, analysed how young men in particular consume Irish newspaper coverage of prostitution in Ireland. Prominent themes which emerged from this study was that men saw prostitution as a phenomenon that occurred at a distance from themselves, allowing men to be critical of the women without implicating themselves in the criticism. A theme of 'us' 'and 'them' also emerged as did a dichotomy from men as they constructed women as lacking in self-control; "a lot of them are, there're easily led, they're weak" was one such comment (FitzGerald and O'Rourke 2012, turn 391, p.150). Men in this study demonstrated traits of liberal feminist discourse in their discussion as one man stated "I don't think prostitution should be viewed as violence against women" (FitzGerald and O'Rourke 2012, Turn 563, p.151). In FitzGerald and O'Rourke's (2012) study men also listed some of the reasons why women remain in prostitution and their discourse varied between individualistic reasons, as a voluntary profession, to possible involvement of social structures; also dominant discourses that are presented in newspapers generally (FitzGerald and O'Rourke 2012). Whilst most men constructed prostitution as an individual choice they also pictured it as an 'unknown', 'dark industry' and a 'mystery' to them and the general public.

Whilst Irish and migrant women in prostitution are highly marginalised (Kelleher et al 2009; US Department of State 2014), Hawthorne (2011, p.147) found that trafficked victims in Northern Ireland and children are often viewed as the real victims. As a result "other adult" women are often de-prioritised (Hawthorne et al 2011). This rhetoric of prostitution as 'choice and work' has influenced global legislation regarding prostitution

and has affected services that assist women in prostitution which are limited as a result. The buyers, predominately male or often viewed as customers with rights whereas women bodies are commoditised resulting in internal objectification.

Separating ‘us’ (the non-prostitute) from ‘them’ (the prostitute)

The third component of the stigma process occurs when social labels or attributes signify a division of “us and them” (Link and Phelan 2001). It is also in this process of stigmatisation that the person who is stigmatised can be blamed for their situation (Green et al 2005). Separation occurs when the reactions of others go beyond benign social awkwardness towards the stigmatised person (Green et al 2005). Pronounced reactions from society cause the separation, accumulating in a devaluing process, where the person is viewed as less than human (Green et al 2005). To be shunned, singled out, or mistreated are all examples of the separation component of stigma (Green et al 2005). Previously held beliefs about a group become the rationale “for believing that negatively labelled persons are fundamentally different from those who don’t share the label-different types of people” (Link and Phelan 2001, p.370). On one hand, there is a perception that no harm can come from attributing such negative characteristics on to them (Link and Phelan 2001). However, in the extreme, the person who is stigmatised can be treated so differently and face “horrific treatment” (Link and Phelan 2001, p.370). Furthermore, stigma can be used by those in power to propagate prejudicial ideologies about such ‘other’ groups and can state sanction ways to curb their growth (McCordic 2012). According to McCordic (2012), Goffman (1963) acknowledges that those who are stigmatised are discriminated against. This discrimination has far reaching implications including dehumanisation of a stigmatised group or person and as a result can be used by institutions of power to justify the incitement of violence (McCordic 2012).

Groups who constituted us and them in the past have changed over time. However, there was always an acceptance and adherence to segregation of the sexes in Ireland (Diner 1983). The acceptance and conformity of its citizens reflected the level of restraint put on them. The effect of this segregation, not only effected women financially, but escalated the animosity and tension between men and women. Throughout Irelands history there was always a fierce determination of Irish women, despite their lowly place in society to provide for their family (Diner 1983). Despite the

determination to survive, prostituted women were consigned to the lower strata of society and subjected to horrific mistreatment, a trait of this component, by those in authority. Particularly poignant examples from the 1850s described a priest pursuing Anne Miles, and cut off her hair (an obvious sign of outcast status, at the time). In 1864 an Ennis priest “tore the clothes off two bad girls in College Road” (Luddy 2007, p.32). Another, Fr McMahan, assaulted two ‘notorious women’ from Kilrush. His defence, according to the *Clare Freeman* (1854), was “that he had spiritual and temporal jurisdiction, which he may exercise at [his] discretion” (Luddy 2007, p.31). Attempts to leave prostitution were not accepted by ‘respectable society’ and refusal of employment was common place with the ideology of the time announcing, once a fallen woman, always a fallen woman, unless she would spend the remainder of her life in an institution to redeem herself (Luddy 2007). Homes for unmarried mothers and ‘fallen women’, such as the Magdalen asylums, protected societal norms and were considered a valuable service by the Irish government (Luddy 2007). Workhouses, also functioned as a protective measure, and were a truly last desperate option, for those women labelled as prostitutes who were not admitted to the Magdalen asylums with children (Luddy 2007). Those who entered into notorious workhouses did so in considerable numbers, and is an indication of how “economically precarious life as a prostitute truly was” (Luddy 2007; 1995). Whilst in the confines of the workhouse, the women would be separated from the respectable poor, and moral classification as well as sex, age and health classification was practiced as this was considered necessary to prevent contamination of innocent women (Luddy 2007; 1995). Women who had no obvious occupation were often labelled as prostitutes and their children as bastards; which became living testimonies of their mother’s deviant profession (Dorfman 2011). Classification and separation within the workhouse clearly played a central role in attempting to control the immorality of women (Luddy 2007).

Today this acceptance of the stereotype of Brigit as virtuous and Pat as a drunk (Diner 1983) has increased the separation of men and women and has brought with it epic levels of men’s violence against women (Safe Ireland 2014). The “horrific treatment” that Link and Phelan (2001, p.370) refers to in the separation process of stigmatisation, can be seen in UglyMugs, a pro sex work scheme that aims to improve the safety of sex workers in Ireland. However, many ‘sex workers’, as they are referred to, in Ireland have reported high incidences of abuse from ‘male clients’, including, attempted rape,

rape, assault, robbery, vaginal rape, forced oral sex and anal rape (UglyMugs.ie). In Ireland also murder, death, violence, disease and abuse of prostituted women are not uncommon (Luddy 2007). The names of women include: Teresa Maguire 1978, Dolores Lynch (34) 1983, Irene Clifford (37) 1991, Belinda Pereira (26) 1996, Sinead Kelly (21) 1998, Layla Brennen (24) 1998, Lynette McKeown (19) 1998 and Qu Mei Na, (22) 2004 (McShane 2014; McGuigan 2008; Ugly Mugs 2013). All of these women entered into prostitution out of desperate necessity, forced and sold to many men daily. They died a brutal death, beaten, raped, burned, and many of their bodies dumped unceremoniously in the shadows of the Dublin Mountains. All the murders were allegedly at the hands of men and provoked a fear in the local communities, but only for a short while. An indication of their dehumanisation which separated 'us and them' brought about by a long history of a socio-cultural process (McCordic 2012). As prostitution of women has become normalised, so too has the harms that are intrinsic in it (Jeffreys 2010). The impact of the separation process thus far shows how the prostitute in Ireland has come to be disregarded as a lesser person, devalued in the eyes of the stigmatiser, dehumanised and has become reduced and discounted as an individual (Goffman 1963).

Discrimination and Status Loss for the Prostitute

How a person experiences discrimination and status loss is the fourth component in the stigma process (Link and Phelan 2001). Although this component is not usually identified in stigma definitions, Link and Phelan (2001) argue that the term stigma does not hold validity if both discrimination and status loss is left out. In their reasoning, Link and Phelan (2014) argue that once a person is labelled, excluded, rejected and devalued, they are set apart causing them to automatically experience status loss and discrimination (Link and Phelan 2001). As soon as successful labelling and stereotypes are applied, an immediate consequence is the demotion of a person in the status hierarchy (Link and Phelan 2001). In other words the person is reduced as a lesser person, devalued in the eyes of the stigmatiser (Link and Phelan 2001) and may be subjected to varying levels of discrimination, impeding their life chances (Goffman 1963; Riley 2010).

Structural discrimination, an outcome of this component, shows how the prostituted woman is denied access to supportive services, especially due to the fact that many

women who engage in prostitution in Ireland come from a lower socioeconomic background, have a history of childhood sexual abuse, poverty, addiction, homelessness, education disadvantage and social exclusion (Nelson et al 2010; Kelleher et al 2009; Valiulis et al 2007). Therefore, a woman in prostitution will, at some point in her life, experience structural discrimination as a result of stigmatisation (Link and Phelan 2001; Phillips et al 2012). There is a lack of state funding available in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland for services to support prostituted persons in their life cycle (Valiulis et al 2007; Hawthorn 2011). This is more than likely due to the “fiercely contested moral and ideological views associated with the prostitution stigma” (Phillips et al 2012, p.686). *The Interdisciplinary Report on Prostitution in Ireland* (2007) also highlights that Ireland does not have a national strategy in place to provide support to those who remain in prostitution or to those who wish to exit it. Nor can the state promise to protect those who have been trafficked into Ireland (Valiulis et al 2007). This is evident in a recent High Court judgment which has shown that the Irish State can add to the oppression of women. In her judgment, Ms. Justice O’Malley ruled that the Gardai had failed on a number of grounds to assist a Vietnamese woman who has been trafficked into the state for the purposes of exploitation, which led to her imprisonment for over two and a half years (P. v The Chief Superintendent 2015). Despite the fact that prostitution is nationwide in Ireland (Escort Ireland 2015) and that there is evidence of women trafficked into Ireland for the purposes of prostitution (US Department 2015), there are no dedicated services outside of Dublin to support those engaged in prostitution and this “is simply shocking” (Valiulis et al 2007, p.157). In the face of the evidence that prostituted women face an exceptional level of violence and abuse (Kelleher et al 2009; Ugly Mugs 2014) the report goes on to conclude that there is a severe lack of knowledge about all aspects of prostitution (on all levels) stemming from a lack of public interest, thus allowing prostitution to become less of a priority for the State to tackle the issue (Valiulis et al 2007). Hence the lack of resources and lack of National Strategy made available to service providers in Ireland to support women in prostitution.

The Presence of Power

The final component of the stigmatisation process is the presence of power and is the “mechanism of choice” by those in power and used to keep people, in, down or away

from economic and social resources (Link and Phelan 2014, p.25). As has been shown, especially in Ireland those in power can suppress those who are marginalised (see Kennedy 2000). Considering the former components of the stigma process, without the presence of power, Link and Phelan (2001) argue that the true meaning of stigma would not exist, or at least the stigma is felt more modestly in some groups more than others. It is also argued by Green et al (2005) that a person with a stigmatised status, who belongs to a group that possesses more power, is more likely to resist the attempts of discrimination, and thus does not lose status (Green et al 2005). “It takes power to stigmatise” (Link and Phelan 2001, p.375) and the role of power in the social production of stigma *is* important to understand. Power, depends on the relativity of one group to another and stigma cannot be enacted without it (Green et al 2005). Those who are in a majority group tend to possess greater, social, economic, and political clout to imbue their dominant ideas of a stigmatised group on to society, and as a result “produce real and important consequences for the other group” (Link and Phelan 2001, p.378).

According to Link and Phelan (2001) people in power; generally have influence to ensure that the original label is sustained in the culture; ensure the stereotype is kept in place, so that the designation sticks, becomes accepted and recognised by the culture; have the power to separate us from them and maintain the distinction. Finally, those in power have control of major institutions such as education, health, housing, employment and may confer stigma so that such groups have limited access to those institutions. If these elements can be found with the combination and influence of a dominant ideal of those in power who maintain it, the stigmatised status of the group will be maintained in society, and they will bear the consequences of that stigma (Link and Phelan 2001).

However, in order to fully understand prostitution and the role of power in the social production of stigma, a logical analysis should include the subject of patriarchal power. This is essential as it requires not only an intellectual awareness but a political consciousness, since in terms of domination prostituted women face brutal realities (Barry 1995). Fundamental to radical feminist analysis is the understanding that men and women are political categories. This type of analysis offers a fuller understanding of

the terrain of male domination and the matrix of sexual exploitation, as well as the possibility of revolutionizing the oppression of women (Barry 1995).

As Williams (1989, p.52) suggests, women are oppressed, “as a group or class, by men as a group or class”. Prostitution is a predominantly female experience, and though men and women who engage in prostitution as sellers experience it differently, male and female prostitution have one thing in common: “the customers are overwhelmingly male” and exist to serve men exclusively (Jeffreys 1997, p.103). When prostitution is examined from a human rights perspective,

the determination of harm must rest on the act, not only individually but collectively in women’s class condition. If the act exploits, it is in itself destructive of human life, well being, integrity, and dignity. That is violation. And when it is gendered, repeated over and over in and on woman after woman, that is oppression.

(Barry 1995, p.70)

Men are the ruling class and “meet in a potentially intimate activity which involves the very organs which represent the status category of the participants” (Jeffreys 1997, p.206). Female subordination and the desire for male supremacy eroticise objectification. It is not just socially constructed, “but constructive of the political system of male supremacy, [and] cannot regard the sex of prostitution as in any way natural or inevitable (Jeffreys 1997, p.208). The prostitution of women is therefore among the most “oppressive aspects of the sex of male supremacy” (Jeffreys 1997, p. 225).

Systems of male political supremacy can govern the interests of those in power and can be done through the process of decriminalisation of prostitution. For example, this was achieved in New Zealand through [*The Prostitution Reform Act*] but this Act has not lessened the violence, abuse or the stigma that is experienced by women in prostitution /sex work (see New Zealand Ministry of Justice Report 2008; Parliament of Victoria Report 2010). Farley and Kelly (2000) further note, decriminalisation only serves the interests of the buyer, normalizes the sex industry and does not decrease the violence, stigma, trauma and humiliation that prostituted women continue to experience. Those who buy sex from minors, they add, have continued to receive lighter sentences since the law was enacted. However, this type of stigma power is particularly useful because it is hidden and serves the interests of the stigmatiser (Link and Phelan 2006). When used in this covert way it can also affect the structures that surround the stigmatised

person, [the prostituted woman] and keeps her in, down and away from economic resources' such as educational or health institutions, essentially limiting her life chances. Jeffreys (1997, p.225) explains, prostitution goes far deeper than stigma as it represents the "most oppressive aspects of the sex of male supremacy". However, as argued, stigma is kept in place by those in power (Link and Phelan 2006), as it serves the interest of the buyer (Farley and Kelly 2000), misdirecting contempt to the prostituted women who receive denigration and blame (Jeffreys 1997).

Green et al (2005, p. 210) argue, "unbalanced power relations that disadvantages individuals with disabilities will persist as long as these structures and values go unchallenged". This statement can also be applied to the prostituted person, bearing in mind Ireland's history of horrific treatment of women in prostitution who remain highly stigmatised (Luddy 2007), marginalised, lacking in social status (Kelleher et al 2009; Hawthorn 2011), discriminated against in law and criminalised as a result under the *Sexual Offences Act 1993* (O'Malley 1996).

Finally, there has always been, and still is, a negative association with such groups reminding us that there are powerful constraining influences at work (Link and Phelan 2001). The stigmatisation of the prostitute in Ireland and elsewhere persists, affecting her life in various ways and highlighting to us that:

...socioeconomic status has had a robust association with disease and death: people with greater resources of knowledge, money, power, prestige, and social connections are generally better able to avoid risks and to adopt protective strategies.

(Link and Phelan 2006, p.529)

Conclusion

Link and Phelan (2001, p.382) revised Goffman's (1963) original theory of stigma conceptually and determine that it exists as a matter of degree and only "where elements of labelling, stereotyping, separating, status loss and discrimination co-occur in a power situation that allows these processes to unfold". Firstly they describe *labelling and the creation of differences*, as "the recognition of differences and the assignment of social salience to those differences" (Green et al 2005, p.197). Secondly, *stereotyping* was examined to show how stereotypical differences become undesirable by others and salient negative attributes such as prostitution, become socially unacceptable. *Separation* was discussed next, which "occurs when the reaction of others to these

differences lead to a pronounced sense of “otherness” (Green et al 2005, p.198). The fourth element evaluated was *discrimination and status loss*. This immediately occurs when a person is discriminated against because of their negative difference. Finally, those in power tend to have more influence than those who are negatively evaluated. This *power differential*, the final component, allows the previous element to unfold, and keeps those considered different, in, down or away from economic and social resources (Link and Phelan 2014). Taken together, stigmatisation of the individual is a complex process consisting of these five elements (Green et al 2005). For the prostitute in Ireland it involves the creation and identification of biological differences, negative views by others, adverse reactions by others, all accumulating in diminished life chances for the individual women involved (Green et al 2005). Taken together, the outcome of the stigmatisation process have the potential to influence the construction of stereotypes and the identification of those who are different and essentially plays a major part in limiting the life chances of a stigmatised person (Link and Phelan 2001).

When each component of the stigmatisation process is combined, stigma can become a chronic negative condition, which offers an explanation as to why stigma can be so difficult to eradicate (Link and Phelan 2001). Evidence of the history in Ireland has shown us that there has been an acceptance of the sexual double standards and that woman more than men have been victimised and stigmatised as a result of prostitution (Luddy 2007). Rates of physical abuse, violence and death of women in prostitution are amply noted (Potteret et al 2004). This section has highlighted that women in prostitution in Ireland are stigmatised as a result of the stigmatisation process which has been sustained by those in power, specifically patriarchal power. The analysis of patriarchal power is essential as Barry (1995) notes and requires a political consciousness, because in terms of domination the realities of the prostituted woman produces brutal realities which accumulates in laws that criminalise her and a society that views her as lesser individual. There has always been and still is a prevailing negative association with such groups reminding us that there are powerful constraining influences at work (Link and Phelan 2001). The stigma of prostitution is a well-established part of a historical legacy of women’s oppression by those in power. Regardless of legislation that controls prostitution, the stigma of prostitution continues and only serves the interests of those in power, not the powerless and women continue

to receive abuse and violence from the men who buy them (New Zealand Ministry of Justice Report 2008).

The stigmatisation of prostituted women in Ireland persists and affects her life in various ways. The process of stigmatisation has far reaching implications for her and can diminish her life chances. This highlights to us that women in prostitution usually lack power, money and prestige keeping them in, down or away from economic resources (Link and Phelan 2006). Those who have a greater socioeconomic status in a stigmatised group are more likely to avoid risks associated with it and are according to Link and Phelan (2006) more likely to adopt protective strategies. Therefore, the review which follows in the next section shall provide an analysis of the protective techniques used to protect the self from stigmatisation that is associated with prostitution and highlight the consequences of that concealment.

2.4: Stigma Management Strategies and the Consequences of Concealment

I'm a homeless, smackhead, prostitute; it doesn't get much worse than that.

(Reeve 2013, p.826)

Introduction

In the previous sections, it was established that the prostituted woman in Ireland was truly stigmatised, not just in Goffman's (1963) traditional sense as "an attribute that is deeply discrediting", but through a socio-cultural process, of labelling, stereotyping, separation, discrimination and status loss, and that she is kept, in, down and away from economic and social resources' by symbolic patriarchal power (Link and Phelan 2001; Barry 1995). It was also demonstrated that many women in prostitution are acutely aware of her stigmatised status (Tomura 2011) and throughout history has been active in her resistance to oppression and stigmatisation (Sanders et al 2009; Mathieu 2011). Goffman (1963) also explains, stigmatised persons who are 'wise' can restrict or limit their interaction with others, revealing information only to others that they trust. Regardless of how successful they are in managing their stigma, those who are labelled with a stigmatised status are "confronted with social problems not faced by the straight world" (Pfohl 1994, p.354). Concealing a non-visible stigma, whilst possible can result

in exhaustion and anxiety (McCray et al 2011) and can lead to negative long-term consequences and considerable stress (Pachankis 2007). In this section it will be argued that possessing a concealable stigma can be fraught with unique challenges and pose a significant dilemma for many individuals including the prostitute, former or otherwise, who belong to such a stigmatised group. It will also be argued, that regardless of where a prostitute is situated, indoor, outdoor, on-line or otherwise, she is stigmatised, and can cause consequences from sadness to suicide. This section will begin with a focus on occupational identity and the stigma associated with prostitution or as Arnold and Barling (2003) describe it 'dirty work'. Following that, there will be an analysis of the various coping techniques used to conceal the stigmatisation that is associated with prostitution and the consequences of that concealment.

Occupational Identity

According to Watson (1995) occupation is important to us all, largely because we are driven by survival as we take from the environment we live in. As a result "the work that people do becomes closely bound up with their conception of self" (Watson 1995, p.113). Occupational identity is described by Ashford and Kreiner (1999) as the defining features of an occupation that typify the line of work. They argue that people typically ask each other what they do for a living. Thus job titles are important as society ascribes occupational identities which become prominent identity badges (Ashford and Kreiner 1999).

Identity literature tends to suggest that the stigma of 'dirty work' threatens an individual's ability to construct a positive identity (Ashforth and Kreiner 1999). Goffman (1963, p.13) also argued that occupation is closely related to a person's social identity and some jobs which are considered undesirable are kept a secret by the holder "lest they be marked as failures and outsiders". He explains that on first appearances, when meeting a stranger, people usually,

... anticipate his category and attributes, his 'social identity'- to use a term that is better than 'social status' because personal attributes such as 'honesty are involved, as well as structural ones, like occupation.

(Goffman 1963, p.12)

Everett Hughes (1951) originally evoked this idea of 'dirty work' as jobs performed by people that others think of as disgusting or "physically, socially or morally" tainted

(Ashforth and Kreiner 1999, p.414). Dirty work can either be literal or figurative types of work that people do and as a result are seen by the public as morally dubious (Watson 1995). To be truly 'dirty' the work must be both necessary and polluting, and within this separation the work can be low or high prestige (Arnold and Barling 2003). Arnold and Barling (2003) consider prostitution as an example of what can be considered low prestige 'dirty work' as it is seen by society as more evil than necessary. Ashforth and Kreiner (1999) explain that unlike other 'occupations', prostitution appears to have multiple dimensions of stigmatisation. The prostitute for example, is considered by Ashford and Kreiner (1999) to possess a moral and physical taint: physical taint, because the prostitutes work is considered a deviant occupation, is dangerous and associated with violence and moral/social taint due to the thought that they employ deception and defy social norms. As Reeve's (2013) found, the prostitute who is homeless and has a drug habit, experiences stigma on multiple levels. Due to her visibility on the street, her obvious signs of drug use and her "known-about-ness" (Goffman 1963, p.65) regarding her prostitution they received daily humiliation and degradation by passers-by, and as one respondent explains "I'm a homeless, smackhead, prostitute; it doesn't get much worse than that" (Reeve 2013, p.826).

People who do 'dirty work' are usually exposed to the same socialising experiences as other members of society and would share the same stereotypical beliefs of the job. The 'dirty workers' then come to perceive themselves as literally a 'dirty worker'. Arnold and Barling (2003) explain that many prostitutes are well aware of the stigma attached to prostitution. Putdowns and discrimination by others and demeaning questions, such as 'how can you do it?' are communicated in subtle and direct forms from society to the worker (Ashford and Kreiner 1999). Tomura (2011) in her phenomenological analysis of five active female indoor prostitutes' subjective experience of stigmatisation noted that some women were well aware of the stigma associated with prostitution and with the gendered expectation of traditional patriarchy. One participant, added that in her culture, she was aware that she has been defined by social norms, of marriage and children, and the fact that she had 'chosen' prostitution and not monogamy was a negative stigma. Another woman recognised that whilst promiscuous women face prejudices, prostitutes are considered different as they exemplify the extremes of womanhood, which is not normally expected in male-orientated society (Tomura 2011). Theories of reflective appraisals, such as 'the looking glass self' (Cooley 1902) also

support the notion that individuals do learn to see themselves based on society's perceptions of them (cited in Rahim 2010). Cooley theorised that the self arises dialectically and that we "unconsciously develop or mood our self on the basis of our communication with society" (cited in Rahim 2010, p.10). In inner city communities such as the ghetto, people receive negative stereotypes and are labelled, which can be internalised affecting how the individuals, thinks, feels and acts (Rahim 2010). According to this theory, members of a stigmatised group, such as the blind, mentally ill, obese, or homosexuals, who are aware that they are viewed negatively should incorporate these attitudes and affect self-esteem (Rahim 2010).

Strategies used to protect the 'self' against stigma

However, many who do 'dirty work' tend not to suffer with low occupational esteem (Ashforth and Kreiner 1999). Ashforth and Kreiner (1999) argue that typically people seek to view themselves and their situation in a positive light, even if engaging in prostitution is challenging for them due to the stigma attached to it. However, the stigmatised person is left in a paradoxical position as "they play a part in servicing the social order generally approved of the same people who often prefer to avert their eyes from such occupations" (Watson 1995, p.214). In attempting to explain the worker's paradoxical situation, Ashforth and Kreiner (1999, p.417) look to the social identity theory that postulates "individuals seek to enhance their self-esteem through their social identities" and is for the most part grounded in the perceptions of others (Felson 1992, cited in Ashford and Kreiner 1999). Another way the prostitute can maintain or manage her stigma, is by using stigma management strategies, or as Goffman (1963, p.125) refers to it as "covering".

With an obvious stigma, such as a facial disfigurement, Goffman (1963) argues that this person will expect some measure of shock from others as well as acceptance. He or she may also hide or disguise their stigma in places where she or he is less known in order to conceal it (Goffman 1963). This is not just done solely to pass, but is a conscious effort to restrict certain failings to outside groups. The stigmatised person uses learned assimilative techniques that are "employed by members of minority ethnic groups", to avert the attention away from the stigma (Goffman 2009, p.103). This can be done in various ways, such as surgery to conceal or hide physical disfigurement, a blind person who looks directly as a seeing person in conversation (Goffman 1963) or protective

strategies used by prostitutes in order to pass as a non-stigmatised person. Many prostitutes use such techniques to neutralise the negative stigma associated with their work, and to a degree can enhance self-esteem (Arnold and Barling 2003). Techniques, such as reframing, rationalising or recalibrating can transform the meaning of prostitution for them (Arnold and Barling 2003).

Arnold and Barling (2003) argue that prostitutes face considerable stresses in their work, some unique to their profession and some other stressors that are common across all occupations (Arnold and Barling 2003). Brewis and Linstead (2000) analysed the varying ways female sex workers negotiate and construct ways to preserve their sense of self. Literature suggests that the sex industry in particular is one such site where the prostitutes own body or parts of it are consumed by the client and often there is a threat that the entire person is consumed, thus experiencing a loss of self-identity in the process (Brewis and Linstead 2000). As O'Neill (2001) suggests "separating the body from the self results in an exceptional control of the inner world" (cited in Sanders 2005, p.325). McCray et al (2011) argue that stigmatised work, such as prostitution, and individuals that work in it, can manage the negative meaning and preserve their sense of identity (McCray et al 2011). However, for the prostitute who has to deal with the multiple taint of her work, there is a great deal of identity management strategies involved. The extent that which stigma coping strategies are employed and the difficulty in managing or concealing identity can cause significant negative health implications for the stigmatised (Koken 2012). In the following section the stigma coping strategies that are employed by prostituted persons will be discussed, followed by an analysis of the implications of management for her.

Redefining prostitution as work

Reframing prostitution as work is just one protective strategy used to enhance self-esteem (Ashforth and Kreiner 1999). Past research, including Wilson and Butler (2013), Cobbina and Oselin (2011), Tomura (2009) and Sanders (2005), also indicates that participants do not recognise their behaviour as prostitution but work, as the money they made was their income. Sanders (2005) ethnographic study of fifty 'voluntary' female indoor sex workers in Britain, noted that many women also referred to themselves with entrepreneurial titles, such as 'career girl' or 'working girls'. Occupational ideologies (systems of belief) are often constructed as a means to understand why their work

matters (Ashford and Kreiner 1999). In order to act as a full member of an occupation, Watson (1995) explains, that the individual learns values, rules and norms associated with that work. The effect of this occupational socialisation helps develop common perspectives and strengthen bonds (Watson 1995). As Scott and Lyman (1968) explain many groups who perform ‘dirty work’ “assert its positive values in the face of a claim to the contrary” (cited in Ashford and Kreiner 1999, p.421). Frequently, strong occupational sub-cultures are borne out of certain types of work, where they socialise together, strengthening their bond, whilst isolating themselves from the rest of society (Ashford and Kreiner 1999). Furthermore, groups who have such ‘dirty work’ in common tend to be more cohesive and have an ‘us versus them’ view of the world (Freud 1851) and rationalise or justify their work (Arluke 1991) which makes their work more salient to themselves (cited in Ashford and Kreiner 1999). Moreover, both Tomura (2009) and McCray et al (2011) acknowledge that most who work in prostitution are acutely aware of the stigma associated with it and hide or lie about their work, shifting focus from the negative aspect of prostitution and emphasise its positive qualities. For instance, Sanders’ (2005) research on English prostitutes reveals stories about how they believe that they provide a legitimate service and help society by preventing adulterous relationships. Another group, COYOTE (Call Off Your Tired Ethics) argue that selling sex is the same as other kinds of work women do, a dancer, model, artist or lawyer (Thio and Taylor 2012). Burnstein’s (2004) research also shows that many of the ‘sex workers’ revealed that many men not only used sex workers for sex, but also as an emotional connection (cited in Kornblum 2012).

Other blaming and self-blaming

As highlighted in the previous section, symbolic power works best when it is discreetly hidden, especially when operated through the stigmatised person (Link and Phelan 2014). Other blaming or self-blaming is commonly felt by the person who is stigmatised and is “a powerful source of social separation” (Green et al 2005, p206). In this way stigma and discrimination cannot be contributed to a perpetrator leaving the discrimination misrecognised (Link and Phelan 2014). Green et al (2005) found in their research that some mothers of children with disabilities blamed their children for their differences. Other mother’s felt that they were to blame for their children’s disability by

total strangers, despite the fact that they had no control over the outcome (Green 2003a, cited in Green et al 2005).

Sallmann (2010, p.151) in her interpretive phenomenology of prostitutes lived experience of stigma, explains, that many women spoke of their experience of sexual violence in prostitution. K.B, for example, when reporting a kidnap and rape the police officer stated that she “deserved it”. She later returned to her pimp, who told her to “get back out there” (Sallmann 2010. p.151). What the experience of K.B reveals to us is that there is a social belief that prostitutes are “unrapeable” (Sallmann 2010, p.151). However, these myths also become accepted by the women involved and are framed as normal expected aspects of prostitution (Sallmann 2010). This “normalisation of harm” was described by one woman when she stated that “I guess it comes with the territory” (Sallmann 2010, p.151). Self-blaming was also explored by Joshua (2012) who argues that we must understand why some women experience violence, but do not leave their situation. This, he adds, provides deeper insight into the perceptions of women who work in prostitution. Context is crucial, and the concept of violence shifts and is unique to each individual who experiences it and to the person who is listening to it. For example, Joshua (2012) gives an account of one woman’s [prostitutes] perception of violence when encountering an arrest with the police; so the police said,

“Your under arrest”, and he said, “Bitch, if you make a move, I’ll knock you down in the street right now. Do you hear me?” I said “I’m not going to do anything”, and he said, “Did you hear me bitch?” You know, he screamed and hollered at me.

(Joshua 2012, p.133)

In this instance, Joshua (2012) (the interviewer) notes that although he interpreted this as verbal violence, in the form of harassment and threats, the woman implied that she did not view it as violence. The woman went on to recall an experience of multiple rapes, when she got into a car of a client who she did not know. The immediate reaction of her interviewer was to ask, “Wasn’t it hard to get into a car again after that?” The woman explained her experience as a mistake, and that she did not know that she should not get into a car with “a trick who (she) hasn’t dated” (Joshua 2012, p.134). One interpretation of this can suggest that she was experiencing self-blame. Alternatively, it could be interpreted as an “astute calculation” (Joshua 2012, p.124); in future she will be more aware and not get into a car of a client she did not know. The difference in the two interpretations (the researcher and the researched) is that the latter thought is an

outside voice- a voice that is a “visceral unbelief” that she would ever contemplate getting into a car after such a horrific experience (Joshua 2012, p.124). The former, is an inside response, that understands the conditions of her life that compel her to work in prostitution (Joshua 2012). The inside voice, of the researcher should (always) contemplate these questions:

Where could she leave from? From the street to a home? Into a car? From the car into the street?
Where would she go? Who are the people that would offer support? The police? Other prostitutes?
Her pimp? A shelter? Could she continue to go to work if she stayed in a shelter?

(Joshua 2012, p.125)

So, the question, “Why don’t you just leave?” is an outside response, and lacks understanding of the complexities of her situation. Understanding her conditions however will not necessary create solutions to her circumstances, but it does at least create a space where aspects of her life are clarified, such as, “the conditions of her work, the decisions she makes, the actions she takes, and her experience of violence” (Joshua 2012, p.124).

Ambivalence

There is a distinction between “realizing a norm and supporting it” and stigma usually occurs where there is an expectation that a norm is supported (Goffman 1963, p.17). Furthermore, it is possible that a person who fails to live up to expectations of others remains relatively untouched, considering her or himself as a “full-fledged normal being” and regarding others as different (Goffman 1963, p.16). Similarly, Becker (1963) argued that a person who is regarded as a deviant by rule enforcers may have a very different view and regard the labellers as incompetent to do so (Becker 1963). The labelled individual rather than think she or he is the rule breaker comes to regard his or her judges as outsiders (Becker 1963). This does not mean that the individual concerned never accepts his judgment; an alcoholic for example may feel both misunderstood and unfairly judged but agree that his drinking is excessive (Becker 1963). At the same time she or he may develop “full blown ideologies” rationalising their actions as right and condemning those who judge him as wrong (Becker 1963). Between the oscillations also lies the possibility that the person who has a stigma feels ambivalence about it (Goffman 1963). She or he can, as Goffman (1963, p.131) suggests, stratify her or his own stigma against others who have a more obvious or

evident stigma and the “attitudes the normal’s take to him”. For instance, Crocker and Major (1989, p .609) explain, there can also be stigmatised ‘out groups’ who are devalued not only by specific ‘in-groups’ but by the broader society or culture”. This was also acknowledged by Rachel Moran (2013, p.92), an Irish [former] prostitute, who witnessed a hierarchical structure present in prostitution. She noticed those who worked in escort services often “looked down their noses” at street working women and took comfort in the fact that they had not “sunk so low”. Thus, as Goffman (1963, p. 131) notes, those who are hard of hearing “see themselves as anything but deaf”. Furthermore, the person who has identity ambivalence regarding her or his stigma, will often feel repulsed when he witnesses “his own kind” acting in a stereotypical way, transforming repulsion into shame and ashamedness into something he feels ashamed of” (Goffman 1963, p.132).

Emotional Management

Prostitution formally requires people to engage in what Hochschild (1985) calls *emotional labour* (Watson 1995). This concept was described by Watson (1995, p.130) as, “a type of work activity in which the worker is required to display particular emotions in the course of their work”. According to Sanders (2005) some sex workers use emotional management strategies and undergo a re-conceptualization of her own sexuality which increases her marketability for financial gain. Emotional management, Watson (1995) argued, is essential in the work of professionals such as nurses, doctors, airline flight attendants, midwives or social workers, for example, and must maintain the façade of being always professional and serious.

However, serious consequences can occur if the façade slips, and the person can show their worry or fear, thus losing face in front of a client or patient (Watson 1995). Brewis and Linstead (2000) for instance have used this concept to explain that the emotional labour experienced in prostitution is intensive and places added pressure in both the prostitutes private and public world, as “the individuals mask is always in danger of slipping” (Brewis and Linstead 2000, p.85). Further qualitative data collected by Brewis and Linstead (2000) explain that maintaining the mask can be hard work: but it is this that makes the sale of sex possible. This hard work, is echoed by Coates (2013, p.289), that whilst emotional management of the self is possible, it is generally “exceedingly stressful and exhausting” to maintain a façade of ‘pretending’ for the group expectation.

Bodily Exclusion Zones

The prostitute's body is an integral part of the "product on offer" (Sanders 2005, p.320) and being sexually skilled is important to her to achieve higher payment. However, to minimise the damage of the emotional trauma experienced by prostitutes (Farley 2004) many use a range of strategies to protect themselves from the intensity of their physical involvement (Sanders 2005; Sallmann 2010). Bodily exclusion zones, such as kissing, are a universal technique used by prostitutes and a strict policy is implemented that only allows certain acts to be performed when sold: other body parts and acts like kissing are 'off limits' and strictly reserved for the prostitute's private use (Boyton 1998, cited in Sanders 2005). The condom is also an essential tool used to maintain physical distance and used as a protective and a psychological barrier (Sanders 2005). Those who had experience of it breaking often felt repulsed, violated and dirty (Day 1994, cited in Sanders 2005). Specialising in sexual acts also maximised the potential to gain higher payment, and thirty seven woman from Sanders study said that they prefer to sell bondage and domination services. As one participant explained she preferred customers who requested this as "there is no body contact" (Sanders 2005, p.327). Brewis and Linstead's (2000) study shows how similar physical boundaries such as the condom were used and many workers were fastidious in using them. However, there are reports of drug users in particular offering unprotected sex as many clients still request it and payment is higher. Incidences of sexually transmitted diseases however are more likely due to the sharing of needles rather than unprotected sex (Brewis and Linstead 2000).

Drugs

Another way the prostitute manages and maintains her emotional identity is the use of drugs (Brewis and Linstead 2000). Hawthorn (2011) also noted that The Home Office (2004) in Northern Ireland found that 95 percent of women in prostitution are addicted to some form of substance. Ruhama (2015), a service which offers services to women in prostitution, found that women use drugs to "numb themselves so they can do the work" (Hawthorne 2011, p. 148). Drugs are widely used in the industry, for a number of reasons, to dull the sensation, to play the role, and to distance themselves from the work that they do (Brewis and Linstead 2000). La Toya, for instance, a prostitute working in Sydney, explains, "when I'm down at work I'm not me, Lisa, any more, I'm La Toya and that's where the drugs come in" (Cockington and Marlin 1995, cited in Brewis and

Linstead 2000, p.86). However, whilst drug use is a coping mechanism, participants in Webb and Elms (1994) study also agreed that drugs compromised their safety (cited in Brewis and Linstead 2000) especially in street work where drug use is more common. Being ‘compos mentis’ however is vital, especially when it comes to her safety and her ability to judging clients. However, being acutely aware without drugs threatens the prostitutes as her mask is in danger of slipping-affecting her identity.

The health consequences of women in prostitution were also highlighted in The Tallaght Drugs Task Force Report (Nelson et al 2010). This report investigated the extent of drug use in prostitution in Dublin 24 (Nelson et al 2010). They found that five out of nine women interviewed reported drug use and four out of nine had not had full sexual health screenings. Nelson et al (2010) recommended a need for confidential service provision, and to “be mindful of the extent of fear and stigma among the target group which may hinder their access to services” as the fear of being seen was a major barrier to them seeking support (Nelson et al 2010).

Rationalising

Goffman (1963, p.29) suggests that in mixed situations, ‘the normal’ can also feel uncomfortable in the company of the stigmatised, as they see the stigmatised individual as either “too aggressive or too shamefaced”. However, Goffman (1963) notes a stigmatised person in social situations is more likely than others to experience uneasiness and as a result is more adept at managing them.

A study using a modified grounded theory approach of 49 female sex workers (FSWs) in Hong Kong, examined how this group experienced and negotiated stigma that arises from working in the sex industry (Wong et al 2011). Wong et al’s (2011) study found that women in prostitution use rationalising as a protective strategy and can in effect protect them from ‘felt stigma’. For instance, one FSW explained, when being with an abusive client, “since they paid, they had every right to your body” (Wong et al 2011, p.56). This can also be viewed as ‘self-blaming’ as referred to earlier (Green et al 2005). However, for a number of women in this study, they did not appear to accept the label put upon them, instead women in Wong et al’s (2011) study were pragmatic in their responses, viewing their work in the context of their circumstances. For example, although many felt angry and hurt by negative comments, they also reported that they

were improving both their own and their families' financial situation through sex work, and had, as Joshua (2012) explains, found a solution that was attentive to their circumstances. Other ways the FSWs rationalised their work, was by comparison to other occupations, in which they likened themselves to social workers, reducing rape in society and by making it clear that they did not harm others (Wong et al 2011).

It's Just Acting

Sociologists have discovered that emotion is a 'dramaturgical skill' used by individuals to cope with social order (Fine 1993). Turner (2013) explains that "the self is not simply enacted by a performance, but is evaluated by its audience (Turner 2013, p.436). In *The Presentation of Everyday Life* Goffman (1959) introduces the idea of the stage, as everyday life, actors simply 'play a part' and the audience do the same. In 'playing the part' the individual actor expects his audience to believe and take him seriously. There are extremes in this scenario, and as Goffman (1959) explains at one extreme, the actor finds himself sincerely convinced with his own performance and the audience is also taken in by his act. At the other end, the performer may have no belief in his act and is cynical about it. Goffman (1959) suggests there are natural movements between the two poles, and most people move between cynicism and sincerity but a person can sustain a middle ground of consistency between the two. The notion of the front versus back stage was introduced by Goffman (1959) where he explains that in 'normal' situations, performances are acted through a 'front', which are moulded and modified to fit and react with the audience's expectations. This gives the actor the opportunity to offer his audience an idealised version of himself (Goffman 1959). Clothing, sex, age, gender, looks and other obvious insignia or some examples of what Goffman (1959, p.34) refers to as 'personal front'. For clarity, Goffman (1959) divided up personal fronts into 'appearance' and 'manner' and usually both are consistent with each other. 'Appearance', is a temporary stimulus and tells us of the performer's social status. 'Manner', on the other hand, is certain manners such as meekness or haughtiness. Generally, people aspire to create a front, so to have common accepted moral standards of society. By carefully controlling gestures and the front, the audience begins to see the person (actor) at "face value" and do not have to waste their energy deciding that he is not what he claims to be (Goffman 1959, p.57). The ideal conditions where people prefer to perform to others is 'front stage' (or in public), but manner and appearance can

contradict each other, especially if the individual acts in an unexpected manner. Impression management, Goffman (1959) explains, is especially important, and he suggested that it is used deliberately and strategically by the individual to communicate a desired impression of her or himself (Johansson 2007). To prevent any faux pas or embarrassing incidences from occurring, all the actors, the performer and the audience included, must play along with the interaction (Goffman 1959). This requires team work, a co-operative effort and a working consensus that is established in interaction order (Johansson 2007). Goffman (1963) provides an example of how such embarrassment can be avoided through collaboration and cooperation. For instance the “solicitous” pimp provides discreet rooms in a respectable hotel, so the customer can hide the fact from hotel staff (Goffman 1963, p.119). Similarly, the prostitute will also maintain the identity of the client nor identify him (Goffman 1963). The rule and code of conduct is extended when they meet in public and never show any recognition or sign that she may know him, unless he greets her first (Goffman 1963).

However, some performances do not go as expected, and the performer can jeopardise the presented self (Turner 2013). For instance, if an outsider inadvertently enters into ‘back stage’ or into the performer’s private world they may witness a fauxpas, this can be contradictory to the impression they previously held (Goffman 1959, p.206). This can lead to embarrassment for an individual and in certain circumstances humiliation, especially if he knowingly lowers his defences to his audience and they do not regard his request. These ‘incidents’ are likely to cause others to become ill at ease, and just as embarrassed as the performer. The audience is forced to accept this new reality, “of the man behind the mask” (Goffman 1959, p.206).

Being a good performer, was a recurring theme also in Sanders (2005) study. Fifteen out of the fifty participants in Sanders’ (2005) study admitted to creating multiple identities and words and expressions such as, ‘performing’, ‘pretend’, ‘playing a cameo’ and ‘it’s just acting’ were used by the participants to describe this concept. To be an ‘authentic performer’ Sanders (2005) noticed some of the participants [prostitutes] would retain some degree of their real identity “falling somewhere in between fact and fiction” as Frank (1998) suggests and this also prevented alienation in the work place (cited in Sanders 2005, p.334). Sanders’ (2005) explains that acting is not a strategy of denial but is consciously constructed and argues that producing an identity and creating

a separate character is a calculated response and a business strategy which capitalises on the desires of their male clients. This is contrary to the view which sees it the other way around, where women were seen as victims and the patriarchal system exploits them.

Creation of a Pseudonym

In her study of women Sanders (2005) notes creating a pseudonym is a fundamental strategy in creating a manufactured identity which can protect themselves from the pressures of their work. Manufacturing an alternative identity is done for a number of reasons: firstly many do not want their family, friends or partner to find out, secondly to protect their family and the fear that they may be stalked by a client if they disclosed their 'real' name and personal details (Sanders 2005). The creation of a pseudonym is also done to avoid the negative stereotypes associated with 'whore stigma' (Sanders 2005) and separates their private and personal lives (Brewis and Linstead 2000).

Goffman (1963) also considers the possibility of a name change, as it can in the case of personal identity, "disengage themselves from the one that was originally theirs" and unlike other identity pegs is the easiest to tamper with" (Goffman 1963, p.76). Maintaining a secret stigma requires careful management of crucial information, and one of these is name change or creating a pseudonym (Goffman 1963). Actors, those who take a change name through marriage, or legally thorough the courts are considered by others as legitimate cases. However, as in the case of the prostitute, where name change is common but not necessarily legal, it is a reminder to the individual and others that "a breach is involved between the individual and his own world" (Goffman 1963, p.77).

Implications of Concealing a Stigma

Sanders' (2005, p.325) argues that protective strategies to manage stigma is "damage limitation". However, the extent that hiding a stigma and the efforts involved all lead to the larger consequence of self-isolation, suspicion, depression, and anxiousness (Goffman 1963). Following, the consequences of using stigma management strategies to protect the self from stigma for the prostitute will be outlined.

Current approaches to understanding the challenges of possessing a concealable stigma, have led to the development of theories grounded in Goffman's (1963) significant

writings on the subject. The introduction of Identity Management Theory (IMT) developed by Imahori and Cupach focuses on how identity is formed, maintained and how it changes within relationships (cited in Littlejohn and Foss 2008). IMT emphasizes the interaction between people rather than the individual and was examined by Cain (1991) who considers the difficulty in managing a concealable stigma and specifically the way individuals manage information regarding their non-heterosexual identity. Cain (1991), in the context of stigma management and gay identity development, explains that both gay men and women are aware of the potential risks involved with disclosure of their sexuality and both control what others know about their potentially stigmatising information. According to this theory, gay men in particular can be either overt or covert; some may never directly reveal their sexuality (Cain 1991). Their 'secret' may be suspected by other people and others may share this secret but maintain the fiction that they do not know it. They have two options; they can tell others about their homosexuality or conceal it (Cain 1991). This is a tactic; Ponce (1991) calls 'counterfeit secrecy'. These options, however, are neither "simple nor dichotomous" and depending on the social situation the information relating to one's sexuality differs from person to person and shaped by a variety of situational factors (Cain 1991, p.67). Goffman (1963, p. 93) also makes it clear that these two extremes of possibilities fail to cover the range of cases that fall in between the dichotomy. The prostitute, for example, must keep her 'occupation' a secret from one class of persons, such as police or family, whilst simultaneously exposing her 'failing' to others such as customers, pimps or other members of society. Goffman (1963) also describes this scenario, especially when the stigma is concealed. The difficulty for the individual in this case is not necessarily managing his stigma or the tension that arises in social situations but managing the information. Goffman explains,

To display or not to display; to tell or not to tell; to lie or not to lie; and in each case, to whom, how when and where.

(Goffman 1963, p.57)

Link and Phelan (2001, p.381) also consider that stigma has a "highly underestimated impact" and can cause significant bearing on life chances such as careers, wages, social ties, health, or even life itself. McCray et al (2011, p.744) also suggest "the degree in which an individual is immersed in the 'deviant role' or 'job' affects the salience of the spoiled identity". In Cobbina and Oslein (2011) quantitative analysis of 40 female street

prostitutes in the United States their results showed that the length of time that was spent in prostitution also increased the “toll” on Women. “Toll” was defined by Cobbina and Oslein (2011) as,

the accumulation of violent encounters, elevated levels of exhaustion associated with the job, heightened stigma and broken relationships with family members, increased drug addiction as a way to cope with the difficulties of the job, and serve punishments from the criminal justice systems.

(Cobbina and Oslein p.315)

Link and Phelan (2006) further examined the health implications of stigma and showed that stigma places people at a substantial social disadvantage and that persons who are stigmatised experience significant emotional distress as a result. In essence, Link and Phelan (2006) argue a stigmatised person will avoid seeking help, leading many to forgo treatment. When taken together stigma-related illness and the fear of being labelled as part of a stigmatised group, has serious health consequences for the person (Link and Phelan 2006). This can lead to worsening or other outcomes, such as the ability to lead a normal social life, and in the extreme, death (Link and Phelan 2006; Koken 2012).

Losing Face

Anticipation, of being found out and ‘losing face’ in social interaction was a dominant theme for many women in Wong et al’s (2011) study. For instance, even though one woman had disclosed her profession (prostitution) to her friend and she had not reacted negatively, she stated that she felt her friend was suspicious after and that “I knew she felt that way, although she didn’t say it” (Wong et al 2011, p.58). Regardless of their rationalisation techniques some FSWs in Wong et al’s (2011) study would use strategies and “make up some lies” to doctors and other health professionals so that her situation as a FSW would not be revealed. The fear of being ‘outed’ was far greater a risk, than providing the doctor with an accurate portrayal of her health risk behaviour (Wong et al 2011).

For the person who is stigmatised they typically fear being labelled, or being associated with a stigmatised group (Link and Phelan 2006). Due to this expectation of uncomfortable social interaction, many avoid or limit social networks (Goffman 1963). Similarly, Koken (2012) found that the ‘whore stigma’ and the negative stereotypical images that are associated with it can have significant and very real

consequences for women's health and safety (Koken 2012). Synonymous with attributes of shame, the person may try to hide or cover their 'non- visible stigma', resulting in anticipatory stigma which can lead some 'sex workers' not to seek help from authorities or health services (Koken 2012). As a result many women in prostitution become isolated (Pachankis 2007), have lower self-esteem (Wong et al 2011) and experience depressive symptoms (Brody et al 2005). Koken's (2012) study of independent women escorts advertising online, found that fear of being labelled a prostitute was a concern for many women. Many also had concerns about their involvement in sex work as it had marked them for life, separated them from "normal's and limited their options for careers and relationships" (Koken 2012 p.216).

Secret Keeping Implications for Ex Members of a Stigmatised Group

In the case of an ex member of a stigmatised group Goffman (1963) explains the problem of secret keeping can be just as difficult. In social interaction, if a person conceals information about her or his real social identity and conceals his or her secret stigma, the other will falsely confirm that they are in the company of a discredited individual. The other scenario is that he does not disclose his or her ex status, and "must face unwitting acceptance of himself by individuals who are prejudiced against persons of the kind he can be revealed to be" (Goffman 1963, p.59).

For those who have a "shady past" as Goffman (1963, p.82) puts it there is a dilemma for the individual to conceal his or her past, particularly if she or he is confronted by an individual to answer a direct question. In this case she or he will be forced to lie or be forced to disclose her or his past and face double embarrassment, "ours for being tactless, his for what he has concealed" (Goffman 1963, p.83). In intimate relationships, the owners of an invisible stigma also have the dilemma of confessing her or his secret or feel guilty for not doing so (Goffman 1963). Considering the range of possibilities, that fall between keeping the secret and exposing it, people make a "concerted and well-organised effort to pass" (Goffman 1963, p.95). According to Goffman (1963, p.84) the effort that is needed to continually remedy a stigma can overtime become "fixed" and part of personal identity. Furthermore, a social stigma is internalised over time, as Freed's (2003) study of the experience of trafficked girls in Cambodia showed. The shame the girls suffered "was generated from internalized social attitudes" (Freed 2003, cited in Tomura 2009, p.61). If one believes that 'others' will reject them based on

society's stereotypical view of a stigma, such as prostitution, they will have an expectation and a fear that they will be devalued also (Link and Phelan 2001). After which, this realisation becomes part of a person's worldview (Link and Phelan 2001). This was also described in Sallmann's (2010) research; even after most women had exited prostitution their stigmatised status resulted in a personal worldview that affected the way in which they interpreted their world. As one participant explained "once you've been exploited, then you see everything as a form of exploitation" (Sallmann 2010, p.154).

Pachankis (2007) presents a model to understand the psychological implications of concealing a stigma. Situational factors, he notes, can trigger and influence these psychological (cognitive, affective or behavioural) outcomes and the development of self-esteem. The psychological implication however depends on certain situations where a stigma is salient and is shared by many or none (Pachankis 2007). Johansson (2007) also explains this consensus can be quite different and depends on different types of setting (Johansson 2007). For example, in the case of the prostitute, she runs the risk of being easily discredited especially when working in known locations that are "reserved for prostitutes" (Rolph ND, cited in Goffman 1963, p.104).

The back place may be involuntarily created as a result of individuals being herded together administratively against their will on the basis of a common stigma. It might be added that whether the individual enters a back place voluntarily or involuntarily, the place is likely to provide an atmosphere of special piquancy.

(Goffman 1963, p.103)

Pachankis (2007) suggests that being in the company of similar others, reduces stress and yields more positive self-esteem. On the other hand, situations, such as services, doctors, or others, where a prostitute may be challenged or forced to answer questions may lead to the discovery of her concealed stigma and can distress individuals (Pachankis 2007). This can lead to "an embarrassing incident" (Goffman 1963, p.95). In such a scenario, the individual faces the dilemma of revealing her perceived hidden stigma so her stigma is discovered, causing rejection, losing face, social isolation, disownment from close associates and discrimination (Pachankis 2007).

For many individuals who conceal their stigma, preoccupation with 'keeping the secret' can be used as a strategy to control unwanted thoughts and serve as a protective function (Pachankis 2007). However, as Pachankis (2007) notes that suppression of a

secret overtime is difficult as it can seep into the consciousness and leads to thought intrusion. This phenomenon is called the ‘rebound effect of thought suppression’ and Wenziaff and Wegner (2000) showed how this occurs when subjects were asked to suppress thoughts about ‘the white bear’. The effect caused, paradoxically, an increase of frequency of thoughts about the white bear (Iijima and Tanno 2012). Iijima and Tanno (2012) also found that the failure to suppress a worrisome thought increases its later frequency for participants. This increases anxiety of the secret being revealed or leaked, leading to further thought suppression, intrusive thoughts and can have a significant impact on cognitive functioning (Pachankis 2007). It is no surprise, therefore, that that this phenomenon has been described as ‘a private hell’ for many individuals who conceal their perceived stigma (Smart and Wegner 200, cited in Pachankis 2007).

Avoidance and Isolation

Goffman (1963, p.23) notes, in the moments when “stigmatised and normal’s” are together in social situations anticipation can occur, and as a consequence the stigmatised tend to rearrange their life to avoid such situations. The tendency of a “discreditable person” to divide their world into who to tell and who not to tell is a common strategy designed to alleviate the risk of rejection (Goffman 1963, p.117). Brody et al (2005) researched the morality trends amongst the prostitute populations and found that many of the same persons were at a higher risk of antisocial and borderline personality disorder. Depression has also noted to be higher among prostitute populations than non-prostitutes (Gibson-Ainyette et al 1998, cited in Brody et al 2005). Another study notes that women experienced immense feelings of isolation and worthlessness (Greenwald, 1958, cited in Brody et al 2005). However, the stigma of prostitution, and the shame that surrounds it, prevents those involved disclosing their involvement and accessing appropriate services (Herman 2003, cited in Sallmann 2010). In the case of post-stigma relationships where an individual does disclose her or his “failings” to a new intimate partner the person who has a concealed secret will usually make sure or “feel out” beforehand that the revelation will be well received (Goffman 1963, p.118). On the other hand, the individual often does not reveal her or his past stigma which can also come at a personal cost,

foredoomed to these scenes: new relationships are often ones that can easily be discouraged before they take hold, making immediate honesty necessarily costly and hence often avoided.

(Goffman 1963, p.118)

The retired individual also feels the long term negative effects of prostitution stigma, as one participant in Tomura's (2011, p.32) research shows, that her stigma was always present by expressing, "it's just something you can't undo". Sallmann (2010) also describes that many participants in her research, although no longer engaged in prostitution, defined themselves by their prior activities. As one participant explained, "I sold my body. For a long time ... it doesn't go away" (Sallmann 2010, p.153). Prostitution for her was not a temporary activity even when her behaviour changed; it became a permanent status (Pheterson 1996, cited in Sallmann 2010) reinforced by her social interactions (Sallmann 2010). By avoiding close relationships or keeping distance, the stigmatised individual is less likely to divulge secrets (Goffman 1963). This strategy also restricts the tendency for others to build up a personal biography of her or him. However they become "cut-off", intentionally or not, from others (Goffman 1963) leading to isolation and loneliness (Pachankis 2007).

Anxiety

The individual who possesses a "secret failing" takes on an ever deeper meaning, especially if they have not revealed this secret to friends or close acquaintance (Goffman 1963, p.85). The possibility of being 'found out', or even making a decision to whom to disclose their concealable stigma can lead to anxiety anticipating behaviour and can have a profound negative impact on an individual's daily life. Although narratives from one woman in Koken's (2012) study explained that 'coming out' to family and friends that she worked as a prostitute was a relief, it also resulted in positive consequences and increased her social support. She explains, "I don't think that there's anything shameful about it. I make an honest living and, and I always treat people honestly" (Koken 2012, p.223). Having a supportive system in place resulted in the relief from stress and, as this participant explained, reduced the burnout for her (Koken 2012). However, those who choose to 'come out' to family and friends were in the minority and mostly confided in other sex workers, resulting in ongoing reinforcement of their positive beliefs (Koken 2012). The findings in Koken's (2012) and Pachankis' (2007) research suggest that 'coming out' can have negative consequences and the

process can result in loss of social status, social isolation, family abandonment, violence, impact on personal relationships, and due to the illegal status of prostitution in the U.S. can lead to arrest or imprisonment. Whilst some women in Wong et al's (2011) study appeared to feeling comfortable with their situation as a FSW, the same women also expressed a fear or worry of the possibility of being 'outed'. This worry stemmed from the perceived reaction from family, what they would think of them, and also the consequences of enacted stigma from society in general. As a result, many modified their behaviour in order to conceal their identity. Again, the reasons varied among the respondents and much of the stigma they felt depended on the cultural and social structures from which they originated. One FSW, for example, from the Philippines, did not tell her family of her situation because of the prevailing Catholicism in her country.

Discrimination

Oselin (2010) and Oselin and Weitzer (2013) argue that there is a distinction between those who are engaged in street and indoor prostitution. Oselin (2010) noted that those who work outdoor are often considered to experience a higher level of stigma and labelling as their work is more visible (salient), and individuals are more likely to experience criminalisation and defy social norms. Weitzer (2001, cited in Weitzer 2005), argues that data also shows that the lower strata of prostitutes or street prostitutes, receive the highest levels of stigma, whereas indoor workers are more publicly tolerated. Workers, also draw distinctions amongst themselves, with indoor prostitutes feeling that they have more control over their working conditions and greater job satisfaction than outdoor workers. Heyl (1979, cited in Weitzer 2005) also notes that among workers, status increases with moving from street prostitution to indoor prostitution: brothel, or independent call girls. However, as amply described in the previous section, stigma does not just occur in daily face-to-face interaction. Stigma develops as a socio-cultural process, with components of labelling, stereotyping, separation, status loss and discrimination, co-occurring in power situations that allow these processes to unfold (Link and Phelan 2001). It suffices to add, regardless of where a prostitute is situated, indoor, outdoor, on-line or otherwise she can be stigmatised. Koken (2012) for instance, researched thirty independent female workers who advertise their work on the internet in the United States. A central theme in this study was a fear of being labelled and many also expressed a concern that their involvement in sex work

“had marked them for life” (Koken 2012, p.216). Many women in Koken’s (2012) study did not wish to reveal to others their real occupation, as they did not want to be identified or labelled as a part of a stigmatized group (Koken 2012). Unfortunately, Koken (2012) adds many avoided police and services and hid their identity as a sex worker from family and friends; this has led to unintended consequences of isolation and loneliness.

Fear of being labelled as part of a stigmatised group was also noticed by Hawthorn (2011) who explained that many women who have been prosecuted or incarcerated for ‘other’ offences, do not indicate their involvement for fear of being labelled. “It is crucial”, explains Hawthorn (2011, p.1 46) that prison staff and those who provide supportive services in general are made aware of prostitution as a hidden problem so that women’s needs can be appropriately responded to.

In each component of the stigmatisation process, symbolic power is discreetly used, affecting the structures that surround the person (Link and Phelan 2001). Whilst some women may avoid the negative social outcomes of the stigma process, most marginalised groups are stigmatised, and as a result are kept in, down or away from access to economic recourses, such as housing, education, medical treatment, and health services (Link and Phelan 2001). Many marginalised groups, such as the prostitute, do not have bio-capital to produce a cultural response and can lead to inequalities in life circumstances for the individual (Link and Phelan 2001). Disproval, rejection and isolation are typical outcomes of the stigmatisation process, and all deny a person access to economic resources and ultimately reducing her or his life chances (Link and Phelan 2001; Goffman 1963). Furthermore, such symbolic power when used in this discreet way does not cause embarrassment to the stigmatiser for causing the discrimination keeping them far away from culpability (Link and Phelan 2014).

Getting “caught in the act”

A less often cited, but common concern and source of tension for in-door prostitute’s, particularly for Irish women, was also highlighted by Ruhama (2012, p.8) is the possibility that a person they know, even a male family member, might be on the other side of the door as a buyer”. This was also acknowledged by Goffman (1963) who explained that getting caught “in the act” of engaging in prostitution by a family

member was a fear for many girls, “as one call girl suggests, “I always wondered what I would do if I ran into my father, since he was around quite a bit” (Stern, ND, cited in Goffman 1963, p.97).

Even after the woman has exited prostitution, fear of being identified or ‘bumping in to’ former clients was a worry for many women in Sallmann’s (2010) research. Leaving a community where an individual’s biography is known, does not always discontinue a stigma. Goffman (1963, p.99) refers to ‘reference group theory’ to explain that in the case of the prostitute who has adjusted to a new life in a new place, she also fears bumping into somebody from her old town, who may “discern her present social attributes and bring the news back home”. Even if an individual passes and uses adaptive techniques to conceal a stigma, they can become vulnerable to embarrassing exposure. This possibility occurs in both the ‘daily round’ and formal institutions or degradation ceremonies, such as the court for example (Goffman 1963, p. 106).

Conclusion

Some “jobs”, such as prostitution are considered as ‘dirty’ by society (Arnold and Barling 2003) and are kept a secret by the holder, “lest they be marked as failures and outsiders” (Goffman 1963, p.13). Many prostitutes/sex workers are very aware of the stigma attached to prostitution/sex-work and use techniques to neutralise the negative stigma associated with their work, and to a degree can enhance self-esteem (Arnold and Barling 2003). Stigmatised work, such as prostitution, and individuals that work in it, can manage the negative meaning and preserve their sense of identity (McCray et al 2011). Another way the prostitute can protect her identity is to maintain or manage her stigma and use stigma management strategies (Goffman 1963, p.125). However, possessing a stigma can be fraught with unique challenges and pose a significant dilemma for many who belong to such a stigmatised group. For the prostitute who has to deal with the multiple taint of her work, there is a great deal of identity management strategies involved but this requires “exceptional control of the inner world” (O’Neill 2001, cited in Sanders 2005, p.325). Techniques such as reframing prostitution as work (Ashforth and Kreiner 1999), self-blaming (Green et al 2005), maintaining a physical distance (Sanders 2005), avoiding close relationships (Goffman 1963), avoiding police and services and hiding their identity as a sex worker from family and friends (Koken

2012) are some strategies used to protect the individual from the negative effects of stigma .

According to Sanders (2005, p.354), protective strategies to manage stigma is “damage limitation”. However, for the prostitute who has to manage the multiple taints of her work are “confronted with social problems not faced by the straight world” (Pfohl 1994, p.354). Hiding a stigma and the efforts involved all lead to the larger consequence of self-isolation, suspicion, depression, and anxiousness (Goffman 1963). Anticipation, of being found out and ‘losing face’ in social interaction was a dominant theme for many women in Wong et al’s (2011) study. These stigma coping strategies and the difficulty in managing or concealing her identity can have significant negative health implications (Koken 2012) and it is generally “exceedingly stressful and exhausting” to maintain a façade of ‘pretending’ for the group expectation (Coates 2013, p. 289). Hiding a stigma is extremely challenging and can be a significant cognitive burden (Iijima and Tanno 2012). The effects can have a long term detrimental effect to her health, as she may not disclose her past involvement with prostitution and as a result not gain access to appropriate services (Herman 2003, cited in Sallmann 2010). When a woman leaves prostitution, it suffices to say, these effects do not necessarily disappear and her stigma can remain, affecting her life in various ways and can have a negative impact on her life chances. Women who have exited prostitution, for example have defined themselves by their prior activities and as one participant explained, “I sold my body. For a long time ... it doesn’t go away” (Sallmann 2010, p.153).

It has been argued in this chapter by referring to the work of key authors such as Tomura (2011); Sallmann (2010), Wong et al (2011), Sanders (2005), and Koken (2012) that stigma is very much present in the lives of those who are involved in the sex industry. However, such research has focused on those who remain in the sex industry. By further examining the impact of stigma through Goffman’s (1963) conceptualisation of stigma and Link and Phelan’s (2001) addition work on the theory of stigma, it has been argued that women in Ireland have historically been subjected to stigma which keeps them in, down and away from social and economic resources which affect their lives in multiple ways. Evidence throughout the history of Ireland has shown us that there has been an acceptance of the sexual double standards and that woman more than men have been victimised and stigmatised as a result of prostitution (Luddy 2007).

Rates of physical abuse, violence and death of women in prostitution were noted (Potteret et al 2004). However, there is also a denial of harm of the violence that is inherent in the sex trade (Farley and Kelly 2000) and no concrete recognition that prostitution is a male dominated industry and that “male domination constructs prostitution” (Jeffreys 2009, p.317). Men dominate this industry: It is, therefore a ‘gender issue’ and one of significant unequal power relations (Moran 2013).

This chapter has highlighted that women in prostitution in Ireland are stigmatised as a result of the stigmatisation process which has been sustained by those in power, specifically patriarchal power. The analysis of patriarchal power, it has been argued, is essential as Barry (1995) notes and requires a political consciousness, because in terms of domination the realities of the prostituted woman produce brutal realities. There has been a succession of laws that criminalise her and a society that views her as a lesser individual and ignoring the multiple human rights violations that women in prostitution experience whilst simultaneously removing the visibility of the perpetrator. There has always been and still is a prevailing negative association with stigmatised groups reminding us that there are powerful constraining influences at work (Link and Phelan 2001). Historical analysis of prostituted women in Ireland by writers such as, Luddy (2007), McLoughlin (1994), O’Brien (1982), Belknap (2010) and Diner (1983) shows us how Irish institutions operated from the 1800s onwards. Their analysis provides a compelling example of how women’s and especially the prostitute’s body have been understood depending on the social, political and cultural context in which the Irish institutions operated (Luddy 2007) and thus allows us to understand how culturally created categories arise and how they are sustained in society (Link and Phelan 2001). The stigma of prostitution is a well-established part of a historical legacy of women’s oppression by those in power. Regardless of legislation that controls prostitution, the stigma of prostitution continues and only serves the interests of those in power, not the powerless and women continue to receive abuse and violence from the men who buy them (New Zealand Ministry of Justice Report 2008).

The following chapter will set out my methodology that will inform the design of this thesis. The methodology chosen reflects the aims of this study, which hopes to give voice to those who have survived prostitution.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

A problem of repression, poverty, marginality, exploitation, or simply survival... The voice that speaks to the reader through the text... [takes] the form of an I that demands to be recognized, that wants or needs to stake a claim on our attention

(Rene Jara Beverly 2000 cited in Chase 2005, p.668)

3.0: Introduction

Harling Stalker (2006, p.26) suggests that the “researcher must decide how he or she wants to investigate his or her problem at hand”. As such, in this chapter, I will demonstrate how I came to research the experiences of women who have exited prostitution, the difficulties I encountered and set out the methodology, values and beliefs that have guided and informed this research. I will explore the emancipatory character of my philosophical worldview and the basic propositions of participatory and action research that have shaped my research. Next, I will discuss the qualitative approach used in this thesis, its emergence, validity and procedures which have allowed me to interpret and understand the meaning from the data which honours this inductive style (Creswell 2009; 2013). The method of inquiry used in this study is narrative inquiry and is used as a means to conduct a qualitative study. More importantly it allows the individual women to provide their own story of prostitution and stigma in their lives. Narrative inquiry focuses on the “awareness of the individual in society” (Elliot 2005, p.39) and will be discussed along with its procedures and the ethical considerations at every stage which is especially important when listening to and hearing the stories of women who have been sexually exploited. In this chapter I will also explain how narratives and stories provide us with the possibility of resistance and subversion whilst highlighting the conditions under which it occurs and provides us with collective accounts of the social casualties and the consequences of ‘non-conformity’ (Ewick and Silbey 1995). Finally, I will describe the narrative procedure that I undertook in this research, from the selection of participants, the interview and the process of content analysis which has allowed me to interpret two women’s experiences of prostitution and stigmatisation in the story of their lives.

3.1: My Philosophical Worldview: Emancipatory or Participatory Action Research

Sire (2004, p.19) describes the term 'worldview', as "a set of presuppositions which we hold about the basic makeup of our world". Similarly, Guba (1990, p. 17) describes it as "a basic set of beliefs that guide action". Creswell (2009) also suggests that the researcher must make explicit their philosophical worldview, as it influences and shapes their approaches to their research.

My philosophical worldview closely resembles participation and action, and has been shaped largely due to the discipline area in which I have studied, BA (Hons) Applied Social Studies in Social Care. During my final year of my undergraduate degree, I completed my thesis on the subject of prostitution and feminist ideologies and from my reading concluded that prostitution is, for many women, an extremely violent industry that disproportionately affects women and an industry where men are the main beneficiaries of its practice. Prompting my interest in this issue, I also noticed that many researchers mentioned the stigmatising nature of prostitution, and whilst this is a feature in some literature, it is often a fleeting notice. I wanted a deeper understanding of this issue and was keen to investigate how once a woman has left prostitution, does her stigmatisation continue? Furthermore, despite research showing that stigma adversely affects the prostituted person and impacts on women's lives, these works have not sufficiently included the voices or the knowledge of women who have had the 'lived experience'. Traditionally, women from academia in "privileged positions" are speaking on behalf of vulnerable women and are, in essence further excluding them in the process (Yeste et al 2011, p.292). Padrós et al (2011) argue that research must move beyond a description of reality, away from an 'expert model', and address the elements that not only cause marginalisation and inequality but consider the voices of those who are affected by such exclusionary dimensions.

At this time I also undertook a voluntary position with a local men's organisation that encourage non-violent men in particular to voice their concerns regarding men's violence against women. This opportunity allowed me to talk with survivors of prostitution and I quickly began to realise that many women do not have the opportunity to voice their experiences. Whilst some survivors of prostitution are public and are

vocal regarding their experience, other women's experience of prostitution remain yet unheard. To add to this backdrop, Ireland was also debating legislation on prostitution (Houses of Oireachtas 2014) and pro-prostitution lobbyists, academics (Ward 2010) and sex workers were arguing the positive and empowering benefits of prostitution (Huschke et al 2014). Not long into my position into the organisation in which I worked, I began to speak publicly and campaign along with survivors on their experiences and calling for a change in the current legislative system that operates in Ireland. Over the years I have met many women who have experienced prostitution. They do not live unusual lives; they are women, mothers and students and have struggled with life in various ways. From my experiences of speaking and working with women who have experienced prostitution and other forms of women's violence, I take the approach similar to Kathleen Barry (1979; 1995, p.9) as "prostituted women not as a group set apart, which is a misogynist construction, but as women whose experience of sexual exploitation is consonant with that of all women's experience of sexual exploitation". Understanding prostitution from a radical feminist viewpoint, as I do, requires one to examine the sex of prostitution as the most oppressive act of male supremacy (Jeffreys 1997; 2009; 2010) and the cornerstone of sexual exploitation (Barry 1995; 1979). I also agree with Jeffreys (1997, p.225) who argues that prostitution, is "a problem that goes far deeper than stigma" and I take the view that stigma is one small part of prostitution, but a focus that requires attention nevertheless. As was suggested in preceding chapters, implementing social reforms or renaming prostitution as 'sex work' has not eliminated stigma, women who are 'active sex workers' in countries where this has been implemented continue to experience violence and abuse from the public, buyers and police. However, the effects of stigma on the individual are not inconsequential, so for this research I wanted to explore, specifically from women who have lived this experience, if they experienced and negotiated that stigma. After substantial reading, the question remained; does the stigma continue after women have exited and if so, how has this impacted on their lives at present?

3.2: Background of Participation and Action Research

Action research emerged as an umbrella term through a variety of different theoretical approaches and has several terms which overlap (Herr and Anderson 2005). Some of the terms used to describe action research are, participatory action research (PAR),

collaborative action research, cooperative inquiry and advocacy action research among others (Herr and Anderson 2005). Despite the numerous descriptions of action research the approach was always intended to be, and still is, emancipatory (Bogg 2003). The aim of PAR, especially for this research, is empowerment and the researcher is usually tied in with political action, as Neuman (2006, p.28) argues, such researchers are “explicitly political not value neutral”. Early advocacy research which increased the public’s attention came in the form of Robert Hunter’s book *Poverty* in 1904 (Gilbert 1994). Some sixty years later Michael Harrington wrote *The Other America* (1962) and shed light on the existing inequalities and the social forces that relegate people into poverty. He concluded that, “there is not yet the political will to get to the root of the problem” (Harrington 1962, p.157). He asked that researchers be passionate as well as personal when expressing his or her policy views (Gilbert 1997) but was strongly criticised for exaggerating claims regarding poverty and that his book was filled with moral impetus, fuelling the cause of the Johnson administrations “war on poverty” (Gilbert 1994, p.18).

Nevertheless, both Hunter and Harrington, who came from front-line service backgrounds, contributed greatly to the knowledge of people’s social conditions and their research supported claims which helped introduced pensions, housing and the idea of the minimum wage. As Gilbert (1997) argues, research that investigates emotive subjects, such as childhood abuse, rape, poverty and other forms of oppression, do expose and magnify the inequality that exists in our society. Their prose may have been as persuasive as their numbers, as Gilbert (1994, p.18) suggests and although emotive and sometimes depressing Harrington himself points out,

If my interpretation is bleak and grim, and even if it overstates the case slightly, that is intentional. My moral point of departure is a sense of outrage, a feeling that it would be better to describe it in dark tones than to minimize it.

(Harrington 1962, p. 176)

The philosophical assumption of advocacy and participation research itself arose in the 1980s and 1990s, following individual’s disillusionment with postpositive assumptions that imposed laws and theories that did not fit with marginalized groups and individuals in our society (Creswell 2009). The work of Paulo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) greatly influenced and inspired this field of social research and emphasises “the paths toward greater humanization and away from dehumanization” (Herr and Anderson

2005, p. 16). In this way participatory action research is emancipatory (Bogg 2003), has a commitment to social justice and has also challenged traditional methods of inquiry and is responsive to the needs of those being studied (Kemmis and McTaggart 2003).

It is supported by a participatory worldview whereby the research process is two sided and the locus of control is shifted from the researcher to those being studied (Herr and Anderson 2005). Proponents of Participatory Action Research also highlight that traditional research methods seek to justify the ideologies and interests of powerful and wealthy people (Kemmis and McTaggart 2003). With the collaborative nature of action research in mind, this type of research holds the idea that the research is best done with those who have a stake in the problem being investigated (Herr and Anderson 2005). The design of action research aims to improve the subjects [person] situation in a number of ways (Bogg 2003). Firstly, it offers an opportunity to create capacity to solve problems. Secondly, it allows the development of skills and increases the chances of self-determination. In addition, the collaborative nature of action research allows the participant to have influence on the research process (Herr and Anderson 2005). Finally, the research is usually conducted *with* people, not *on* them with the aim of improving a social situation through research (Hennink et al 2011). In this way the action element is incorporated as the researcher and the participants aim to raise consciousness and awareness (Neuman 2006) with a focus on social change (Hennink et al 2011).

As an applied research method PAR is typically done when the aim is to equalise the power that exists between the researcher and the participant (Neuman 2006). The research methods typically employed for collection of data can incorporate focus groups and/or in-depth interviews (Hennink et al 2011). The participation element of PAR depends and the level of involvement but generally the researcher become actively involved in the lives of those involved in the study (Hennink et al 2011).

3.3: Potential Limitations and Strengths

Janice Raymond (2013) is also an advocate, researcher and campaigner and opposes legalisation and decriminalisation of the sex industry. Raymond, an expert in this particular area, is often criticised and her credibility undermined because of her stance on prostitution and the sex industry. She argues that some authorities and academics believe that combining research with advocacy is seen as a threat to objectivity and that

the researcher must remain neutral in what they study (Raymond 2013). However, combining research with advocacy is a scholarly strength not a liability and what these researchers discover through their research can inform and test real world programmes and policies. Often ignored, is that researchers often choose the subjects that reflect their advocacies, and she argues “what we choose to study as scholars is a reflection of our advocacies, our passions spoken or otherwise” (Robert Jay Lifton 2011, cited in Raymond 2013, p.xiii).

Nevertheless, researchers who are involved in advocacy or other forms of action research are often accused of overstating or exaggerating claims of oppression (Gilbert 1994; 1997; see Weitzer 2006; 2005). Danieli and Woodhams (2005) for example, challenge that such emancipatory research is in itself an exercise of power that can silence the voices of others. They argue, that under the guise of objectivity and value neutrality such researchers articulate their political position that generates data that supports their own argument and agenda. Weitzer (2006) for example argues that the numbers of women who are trafficked for the purposes of prostitution are inflated. He cites William McDonald (2004) who argued that anti-trafficking and prostitution campaigners have “exploited anecdotal horror stories” of the “innocent, young girl dragged off against her will to distant lands to satisfy the insatiable sexual cravings of wanton men” (Weitzer 2006, p.38). The use of emotive language such as “sex slavery” and statistical claims about trafficking, Weitzer (2006, p.37) insists, have no basis in the prostitution debate and deprive those who consciously made the “choice to migrate in search of work” of any agency.

However, Raymond (2013, p.4) argues that sex worker “apologists”, such as Weitzer (2010) trivialise the lack of statistics which have led to trafficking victims to be viewed with suspicion (see also *P. v The Chief Superintendent* 2015). The statistics, she adds, and numbers argument on victims of prostitution and sex trafficking have always been a mainstay in the prostitution debate and only serve to overlook the oppression of women. Raymond (2013, p.6) asks are we supposed to feel “proportional revulsion” to a few more or a few less trafficked human beings before we take action? Moreover, whilst emotive statements and strong language are sometimes used it is needed and necessary to,

express the experience of being sexually used by many men daily, unable to refuse any practice or any male, whilst under the control of overseers and receiving no payment until a putative debt, made by the trafficker and added to daily for personal items, is paid off .

(Jeffreys 2009, p.319)

Furthermore, such contributions from advocate and action researchers go beyond mere statistical size of the client group's problems (Gilbert 1994). As Gilbert suggests, the agenda of such research is to,

attribute the underlying causes to oppressive social conditions, such as sexism, racism, ageism, and capitalism, which can only be corrected through fundamental changes in society.

(Gilbert 1994, p.22)

As Harrington (1962) points out, whilst the reader should always be critical of statistical data, what *must* be observed is the enormous fact that people exist in poverty and oppression. Even though it may be visible to some it is often underestimated and overlooked because of "statistical quibbling". The fact remains that a great mass of people are in need: it just takes "an effort of the intellect and will to even see it" (Harrington 1962, p.2).

However, Gómez and colleagues (2010) explain that subjectivist research, such as Participatory and Action Research, does not always include the fundamental voices of the researched. The work of Gómez et al (2006) and Beltrán and Gómez (2005) also criticise postmodern perspectives and argue that the constructivist perspective, although it holds the participant central in the research process, it "did not go far enough in advocating for an action agenda to help marginalized groups" (Creswell 2008, p.9). As Mitchell (2002, p.208) further explains, there has been a realisation that "the informed researcher's voice no longer provides an authoritarian monologue but contributes a part of the dialogue".

This realisation, is partly due to the change in society's experience of technologies and the internet, and also the rise of new global economies and this phenomenon has been called the "dialogic turn" (Yeste et al 2011, p.285; Gómez et al 2006; Gómez et al 2011, p.236). This dialogic turn is occurring on a number of levels, including personal, political and institutional (Gómez et al 2010). In response to crisis in society and traditional institutions, negotiation or egalitarian dialogue is increasingly being used in the pursuit for the implementation of human rights (Gómez et al 2010). Increasingly,

families are beginning to question the traditional role of the father, politicians are increasingly using ‘horizontal dialogue’ to make democratic decisions and in education, teachers must now make an argument rather than cling on to the old traditions of authority (Gómez et al 2006; Puigvert 2012). In addition, Gómez, Racionero and Sorde (2010) and Beltrán and Gómez (2005, emphasis in original) argue that in response to this dialogic turn in society, exploration into social problems leads the researcher to investigate *with* participants rather than *on* them.

3.4: Critical Communicative Methodology

It is for these reasons that I had originally chosen Critical Communicative Methodology (CCM) to guide me through this research process, as it supports the aims of this research and is a particular ‘worldview’ grounded in “equity, democracy and respect” and seeks to understand those who are marginalised by directly including those who are being studied in the research (Gómez et al 2011, p.239). However, due to time constraints, and the difficulty in accessing larger sample of participants, the CCM was not used in this research. However, from reading CCM, I have retained some of its principles in this research and feel it appropriate to include its core concepts and values; values that can be considered for future research when doing research *with* marginalised groups. The following sections will explore CCM, its origins, development, concepts, postulates, and procedures and highlight throughout how this approach, when used, has led to the generation of scientific knowledge that would have not been created otherwise.

Background of Critical Communicative Methodology

The creator of CCM Jesús Gómez (1952–2006) believed that ‘non-academic’ people have the capacity to analyse and on their own reality (Gómez et al 2011, p.239; Valls and Padrós 2011). Gómez or Pato, as he was also known, had a profound commitment to social justice with an ambition to improve the lives of people who are most excluded from society (Gómez et al 2011). He believed that research methods has moved forward to become more politically responsible, useful, democratic, and equal and for the researcher there has been a change and a “demonopolisation of expert knowledge” which has challenged traditional research methods (Gómez et al 2011, p.236). CCM addresses challenges of exclusion and allows women to become protagonists and

contribute to the creation of scientific knowledge that informs social science (Yeste et al 2011).

The CCM position holds itself within a theory of action model in that the research process is double sided and includes vital human agency (Gómez et al 2006). Critical communicative research relies on the inter-subjectivity of the researcher and those being studied (Gómez et al 2006) and takes into consideration both objectivist and subjectivist conceptions (Gómez et al 2010). CCMs epistemology is centred in inter-subjectivity and structured through interaction among people where scientific knowledge is gained through dialogue (Gómez et al 2010). This egalitarian dialogue postulates that both sides take on theories and research that has already been analysed; this is what ultimately guides the research and this is why CCM is considered to be ‘critical communicative’ in nature (Gómez et al 2006, p.6). In this way knowledge from the participant can be accepted, refuted or expanded upon. Furthermore, because this type of perspective does research *with* others rather than *on* or *to* others it does not further marginalize the participant as it directly includes them in the research process (Beltrán and Gómez 2005). As Yeste et al (2011, p.285) argues “wisdom does not grow in a greenhouse”, as such using CCM ensures that research responds to the needs of those who most need it, by including them in the research process.

CCM highlights the idea that social reality is in fact communicative in nature and that peoples meanings are created and defined through dialogue (Gómez et al 2006). CCM postulates that through dual dialogue, everyone can become an agent who can transform their circumstance (Gómez et al 2006, p.6). The *lifeworld*, a concept by Habermas, of *all* the social actors’ involved are built-in to the research (Gómez et al 2011). According to Gómez et al (2011, p.338) *lifeworld* is “made up of the interpretations and generalisations that people make based on their daily-life experiences”. Gómez et al (2010) concur that the *lifeworld* of the researched subjects is necessary as it promotes egalitarian dialogue with the scientific community; this process they argue contributes to greater levels of understanding and social justice.

Dialogic Inclusion Contract

Communicative research allows for both quantitative and qualitative techniques to be used for collecting empirical material and does not deny the many techniques that can

be used; however it must follow communicative principles (Gómez et al 2010). These principles have been expanded by Padrós et al (2011) and articulated around three main concepts which are: communicative rationality, eliminating the interpretative hierarchy, and realising that people are transformative agents (Padrós et al 2001). Padrós et al (2011) have set these principles out in the Dialogic Inclusion Contract (DIC) which is an agreement between the participants and researcher for transforming exclusionary dimensions, and is grounded in the CCM concept. These core elements will now be set out and show, when implemented, it has helped to counteract exclusion in various areas (Padrós et al 2011).

1. Communicative Rationality

The first principle in the DIC is communicative rationality and uses language as a medium to understand inequality (Padrós et al 2011). Language is an inherent and a universal attribute as Habermas (1984) explained, and when communicative language includes the voices of everyone in achieving collective goals, it gives a deeper understanding of exclusion and the barriers people face, and is based on the collective interests, not someone else's interests (Padrós et al 2011).

An example of communicative rationality was shown in the implementation of the URBAN Plan to revitalize neighbourhoods in Spain (Padrós et al 2011). The initial plan that was used failed to improve the lives of the people. This occurred because of a top-down process where management, professionals and agencies decisions did not include those directly affected in the neighbourhood. Ten years later, a new URBAN plan was obtained, and was based on communicative rationality. The people in the neighbourhood were invited to participate in the process, from the aims and objectives of the plan, the implementation and included their opinions for best ways to use resources to overcome exclusion in social areas. The final decision was based on an argumentation process, where all opinions were considered and the validity of their argument contributed to the final goal: to get people out of the ghetto (Padrós et al 2011). Debates for the final goal included researchers who contributed their academic knowledge on how previous successful plans delivered benefits to society, housing, employment and education. Voices from people in the neighbourhood assessed which plan worked and best suited them. The best argument was not prioritised over status and *no* voice was considered more important than the other (Padrós et al 2011).

For the first time, a research methodology was providing an opportunity to contrast empirical knowledge with their problems and experiences to overcome social exclusion in the neighbourhood

(Padrós et al 2011, p.307)

New dialogue and social movement was beginning to emerge from this communicative rationality principle, and natural leaders from the community were born out of this process addressing the need to have real representatives of people living there (Padrós et al 2011). The social transformation of the neighbourhood and successes of the project carried on and the leaders established an Advisory Neighbourhood Board, which monitored and evaluated the actions made and responded actively to ongoing neighbourhood changes and needs (Padrós et al 2011).

Similar to PAR, the CCM suggests an advisory council can be established within the community or a group of people to guide and inform the researcher. This belief stems from the idea that participants who have the 'lived experience' can incorporate their knowledge with the popular knowledge of the subject under investigation (Neuman 2006). This can be considered useful especially as it provides a space for dialogue and change and can contribute to empowerment. In this way, both PAR and CCM have a distinct emancipatory function (Hennink et al 2011). However, as I soon discovered whilst in the process of this research, establishing a group of participants for an advisory council was not possible to achieve. Given the small number of participants and sensitive nature of this research subject, participants did not want to be part of a group and disclosure and identification did not allow me to use the advisory council.

As an appropriate alternative, and to ease any anxiety for participants, each interview was conducted face-to-face and was unstructured and in-depth, allowing each woman to speak as openly as possible about her experience. Both women contributed extensive knowledge and were eager to add their voice as part of research. They provided support to this research beyond the interview and participated in this project to the level that they felt comfortable with. Their participation, support, wisdom and advice I received from them were gratefully received.

2. *Eliminating the Interpretative Hierarchy*

Methodologies such as CCM breaks away from the traditional role of research and includes the voices of ‘Other Women’ and thus contributes to a better understanding of their situation and what elements of inequality they face (Yeste et al 2011). For the creation of knowledge to occur two guiding principles define the type of relationship that exists between the researcher and those who are “being studied” (Padrós et al 2011, p.307). To eliminate research hierarchy, the first principle in CCM starts from the premise that individuals and societies have the ability and common sense to interpret their world (Gómez et al 2010). Secondly, people’s [participants] ontological assumptions and their interpretation can be just as solid and valid as the interpretations of the researcher (Gómez et al 2010). By eliminating the idea of an interpretive hierarchy, and applying this principle in this research, the CCM acknowledges the possibility that *everyone* has, regardless of language or cultural background, the ability to create and construct knowledge (Padrós et al 2011).

Full and equal participation of the participants goes beyond mere intention of the CCM (Yeste et al 2011). For it to succeed the participants are invited to engage in *all* the stages of the research process, from the definition of the research question to the dissemination of the results (Gómez et al 2010; Yeste et al 2011). This principle was applied throughout this research at various levels. For example, the title of the original project was “Other Voices: Assessing the phenomenon of stigmatisation of the former prostitute”. After extensive reading, it became clear that the word “prostitute” eliminates the human being and the gender element into what was inflicted on to her by others (Farley and Kelly 2000). The term “prostituted woman” or “prostituted person” was chosen in its stead as this term is used by women in research who have survived prostitution. This was explained to the participants and they agreed that the title be changed to reflect this. After further consultation with participants the language used to convey the participants experiences are now reflected in the title: Other Voices: Assessing the phenomenon of the stigmatisation of former prostituted women.

3. *People as Transformative Agents*

Theories, such as structuralism transmits the belief that people cannot change social structures and systems (Padrós et al 2011). Functionalism similarly draws on the idea of structures which explains social reality and post-functionalism denies that people have the capacity to act (Padrós et al 2011). Contrary to these ideas, that actors cannot transform structural inequalities that exist, Padrós et al (2011) Gómez et al (2010; 2011), Aubert et al (2011), and Puigvert (2012) argue that structures and inequality can be reversed and defend the belief that people have capacity and ability to reflect and intervene in social change. The “importance of the subject” emerged from the 1960s where phenomenology began to recognise that people had capacity to construct their own lives and began to include the “subjects” voices and their subjective experiences into the social sciences (Puigvert 2012, p.81). When using participants’ knowledge alongside academic knowledge, we can determine just how social facts, as Durkheim described, are created by society (Garfinkel 1967; Gómez et al 2006). Garfinkel (1967) also argued people are not “cultural dopes” and have practical reasoning (see also Gómez et al 2006, p.4). In this way CCM focuses, not just on the ‘wrongs’ of what excludes women, but the idea of transforming difficulties and inequalities into possibilities (Yeste et al 2011). In essence, this perspective focuses on abilities and potential, not deficits of people where knowledge is built ‘inter-subjectivity’ through dialogue (Puigvert 2012)

Valls and Padrós (2011) used CCM and included voices of the excluded in the core of their research to overcome poverty. In a *Science Against Poverty Conference* in Spain (2010) the final recommendations to alleviate poverty, held that the CCM approach,

has demonstrated its capacity not only to provide a deep and accurate understanding of the complex elements that lead to exclusion, but also to identify ways to reduce inequalities and inform policies based on those results.

(Valls and Padrós 2011, p.173)

Studies which have used CCM have promoted participation of diverse vulnerable women, bringing their voice into current dialogic feminism (Puigvert 2012). Yeste et al (2011), explain that participation can be carried out in a number of ways and data collection techniques can be used at different levels. The full and equal inclusion and participation of women in research results in new understanding of the problem being studied where solutions emerge and effective policies are implemented (Gómez et al

2011; Gómez et al 2006). This principle was employed in this research, however women participated at a level that they felt comfortable with. Both women contributed knowledge from their lived experience of prostitution and offered rich descriptions of their stories. Both women examined their stories, checking for validity of the findings. As expected, given the sensitive nature of this research, the analysis whilst offered, was not referred back to them as neither woman indicated that they would like to be included in that process.

3.5: Qualitative Methodology

Qualitative research, a staple in social sciences, preserves the chronological flow of processes in identifiable local contexts and offers rich descriptions and explanations in the form of words (Miles and Huberman 1994). Words, rather than numbers, have a quality of “undeniability”, provide a concrete vivid meaning for the reader (Miles and Huberman 1994) and gives a detailed description of the quality or substance of the human experience (Marvasti 2004). With an emphasis on people’s ‘lived experiences’, qualitative data is well suited for locating peoples meanings and connecting these meanings to the social world (Miles and Haberman 1994).

3.6: Strengths and Qualities of Qualitative Research

Silverman (2005) argues neither quantitative nor qualitative research methods are superior or better, rather the method chosen must be appropriate to reflect what the researcher is trying to find out. Both methodologies have equal strengths and qualities (Sarantakos 2005). However, as Tuli (2010) notes the preference of research methodology also depends on philosophical issues related to the question of ontology and epistemology. My preferred perspective is interpretivist constructivist and is the theoretical framework used for this qualitative research. Quantitative research, derived from a positivist model, I believe would sacrifice the detail whereas “qualitative researchers tend to use a non-postpositive model of reality”, and are interested in the precise particulars of people’s understanding of that reality (Silverman 2005).

As such, a qualitative route was chosen in this case, as it fits with my research question, suits the small scale nature of this research, was a financial practical choice and responsive and ethical to the needs of the participants involved. Collectively this

method allows the individual women to describe in detail the experience of prostitution and stigma in the story of her life. Qualitative research also allows the researcher to gain a broader picture and ensures that the research findings accurately portray the individual's reflections. In this way, qualitative research has an inductive orientation as it aims to discover deeper insight into the context under study, and although the sample population is often small, it can have high validity and makes no promises of generalisability (Tuli 2010).

3.7: Maintaining Credibility, Dependability and Narrative Probability for this Research

The flip sides of quantitative research are important to consider (Sarantakos 2005). The credibility of either quantitative or qualitative findings are based on good research practices and judged on validity, reliability, generalisations and objectivity (Denscombe 2010). However, qualitative researchers generally do not implement this conventional positivist approach (Denscombe 2010). As Lieblich et al (1998, p.171) explains, such criteria are difficult to maintain in qualitative research and “it contradicts the very nature of the narrative approach”. Instead, qualitative researchers have adopted a more realist perspective that fits with post-scientific aspects of social research (Sarantakos 2005). The principles of qualitative research do not make a claim of *representativeness*, not because qualitative researchers are not interested in it, rather due to the small size of the sample which cannot speak for the entire population (Sarantakos 2005). Rather than use the term ‘validity’ the realist perspective uses ‘*credibility*’ and reassurances the reader that the data used was “reasonably likely to be accurate and appropriate” (Denscombe 2010, p. 299). Further credibility of the research can be obtained by returning to the participant and allowing them to check the validity of the findings (Denscombe 2010; Creswell 2009). However, respondent validation is not a guarantee of ‘validity’ and other methods should be sought to ensure this (Silverman 2005).

Qualitative research does recognise the researcher as integral in the research process and that his or her own identity, beliefs and backgrounds take a large part in the creation and analysis of data. Furthermore, because the narrative process can also involve significant personal involvement with the lives of those they study (Smythe and Murray 2000) there can be a danger that interpretation can be “bound up with the ‘self’ of the

researcher” (Denscombe 2010, p.305). This leads one to examine the reliability of the research, or what Linkin and Guba (1985) refer to as *‘dependability’*. No research is free from the influence of the researcher as the qualitative data is the product of the interpretation from the researcher (Denscombe 2010). However, although I have known both of the women previously in this research this has helped me establish trust between them and me. Trust I feel is vital when conducting *any* research, but especially important when conducting research with women who have been exploited or may be considered a vulnerable group. As Tuli (2010, p.100) points out, “[B]uilding a partnership with study participants can lead to deeper insight into the context under study, adding richness and depth to the data”.

Denscombe (2010) argues that whilst the qualitative approach offers rich detail, such small scale studies may become *generalised* and open to doubt as opposed to a larger scale, well conducted quantitative research. However, if the research can relate to other instances in research, it is possible to gauge if the findings relate. As Silverman (2005, p. 211) notes that whilst there is no “‘golden key’ to validity”, the researcher who uses qualitative methods must show the reader the procedures that were used and always ensure that their methods were reliable. Furthermore, the truth or plausibility in narrative is different from scientific positivist assumptions as “the outcome of any one telling is necessarily a re-telling” and what I strived for in this research was “narrative probability” (Sandelowski 1991, p. 164-165). To allow for focus, the women’s most significant events in their story were selected, retold and re-narrated with an emphasis on the conditions under which it arose. Their feelings, thoughts and desires were built in to this research with an emphasis on their agency and reasoning and how they often resisted such events from occurring. Using Lieblich et al (1998) method of selecting principle sentences and the creation of themes, I feel that I have managed to capture the ‘content universe’ that represents their story through their experience of prostitution.

The following section shall now set out my design plan and include a description of the narrative process.

Philosophical Framework Plan

For clarification purposes I will set out my design plan below which was adapted from Tuli (2010, p104) which presents how my philosophical framework has influenced my research practice.

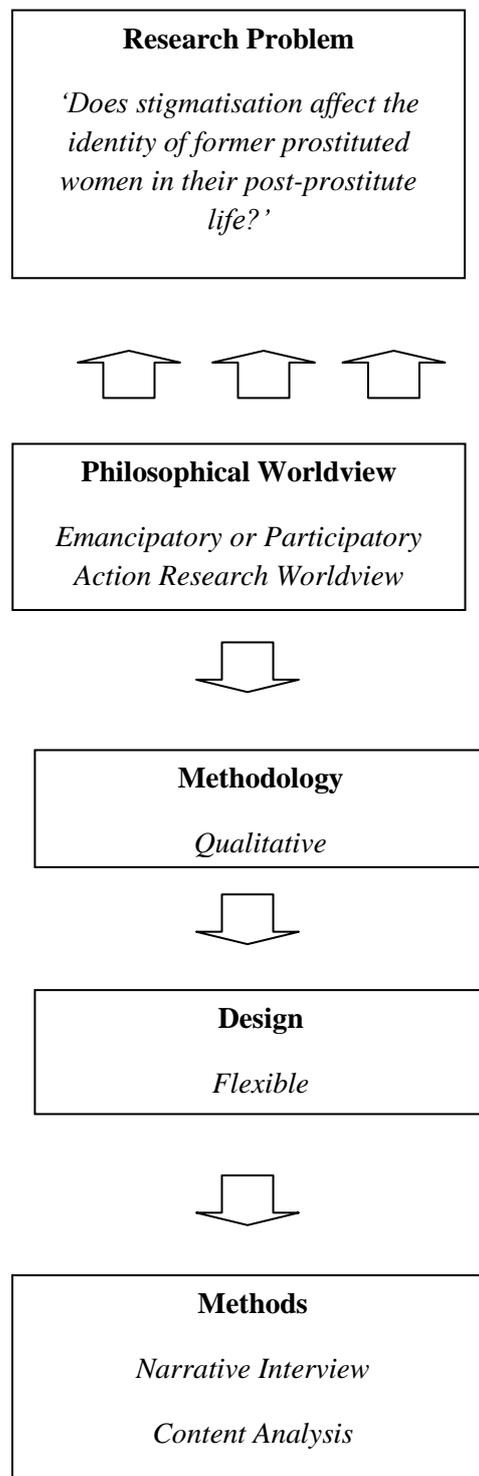


Figure 1: Research Design

3.8: Narrative Inquiry

Background to Narrative Inquiry

The following section shall provide an overview of narrative research and include its impact on feminist discourse. The political potential of narrative inquiry will be discussed along with the research process of interviewing and analysis which adheres to ethical principles for this research project.

Qualitative life story or narrative research is the study of people's lives and involves in-depth autobiographical interviewing of research participants (Smythe and Murray 2000). "People are storytellers by nature" Lieblich et al (1998, p.7) explain and are "meaning-generating organisms" whose narratives provides us with a better understanding of the individuals experienced reality, lives, identity and personality. As Reissman (2000, p.3) puts it, "[S]torytelling is a relational activity that gathers others to listen and empathize". Narratives appear in text, in the form of short stories, poems and myths for example and in any other forms that tells the events and conditions of a person's social life (Neuman 2006). The role of the researcher is integral to narrative inquiry as she or he attempts to capture people's lived experience and places her or himself in the reflective role and in doing so become a part of the "plot" (Neuman 2006, p.475). By becoming reflective the researcher aims to "dissolve any gap between the researcher and those being researched" (Neuman 2006, p.475). It is therefore a co-participatory exercise as the researcher is viewed as a social actor with his or her own voice whose emotions, life events and personal experience are woven into the fabric of the story (Neuman 2006).

Narrative research is often used as a framework for investigating or understanding the participant and often used in qualitative research (Sandelowski 1991). Narratives revolve around "an interest in biographical particulars as narrated by the one who lives them" (Chase 2005, p.651). This method of inquiry allows one or more participants to provide stories of their lives (Clandinin and Connelly 2000, cited in Creswell 2009). By collaborating and using a narrative approach the participant and the researcher stories are chronologically interpreted, retold or re-storied (Clandinin and Connelly 2000, cited in Creswell 2009).

However, what become clear to me in narrative research is there is no single definition of narrative analysis, nor a standard approach, and this has caused, according to Mishler (1995) “a state of anarchy in the field” (cited in Elliot 2005, p.36). However, it can be loosely described as “discourses with a clear sequential order that connect events in a meaningful way for a definite audience” (Hinchman and Hinchman 1997, cited in Elliot 2005, p.36). Ewick and Silbey (1995) argue that to qualify as narrative three elements must be present; a reliance of past events and central characters; that the events be temporally ordered; that the events and characters be related to each other in a larger organisational structure in the context of an opposition or struggle. Elliot (2005) however notes that any one of three of the following central features of narrative can be used, but each depends on the research question. First, some narrative researchers stress the temporal nature of social life, and this, explains Elliot (2005) provides their rationale for using narrative methodology. Second, some narrative researchers place greater emphasis within a hermeneutic or interpretative tradition and focus on the subjective dimension where narrative can be found within everyday social interaction. Finally, the third group of narrative researchers can be identified where their interests lie in the “social process surrounding the production and consumption of stories” (Elliot 2005, p.37). Broadly, however, narrative lies in a hermeneutic or interpretive tradition, with no clear set of procedures because interpretive analysis demands “that we understand how the subjects of our research make sense of events and experiences require dense, detailed and contextualised description” (Elliot 2005, p.37).

However, narrative research is more than just gathering stories; the researcher pays particular attention to how the story is constructed and is sensitive and respectful to the different worldviews of others (Trahar 2009). Mishler (2004) also argues that narrative researchers understand that stories change depending on the listener and the teller, when the story is told and in what context (cited in Trahar 2009, chapter 6). Lieblich et al (1998, p.8) take the stand that narratives should not always be taken at “face value”, rather stories which are constructed around “remembered facts” where the individual storyteller is free to selected their story and portrays a representation of reality allowing freedom of individuality.

The emergence of narrative analysis

Concepts of narrative have become increasingly visible and have earned their place in various theories, methods, research and disciplines (Lieblich et al 1998). This significant momentum is largely due to the dissatisfaction concerned with structured research which can “artificially fragment individual’s experience” (Elliot 2005, p.36). Others comment that the ‘impulse to narrate’ is a sign of the demise of the positivistic paradigm (Lieblich et al 1995). There is also a move towards interpretation (Sandelowski 1991) away from the modernist understanding of the ‘self’ to the notion of the narrative construction on identity and ways which identity is malleable and shaped in interaction through discourse (Elliot 2005). As Riessman (2000, p.3) articulates, this approach “does not assume objectivity but, instead, privileges positionality and subjectivity”. The momentum in narrative has also influenced the feminist movement (Riessman 2000) where women’s voices at last were beginning to be included in research and treated as subjects, not objects for investigation, and as social actors in their own lives (Chase 2005). Stories, not statistics, are now prominent in much sociological scholarship (Ewick and Silbey 1995) and narrative is often viewed as an alternative to traditional research tools and methods (Lieblich et al 1998; see Yeste et al 2011). Narratives are also used to provide a platform for unheard groups, from different ethnic, cultural or social backgrounds to express their voices, those who are discriminated against and marginalised (Lieblich et al 1998). Through the feminist movement women’s voices and their personal life histories are beginning to be documented, offering new understandings of historical, cultural, and social processes that mediate women’s stories (Chase 2005). Personal narratives and stories of marginalized people are now being heard in contrast to those who “occupy more powerful subject positions and social location” (Chase 2005, p.671; see Padrós et al 2011).

Political potential of narrative

In narrative research the social identities and social actions of the social world are storied, and central to narrative is to ‘give voice to the subject’, to reveal the truth and unsettle power (Ewick and Silbey 1995). Narratives are, after all, “social acts performed within specific contexts that organize their meaning and consequences” and are likely to make explicit the dominant cultural meaning and their relation to social practices

(Ewick and Silbey 1995, p.205). Whilst narratives do “bear the marks of existing social inequalities” they can also be inventive and creative by reshaping the social world. Narratives, add Ewick and Silbey (1995) remind us that our social world is not fixed, rather an ongoing production that has the potential to identify ways in which power gets exercised. They add that narratives and stories of people who suffer inequality provide us with the possibility of resistance and subversion whilst highlighting the conditions under which it occurs and provides us with collective accounts of the social casualties and the consequences of ‘non-conformity’ (Ewick and Silbey 1995). Thus,

having an appreciation of the structural conditions of power and authority, stories of resistance can become instructions about both the sources and the limitations of power.

(Ewick and Silbey 2003, p.1328)

The activity of storytelling can have an emancipatory power whereby the participants recount the event in their lives and in turn scholars narrate their version (Sandelowski 1991). For some women narrating a significant life event can have a positive effect and their “urgent voice” stems from the need of the narrator to tell one’s story and a desire for others to hear that story (Chase 2005). Chase (2005), quoting from Rene Jara Beverly (2000) articulates the urgent voice as an “emergency narratives” and involves,

A problem of repression, poverty, marginality, exploitation, or simply survival... The voice that speaks to the reader through the text... [takes] the form of an I that demands to be recognized, that wants or needs to stake a claim on our attention.

(Rene Jara Beverly 2000, cited in Chase 2005, p.668)

Ewick and Silbey (1995) note, limitations of narrative research include its potential for it to be complicit in constructing and sustaining the status quo of the oppressed and also its inability for political potential. However, narrative as explained, *can* have a political effect, not only because it ‘gives voice’, but also as it is an interpretive exercise and can challenge the taken for granted hegemony (Ewick and Silbey 1995; 2003). By highlighting the connection between the lives of the participant and how hegemony shapes social lives and conduct (Ewick and Silbey 1995) narrative can be viewed as a form of social action and has been advocated as an act of cultural resistance (Atkinson and Delamont 2006). It allows the testimony of muted, marginalised and dispossessed groups to be heard in an academic space that were previously ignored and who were regarded as the objects of the study (Atkinson and Delamont 2006). In “thinking the unthinkable” collective stories of individuals expose social structures (Ewick and Silbey

2003, p.1329). This exposure may be only for a moment, but it is in those moments actors can recount the time when they were able to ‘best power’, showing their acts of resistance (Ewick and Silbey 2003). In what Goffman (1961) calls ‘secondary adjustments’ these every day acts of resistance tell us how the powerless respond and adapt to power and how they protect their interests and identities (cited in Ewick and Silbey 2003).

Not every act is an act of resistance however. It must be recognised, and firstly “entails a consciousness of being less powerful in a relationship of power” (Ewick and Silbey 2003, p.1336). The social actor involved in the scenario usually feels self-conscious and has a sense that they are “up against something or someone” in a relationship of power. Secondly the act of resistance requires a consciousness of opportunity turning the event into a trio of autonomy, power and possibility (Ewick and Silbey 2003, p. 1336). Thirdly, resistance stories can often make claims about power that have produced unfairness, constrains or injustice (Ewick and Silbey 2003). Finally, Ewick and Silbey (2003) note that because hegemony can be difficult to recognise or ambiguous, such acts of resistance may be institutionally indecipherable. Nevertheless, “subordinates are not necessarily unaware or bamboozled by such practices” (Ewick and Silbey 2003, p.1337). In the following example Siobhan, a participant in this research, stories her experience with a buyer, describing how she wanted to challenge his reasons for buying her. Her awareness of the presence of power and her personal act of everyday resistance can be recognised as follows;

[...] I had got in to the car and we got there and he gave me fifty [euro], and I said to him “so your hear cos your lonely?” and he said “ye, ye, I wouldn’t do this on a regular basis or anything” and I said “ah, that’s grand, I have a bit of time cos I’m kind of lonely myself (laughs) [...] let’s talk”. “So what has you lonely?” I turned it around on him. He did talk for a while and about fifteen minutes passed and he was getting edgy, and I said “I hope you’re not feeling lonely now, feel free and pick me up for a chat anytime you feel lonely” and he said “what about me..?” and I said “what about your what?” I said, “I thought you were here cos you felt lonely?” [...] and he said (aggressive) “but I wanted...”, and I said “I know what you wanted” and I opened the car door and got out and said “and you can go fuck yourself the next time, if your here for one thing say it. I’d rather you be honest than tell me a whole load of fuckin lies, it’s bad enough that I have to swallow your dick, without swallowing your shit as well”. Anyway, I closed the door, and he never got that blow job, and he never picked me up again (laughs).

These moments, like Siobhan’s, are not inconsequential and warrant our attention as they are attempts to explain social action and contributes to our understanding of what constrains and enables such action (Ewick and Silbey 2003).

Nevertheless, narrative researchers such as myself could be accused of attributing greater agency to social actors, and because personal narratives can sometimes be ambiguous, the researcher assumes such acts as resistance (Ewick and Silbey 2003). However, although resistance may be a response to power, opportunistic or individualistic, it is neither “random nor idiosyncratic” and social actors can identify the cracks in institutional power structures as they have familiarity with them. Whilst there are gaps in the literature and unexplored stories fashioned by people who have experienced injustice, narrative research can allow participants, like Siobhan, to voice their subversive stories and include their experience of resistance and movement (Ewick and Silbey 2003).

Storytelling thus has the potential to inform us of everyday resistance and disadvantage. They may not always equate to institutional change but allow the storyteller the opportunity to tell their story that may be otherwise discrete and ephemeral transactions (Ewick and Silbey 2003). Narrative provides the opportunity for their story to extend beyond the momentary, and can also add significantly to our sociological knowledge informing us of how social structures work and contribute to social disadvantage (Ewick and Silbey 2003). The narrative study of lives is chosen for all these reasons and because, narrative research, when used with CCM core values, I believe, provides the framework and ethical guidance for this to happen.

3.9: Data Collection and Analysis: Narrative Process and Ethical Responsibilities in Each Stage.

Recruitment Stage and Ethical Considerations

Cognisant of the ethical responsibility for the research participant, Smythe and Murray (2000) place this responsibility firmly at the recruitment stage and in the hands of the narrative researcher. I used discretion to guide me in this process, as Smythe and Murray (2000) explain its importance: In selecting participants researchers must use and determine the suitability of each individual participant. Concerns cannot always be anticipated, they add, but areas to consider are the potential vulnerability of the participant and potential risks for the individual (Creswell 2009). Smythe and Murray (2000) offer one solution; to establish the suitability of the participant the researcher should engage in an informal conversation with the participant before invitation to participate with the

research. Ethically, the researcher is also responsible for their conduct and motives during this stage and should not abuse their position of authority or knowingly allow or encourage a participant to engage if their disclosures could adversely affect them (Smythe and Murray 2000). As with all research, ethical research must consider groups who may be regarded as vulnerable and protect them from risks such as, physical, social, legal or economic (Creswell 2009).

Ethical research into prostitution, or any form of sexual exploitation, also begins at the selection stage (Raymond 2013). Often, researchers select and obtain interviews from women who are currently involved in the sex industry and gain access to them through on-line sources, brothels or pimps (Raymond 2013; see Huschke et al 2014). Raymond (2013) states that it is imperative to understand that ethical research that conducts research into the sex industry only recruits participants through organizations who provide services to women who have experienced prostitution and sex trafficking or from other trusted sources (see Magee 2014). This research follows Raymond's (2013, p.xi) recommendations and guidance and interviewed women who have "lived that "content"", and independently selected through women whom I have built a trusting working relationships over the last number of years.

Selecting Participants for This Research

In this research I wanted to explore women's experience of prostitution and stigmatisation; it is for this reason that I employed participants using *purposive sampling*. I purposely selected women because they have the 'lived experience', were all formally prostituted in Ireland and, as Sarantakos (2005) suggests, are best suited to provide adequate and useful information about the topic being explored. Two women have agreed to participate in this research. Both women are Irish born and live in different locations in Ireland and have, at some stage in their lives, engaged in prostitution both indoors and outdoors for various reasons and have exchanged 'sex' for drugs, money, accommodation, protection, food, other material goods and basic survival necessities.

However, the task of reaching participants for any research can be difficult to achieve. Gaining trust from each participant was a major element in this research but as Sarantakos (2005) suggested, I stressed that their involvement and participation in this

research was important to the research findings. For both women their anonymity was crucial and I outlined my research project and ensured their anonymity and made every effort to ensure that they felt comfortable in participating in this project. After each interview I contacted both the participants to follow up on any feelings that may have emerged. Once the interview was transcribed, I emailed them the verbatim transcript, with names, dates and any identifying material omitted and they confirmed that they were satisfied with it. Participants were made aware of the intention, verbally and written form, that their story would be re-narrated in the course of the analysis (Smythe and Murray 2000). The opportunity to verify the interpretation of the interview was also explicitly explained to each participant before consent was given or invitation to participate. Whilst the final interpretive authority rests with the researcher in narrative, I also offered the opportunity for the participant to confirm the validity of the conclusions (Creswell 2009).

I have taken every necessary step to help ensure that that the participants are aware of the potential risks and benefits to them (Creswell 2009). Their rights to engage or to remove themselves in the research are included in the consent form and also included in the information leaflet for participants that can be viewed in the appendices (Creswell 2009). However, given the nature of narrative interviews, as an emergent or discovery based methodology, I was aware that boundaries might move (Smythe and Murray 2000). To address this I frequently returned to the issue of consent with the participant making it an on-going process and not a one-time agreement (Smythe and Murray 2000).

The Interview Stage and Ethical Considerations

Gathering stories requires lengthy in-depth interviews (Ewick and Silbey 1995) which is conducted over a period of time, and usually in a naturalistic setting (Smythe and Murray 2000) where the respondent feels comfortable, safe and relaxed (Sarantakos 2005). I asked each participant where she would like the interview to take place and accommodated this preference, making sure the location was safe and appropriate for both the participant and I. In this research, I interviewed both Siobhan and Ava in their home and a more detailed description of each interview setting will be given in the following chapter. Both interviews took place between January and February 2015.

The interview phase of this research included individual, in-depth, un-structured, face to face interviews between the respondent and me as a means for data collection. A loose topic guide based on previous review of the literature was used during the interview and allowed for focus. I used a method proposed by Tomura (2011) who conducted research with ‘active sex workers’ and followed it with each interview participant. The method consisted of a briefing conversation at the beginning of the interview and a debriefing at the end which is necessary to follow up on the participant’s feelings. The information was gathered from one interview and concentrated on each woman’s experience of stigmatisation, before, during and focused specifically *after* her exit from prostitution. The general flow of the interview was as follows:

- Briefing: Introduction, and signing the consent form
- First phase: Experience of participant before entry into prostitution
- Second phase: Experience of participant during prostitution
- Third phase: Experience after the participant exited prostitution
- Debriefing : Closing conversation and reflection

Elliot (2005) notes there is no one way that researchers can engage with narrative; rather they use basic tools that assist them to go beyond the most obvious content. The interview usually starts with a question which motivates the interviewee to talk about their experiences, past present and future (Sarantakos 2005). The interviewee makes the decision on what events are discussed and the interviewer listens, encourages, and does not interrupt the interviewee in any way (Sarantakos 2005). When the interviewee indicates the end of a story, questions can be asked, in order to clarify ambiguities and gain further information. I also agree with Smythe and Murray (2000) who explain that narrative researchers must also learn how to be empathetic, to listen, to be attentive, intuitive and especially cognizant of ethical principles that guide research and to treat individuals as human beings and not a source of data who have “their own distinctive individuality and autonomy” (Smythe and Murray 2000, p.317). As such, I did not feel it appropriate to interrupt a participant when she spoke. Both women were extremely descriptive when explaining their story. I listened and asked some questions relevant to the research topic or for clarification purposes when I felt it was necessary to do so. I

began each interview in a similar fashion; explaining to each the research and asking the participant to begin her story where ever she wanted before she entered into prostitution.

Sarantakos (2005) explains that in the process of interviewing researchers must be resigned to failure of meeting prospective respondents. I also experienced some level of failure or disappointment, as I experienced considerable difficulty in securing a date and time for an interview from each woman; conflicting work schedules, family commitments and travel arrangements were some of the reasons for both the participants and me. On a number of occasions I made arrangements and was ready to interview but they were not and this caused me some anxiousness. However, I came to realise that each women has difficulty in their own lives, each woman have been affected differently by their experience of prostitution and each women is dealing with in her own way. I had to be extremely patient, and I had to go at the pace of each woman and wait until she was ready for me to interview her. When each of the interviews did happen, we were both ready and relaxed and these elements certainly allowed each interview to be conducted as comfortable as possible.

Regarding the vulnerability of the participants in this research, I am acutely aware of the risks for the participant and this was verbally articulated beforehand and explained in the consent form. As is shown in this dissertation, prostitution causes great psychological (Farley 2004), physical (Potterat et al 2004), and emotional harm (Farley et al 1998; Farley and Barken 1998) for many women. It is also widely researched that sex traders, especially women, experience post-traumatic stress disorder as an outcome of being prostituted and in many cases involves a “lifelong continuum of sexual exploitation and violence” (Farley and Kelly 2000, p.2). I was aware that both women are currently visiting psychologists and counselling services. We discussed this issue at length before our interviews and both stated they were comfortable speaking about their experiences in prostitution without it affecting her emotional or psychological well-being. Regardless, I was prepared to terminate the research and take corrective action if there were unanticipated harmful consequences to *any* participant that arose in the process (Smythe and Murray 2000).

It was explained to each participant that all identifying information, such as names, age, places or locations would be disguised to ensure that the participant cannot be identified (Creswell 2009). As such, to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of all participants, no

person could be identified in this research or any reports, articles or in publications used in the future and this was explained to the participant and written in the consent form. Each participant was asked to provide their own pseudonym for this research. This was done for two reasons. Firstly, it allows the participant to identify themselves when they are reading the final report. Secondly, the use of a name change is a strategy used by some women in prostitution to protect her private identity (Sanders 2005). I felt that allowing her to choose her own name in this research, lessens the chances of me using that name as this may cause the participant some distress.

However, having undertaken the ethical measures, as outlined by the various authors mentioned, an ethical concern emerged from the interviewing stage and something that I never anticipated or considered in this research. Originally, there was a third woman who agreed to participate in this research, however at the beginning of the interview whilst we were reading the consent form, she stated that she did *not* wish to remain anonymous. I explained to her that I could not promise that her name would be released. I explained to her that I would speak with my supervisor for advice on this matter. I asked her if she wished to terminate the interview and she agreed that we would continue and the interview was completed. The consent form was signed with an agreement that I would follow up with her request.

I spoke with my supervisor directly after the interview and raised this issue with him. My initial concern was for the participant and any potential risks she would encounter by identification. Another potential issue was the risk of identification of the other participants as I was afraid their anonymity might be compromised. The sample is very small from a relatively small group of women and I feared that identifying one woman would have possibly led to identification of others. This posed a dilemma for me, as the person who wished to be identified is an adult and her autonomy to choose to be identified is her right and especially important as this research wants to 'give voice' to marginalised groups. Such an action is not unknown as participants in research conducted by De Vet et al (2012) waived their right to anonymity because they felt that any future consequences to them sharing their story were outweighed by the fact that they stand by their truth.

I spoke with the participant and explained my concerns, but as stated she was firm that her name was included. The final decision was chosen from a risk verses autonomy

route and based on the foundational ethical principle of "Primum non Nocere" - First do no Harm. Which action (risk or lack of autonomy) would be the least likely to harm the participant? After some further reflection and discussion with the Chair of the Ethics Committee at the Waterford Institute of Technology, it was decided that if the story was to be included in the research she would *not* be identified. Whilst her autonomy is essential so too are the rights of the other participants to whom I have a responsibility. The participant understood that her name could not be identified and she declined to partake in this research. I thanked her for taking the time to talk with me, and as with all the women who have participated in this research I thank her for her guidance and continued support.

Transcribing Stage

Elliot (2005) notes, that it is all but impossible to transcribe a narrative interview that completely captures the true account of the interview itself (Elliot 2005). As such, it is important to note that any transcription of an experience must be seen as a compromise. Narrative research calls for details; however, attending to too much detail in the text can slow the narrative in a highly artificial manner (Elliot 2005). A solution to this is to use a method of transcribing where the researcher cleans, or sanitises the transcript, leaving out unnecessary pauses and 'umms' or 'errs'. Clearing the transcript, as I did in this research, makes the transcript accessible for both general audience and academic readership, and captures, chronologically the accounts of the events that are significant in the participants lives (Elliot 2005). All interviews were transcribed and analysed, with the permission of the participants, and the process of this can be viewed under the heading: *The process of content analysis for this research.*

Following transcribing, Smythe and Murray (2000) explain that four separate phases should be included in narrative analysis. The first step includes asking the participants if their transcript accurately reflects what they said. Second, the researcher should code the transcript using their own initiative and reflect on their feelings about the process. The third phase should address any ethical concerns that may have been raised. Finally, the participant is encouraged to provide feedback of the researcher's interpretations (Smythe and Murray 2000).

Feedback is essential so that the participant can confirm the validity of the conclusions. Smythe and Murray (2000) also add that in this final phase of narrative analysis, whatever level of involvement of the participant, the negotiation between the researcher and the participant through the process must be documented, especially if there are significant differences in interpretation. This procedure ensures that no one interpretation is more privileged. The final report should be written and presented as a perspective; leaving room for other readers to interpret the multiple narratives in their own terms (Smythe and Murray 2000).

Narrative research is, methodologically, an interpretive enterprise with the researcher actively engaging in formulating meaning from the participants'. This can, in some instances, lead the researcher to become conflicted ethically as to how to gain a balance between the participants' understanding of their life and how the researcher understands their life. The intention to balance this conflict thus must try to clarify what the participant meant to say rather to "interpret the underlying, implicit meaning behind what they say" (Smythe and Murray 2000, p.324).

An interesting point arises when the researcher and the participants narrative accounts conflict. On this issue, Smythe and Murray (2000) ask an epistemological question, whose story is it anyway and whose account is more valid and on what grounds can the account be credible? However, they argue that narrative accounts are told from multiple perspectives with multiple meanings, with the aim of achieving a multiple interpretation of reality. They argue, many narrative researchers agree that their own interpretation is not the final one (Smythe and Murray 2000). As Ewick and Silbey (1995, p.215) further articulate "stories are interpreted as one version of a situation in which multiple stories are possible".

Further ethical considerations to consider at this stage is that of "narrative ownership" because according to Smythe and Murray (2000, p. 324) "the narrative researcher approaches a life story from a radically different perspective than that of the individual who tells the story". They address this matter in the following way: both the interviewer and the participant must form an alliance and the "the narrator's outlook must prevail" (Etter-Lewis 1966, cited in Smythe and Murray 2000, p.325). Furthermore, the interviewers' external knowledge must guide, not dominate, the process of elicitation

and the interviewer must be willing to learn from the narrator who participates and adds to knowledge outside the researchers' knowledge.

Content Analysis and Issues to Consider

Some narrative studies are more interested in the formal aspects, such as its form, linguistics, its nature, structure and quality rather than content (Lieblich et al 1998). However, I decided to focus on and describe the 'content', because it is the content of women's stories and their experience of stigmatisation that I aimed to explore.

According to Elliot (2005) content analysis is thought to have two functions, where the researcher produces a chronological account for the reader and second to make clear to the reader the meaning of those experiences and the meaning in the lives of the participants. Some of the best known narrative research that focuses on content is from the Chicago tradition, and their texts focus usually on biographical narratives (Elliot 2005). Content analysis is thought to be the classic method for doing narrative material and has many variations, and the steps taken depend on the researcher's discipline and the purpose of the study (Lieblich 1998). The traditional method of content analysis dissects one or more of the storytellers text(s) and single words are collected which become defined categories (Lieblich et al 1998). This categorical approach or content analysis is primarily used when the researcher wants to investigate a phenomenon shared by a group of people (Lieblich et al 1998). As Lieblich et al (1998) explain, the researcher who focuses explicitly on content of the account aims to see what happened, why it happened, who participated in the event?; all from the viewpoint of the storyteller. There are no set rules as to how many categories are reached as this depends on the goals of the research, and the research question. Lieblich et al (1998) suggest that a balance can be reached between defining a few broad categories that do justice to the text and the other by defining subtle categories that retain the richness of the data.

When doing narrative research in this way Elliot (2005) notes that it is important to gain an accurate account from the participant that reflect their individual values and beliefs. Narrative researchers, who focus on content, must also try to gain a relatively accurate description of events through time, and recognise the substantive elements that can inform us about the social world. In essence, a narrative must add up to something, and is "more than the sum of its parts" (Elliot 2005, p.48).

One significant argument put forward by Denscombe (2010) is the danger of placing an extract from the interview that can be taken out of context. Placing an extract from the transcript, he adds, can provide a proof of a point. However, he argues the meaning of the words that are said can sometimes be changed because they are not linked with what was said before or after. The researcher can at least try and explain this to the reader but inevitably there is limited opportunity to do so. Another difficulty is that the selection of extracts from the interview transcript is entirely up to the researcher, but this editorial decision can limit significance or be over used to represent the overall picture. To evade this danger, Denscombe (2010, p.296) suggests that the researcher must avoid the temptation of using quotes 'out of context' and should give the reader some indication on the background of where the statement arose.

The Process of Content Analysis for this Research

This research loosely followed Lieblich et al's (1998) approach as follows:

1. The un-structured narrative interviews with the participants were recorded and notes were taken about the setting in which the interview took place and impressions, thoughts or feeling I gained (Lieblich et al 1998). The recording of the interview was listened to numerous times, transcribed verbatim by hand, leaving out unnecessary pauses and 'ums' or 'errs' (Elliot 2005). The transcribed text was then subjected to content analysis (Sarantakos 2005) separated into themes or categories and given descriptive treatment (Lieblich et al 1998).
2. To begin this process I read each transcript numerous times and during these initial readings I made marginal reflective remarks about the interview using the comment function on Microsoft Word. Remarks were about my thoughts, similarities or differences to theory, and the interview environment for example. I consulted my field notes as Miles and Huberman (1994) suggested and checked if similar thoughts or ideas arose during the interview. I also coded (with colour) these remarks that related to the principle sentences that emerged from the data which added meaning and context (Miles and Huberman 1994). This became especially useful for me as the interviews continued; especially if a similar idea was repeated by one or more participants and because I am a visual

person I found this to be particularly useful as it allowed me to see common words, sentences or ideas in colour and allowed for focus.

3. Using Microsoft word highlight function repeated words or similar words were highlighted in colour, as well as words and sentences that represented ideas regarding stigmatisation. Principal subtext was extracted from each individual's transcript and treated as a subtext. From these subtexts, principal sentences were chosen that expressed the distinct phases in each woman's life. These were separated by relevance to the women's experience, before, during and after her exit from prostitution.
4. My overarching goal at this stage was to choose sentences that represented the unique content universe of each individual's story. At this stage, separate colour sentences or utterances from individuals were labelled and assigned a category. Each sentence was counted in order of frequency and was used in verbatim to formulate an overall picture of the content universe of each woman's story (Lieblich et al 1998). Categories were chosen on the basis of frequency and established only if a sentence was repeated more than three times throughout the interview which highlighted the idea, rather than the length of the interview. The process was repeated for each woman's interview.
5. Categories were named based on the collective meaning I gained from the sentences. From here I established a story map for each woman that represented each stage in her life. I also arranged sentences in chronological order and arranged the story to show the reader the average year and age of the individual as she was experiencing prostitution. As you will see, each woman's story map has different themes under predefined headings of experience before, during and after her exit from prostitution as I wanted to show the difference and similarities between them. The structure of the individual story map of each woman will be presented in appendices 5 and 6 and an example is as follows;

Principal sentences and categories that represent Woman’s experience **before** prostitution

Category	3x Principal Sentences
----------	------------------------

Principal sentences and categories that represent Woman’s experience **during** prostitution

Category	3x Principal Sentences
----------	------------------------

Principal sentences and categories that represent Woman’s experience **after** prostitution

Category	3x Principal Sentences
----------	------------------------

Figure 2: Principal Sentences and Categories Table Example

6. Finally each woman’s story map was given descriptive treatment, re-narrated and developed into individual dominant themes that capture their lives, and described to the reader whilst preserving the chronological flow and time line: before, during and after each woman’s exit from prostitution.
7. Symbols that appear in each story are as follows:
 - Three periods in square brackets [...] signify the omission of a missing sentence or several sentences as Lieblich et al (1998) suggests. This was done for various reasons, including protecting identification of participant, or when the sentence repeated an earlier one.
 - Three periods of ... donates a long pause by the interviewee
 - Two periods of ..signifies a short pause by the interviewee
 - If the pause was significant the author has added [long pause] to indicate this
 - (word inserted) signifies that the addition of a descriptive word that has been put in place by the author to clarify a sentence from the interviewee
 - Quotation marks in the story signifies the dialogue verbatim from the interviewee

- Capital Words, such as OKAY, signify that the interviewee's tone of voice was pronounced and louder.
- A word in a sentence used in italics signifies the interviewee's tone of voice was pronounced to express her meaning.

Follow Up to Confirm Accuracy of Analysis

In this research, each stage of the interpretation from the development of the Story Map to the interpretation of their descriptive story was confirmed by both women and they ensured my interpretation reflected their experiences accurately.

3.10: Conclusion

Researchers often choose the subjects that reflect their advocacies, passions spoken or otherwise (Raymond 2013). Therefore, I began this chapter by describing my particular worldview, participatory and action research (PAR) which has shaped and guided my research. My original intention was to use Critical Communicative Methodology (CCM) however due to time and the small population size of this research this was not realised. I have retained some of CCM core principles in this research and included in this chapter its background, concepts and values, such as democracy, equality, equity and respect that I consider important when doing research with others. A qualitative route was chosen for this research as it fits with my research question and suited the small scale nature and low budget of this research. Qualitative research was also a practical choice as it allowed the individual women to describe in detail the experience of prostitution and stigma in the story of her life. Narrative research, as an interpretive exercise offers new understandings of historical, cultural, and social processes that mediate women's stories (Chase 2005) and was chosen for this research as it 'gives voice' (Ewick and Silbey 1995) and commonly used as a framework for investigating or understanding the participant experiences (Sandelowski 1991). It is for these reasons I chose narrative, as I wanted to explore for myself the historical account of women's stories and co-construct the nature of woman's experience of prostitution and stigma through time in Ireland. I expressed this interest in my literature review, through Goffman and Link and Phelan's explanation of stigma and the historical stigmatisation of prostituted women in Ireland, for example, whilst understanding it through a feminist lens. What I wanted most from this research was women's voices to be heard, as best

they could, and to let their stories represent their realities. As Ewick and Silbey (1995) explain, participants provide us with the possibility of resistance and subversion and provide us with collective accounts of the social casualties and the consequences of 'non-conformity'. In this chapter the reader was briefly introduced to two women, Siobhan and Ava, who agreed to take part in this research and were purposely selected because they had the 'lived experience' as Tomura (2009) suggests and can provide adequate and useful information about the topic being explored (Sarantakos 2005). Cognisant of the ethical responsibility for each research participant, each stage of the research narrative process was discussed with each participant. Negotiation and consent between the researcher and the participant was ongoing throughout and a third woman declined as she wished to be identified. Her wishes whilst respected however could not be realised as identification had a chance of affecting other participant's anonymity and the integrity of the research. For the remaining participants consent was sought again after my interpretation of their stories by returning to each participant and allowing them to check the validity of the findings (Denscombe 2010; Creswell 2009; Tomura 2011).

In the following chapter I will introduce the reader to each individual woman, Siobhan and Ava, and provide the themes that have emerged from the process of content analysis with reference to their experience of prostitution and stigma in the story of their lives.

Chapter Four: Voices of Participants

Introduction

This chapter will introduce the reader to two women; ‘Siobhan’ and ‘Ava’ who have agreed to participate in this research. Both the women’s names and pseudonyms for the street have been changed to protect their anonymity. Their individual story maps can be viewed in Appendix 5 and 6, and consist of principal sentences and are presented chronologically in order, before, during and after their exit from prostitution. In order to reduce bias (Lieblich et al 1998) principal sentences were selected by frequency from the interview transcript which was transcribed verbatim and cleaned of unnecessary speech disfluencies (Elliot 2005). In this chapter each woman’s story have been re-narrated and developed into individual dominant themes that capture their lives. Their story will be described to the reader whilst preserving the chronological flow and time line: before, during and after each woman’s exit from prostitution with a focus on their experience of prostitution and stigma and the extent of choice and agency in their lives.

4.1: Siobhan’s Story

They did not care, nobody cared, nobody came near me, nobody, nobody...they just watched me. I would have been just another dead drug addicted prostitute and yeah that told me a lot.

Siobhan is an Irish woman who entered into prostitution at 33 years of age and spent more than 6 years in prostitution. The interview was conducted in her apartment in one sitting, over three and a half hours where we drank copious amounts of tea. I have known Siobhan for approximately one and a half years and we speak regularly. I approached her directly and asked her to participate in this research. This was my first ‘official’ interview with Siobhan and also the first interview of this research study. Siobhan’s interview was the longest of the interviews and she was extremely descriptive, offering vivid accounts of her memories and feelings throughout. I began the interview by asking Siobhan to begin her story before she entered into prostitution. Siobhan, in her first sentence of the interview, places herself at 32 years of age with her partner and she never mentions life before 32 years of age, other than she had a “good job, car, house” before this. I know a lot about Siobhan’s early life, but she never mentioned that part of her story in the interview.

Siobhan's experience before she entered into prostitution

Chaotic Partner

This interview began by me asking Siobhan to begin her story before she entered into prostitution. This question brought forth a long description about her ex-partner, who she met in her 30s, and the only person she mentions as a significant person in her life before she entered into prostitution as part of her family, besides her daughter and her father. She began,

I met someone, and they were clean of heroin and then they relapsed but I was mad about this person and I spent a long time trying to get them back.

Siobhan went on to explain how she tried to maintain her life, her ex-partner, her daughter, and her job. In fact in her first sentence the word “tried”, or “trying” was repeated several times. She emphasised her multiple roles as a good partner, a good mother, and a good worker. I got a sense that her life at the time was exhausting because of the substantial effort involved in maintaining her chaotic partner. She only ever refers to her partner in this way; “my ex, who was quite chaotic” “she relapsed quite chaotically” “she had got chaotic” “she was quite chaotic”. Eventually she describes how her personal boundaries shifted dramatically and conveys a picture of “crossing lines”;

...crossing lines in between that I never thought I would, in lending money for drugs buying methadone on the street that sort of thing, but eventually life was falling around.

She pin points this shift in her personal boundaries to a specific night when she lay in bed with her partner and Siobhan said to her,

[...] “look, you can smoke a bag before you go asleep”: because then I knew that she was not out in the car or wherever. But that's a big line to cross actually, when I think now, that you let your partner smoke a bag of heroin in the bed beside you, that's how many lines I actually crossed [...]

Rational

Thinking that this was the “rational thing to do”, Siobhan emphasised to me that she took heroin one night to help her sleep and within months explains that she found herself addicted with a “big problem”. Siobhan was 32 years of age at this stage with a young daughter. I asked Siobhan to explain how she came to the decision to enter in to prostitution and she skips ahead to a year later where she explains that she began to

inject cocaine but it was “a hell of a lot more expensive” and she “literally hadn’t a penny left”. She explained that it was her partner that suggested prostitution because she “had briefly been involved with the street some years before”. Her partner said “we could always, you know... do *that*”. Her reaction at the time was shock and she did not know how to respond to the suggestion and added, “It just seemed not even crazy, I don’t even have a word”. She repeated a number of times that at the time it “seemed the rational” or the “logical thing to do” in the context of her situation.

She did not remember exactly when the subject arose again, but a few nights later she was standing in her flat and “had those thoughts like, ““Oh my God, I’m gay”” and she worried because she had not been physically been with a man in “like, Jesus eleven years or something”. She did talk about her sexuality briefly but when it came to prostitution I got a sense that she was ambivalent about it, she said, “I’m gay it doesn’t matter”. However, she also explained with reference to her sexuality later in the interview, “if I used cocaine I could cut off what was going on *down there*”.

She recalled her first night preparing to go on the street in “a very drug altered state of mind” and she arrived over to her partner’s house with what she thought was sexy clothes,

I put them on, I looked in the mirror, I put tons of make up on, I injected a load of coke, I got in the car with (Partners Name), and I drove to the only street that I knew that was connected to prostitution in Dublin, everyone kind of knew it.

Siobhan’s experience during prostitution

Siobhan explains in detail her first night “standing on the street” and felt very self-conscious and did not know what to do. She explained that she just “stood there” but her partner directed her from her car and said, “no, walk up and down, because you look like you’re waiting for a bus”. Looking back Siobhan recalls her “naivety” not thinking about what would happen when a car did stop. Eventually, “a navy Merc, very beautiful car with a well-dressed man” stopped and she got inside. She recalls that she wasn’t nervous, as he had a nice car, was polite and had a nice voice. So they drove, and she explained that she panicked when he wanted sex and her “brain went “shite””. When he gave her a hundred euro’s she “laid back” and described how she felt “very awkward, humiliated, embarrassed and painful”. She described how she remained silent

throughout and never showed her worry or fear to the buyer and even though she “wanted to cry but couldn’t” she “didn’t make a sound”.

After this experience Siobhan rang her partner, who asked her how much she got paid, Siobhan replied;

“I got one hundred euro’s, but he wanted sex like”, and she was like “grand, great 100 euro’s”, but I was upset because she had missed the part of that sentence, she had missed the bit where I had to (short pause) she missed it, she didn’t hear it, she didn’t think about it, she never said “what would that have done or I’m your partner I’m the one who loves you”, that I had to (long pause) it went over her head.

She explained that she felt “broken” after that first night,

So I was broken hearted, so I always feel like something broke in me, I mean that night...I let the broken bit of me have control, I hadn’t a hope...

Miriam (pseudonym chosen for the street)

‘Miriam’, the name she chose for the street, is salient in Siobhan’s story including after she exited prostitution and she only ever speaks about her in the third person (although she realises this) and in glowing terms. “Miriam is the back bone I never had” she said. On the street Siobhan says, “I was Miriam”, but when she was home she was “completely mammy” and explained that she chose her pseudonym ‘Miriam’ after a positive person in her life who she loves. It was “attached to goodness” as she explained and hoped in some ways it would give her the “strength to cope”. She stressed the importance of her father in her decision and mentions him regularly in her story;

[...] obviously I didn’t want to use my real name because my father gave it to me and I love my father and no buyer was going to call me by the name my father had chosen for me.

I asked how she would prepare for the street and she said that by six o’clock in the evening she would get “very anxious and nervous” but she “would just step in to a role” and she would put the clothes on; a long black coat, put her boots in a bag “so no one would know” and that was it.

An episode stands out where Miriam and Siobhan becomes separate people and this was after an extremely traumatic experience of “the gang rape”, which she explained “had...a profound effect...on me...and my life since...”. In the hours following the rape, she caught a glimpse of herself in the mirror and said to herself,

“It didn’t happen to you, it happened to Miriam”, and that was it, something happened, then I took Miriam’s body home and spent three weeks repairing it and when it came to going back out, cos my drug habit increased to two bags a day, because I was haunted by what happened, but eh...but that was it from then on Miriam’s stuff became Miriam’s stuff, make up everything, everything was separate, everything.

After the rape, she explained her preparation to become Miriam changed, “[B]ut it was mainly my face”, she added; when preparing to become Miriam, Siobhan never completely saw herself in the mirror.

***Siobhan:** I had one of those Elizabeth Arden make up things, a small mirror and the makeup bit I would just do, ya know (rub the foundation in), and then I would do one eye in the mirror, and then the other eye, then move to the lips, and I never saw my full face...*

***Rebecca:** Purposely?*

***Siobhan:** Ye I never saw my full face, I never saw what Miriam looked like, I didn’t have a full mirror, I never caught a glimpse of my face, even during the day passing a window, I never looked at myself for nearly six years.... and that’s how I would prepare for Miriam, and then I would put on the wig, and once the wig was on then that was Miriam [...].*

The Hospital

Siobhan had an awareness that cocaine was “going to kill” her and recalls that she was “just fed up of life and everything” and signed herself in to a private hospital in an effort “to get away” from the street and her partner in April of 2004. Siobhan dedicates a substantial part of her story to her memory in the hospital and was at pains to stress how she was treated there. She expressed several times her isolation and “saw no one”, except her father who came to visit her in the hospital. Siobhan was four months in prostitution at this stage and explained that her daughter was struggling and her “family was a mess”. She describes in vivid detail her experience in the hospital, and explained that she had been a patient there before her involvement with prostitution and received the “best care you can ever imagine”. But this time it was different she said. This time she went in as a “junkie whore” and “got offered nothing”. At this stage in the interview Siobhan became upset. I asked her if she wanted to stop the interview, “No” she said, and explained to me that it just makes her upset and added, “it breaks my heart”. She did not want to stop the interview at this point and explained that it was because she could see “the dissatisfaction in the doctors face”, “I could feel it”, she added. Siobhan described that she was perceived as “the lowest of the low” by the staff at the hospital because “not even the people that had looked after me before wanted to know me now” she added.

Whilst in the hospital she began to work out that she “was leaving this place” and made a decision and a plan that she would end her life. She described to me how she ensured that her daughter was safe. She left no note, “I hadn’t the energy to write”, she said. She went on to explain in intricate detail how she left the hospital, accessed heroin and attempted to take her own life. Her attempt did not work however, and when she woke up “everything was white” and she had a sense that she “was in the clouds or something”. She was back in the hospital, but then a nurse pulled the curtain back and said to her in a cross voice,

“I hope it was worth it”, and then I just lost it. I couldn’t believe that I was still here. So I screamed and I cried and I lost it for about 24 hours. I cried so much, that my eyes... I couldn’t close them.

I asked her if the hospital staff had realised that she had attempted to take her life, and she said in a stern voice,

They did not care, nobody cared, nobody came near me, nobody, nobody..... they just watched me. I would have been just another dead drug addicted prostitute.

After this incident Siobhan recalls that they sent “some addiction counsellor who didn’t know me from Adam”, down to her bedside and said to her ““you used (heroin)” and I just said “no I didn’t use” [whisper]”. Siobhan left the hospital and continued her relationship with her partner and returned to Benburb Street. In April or May 2005 she moved to the Burlington Road, where she considered it to be “quieter not as chaotic, you know it would be known, I suppose as in street language as the upper class (laughs) side of the canal”.

Stigma related incidences (how she perceived the ‘public’ saw her)

I asked Siobhan if she employed strategies to protect herself from the physical involvement in prostitution, for example did she avoid kissing buyers or engaged in non-physical contact. No buyer ever looked for non-physical contact, she explained. Siobhan made it clear to me that she would “only ever kiss if it was more money” and added that if it meant she would get a few euro’s extra for a kiss she would give one, but stressed to me that,

They don’t like to kiss us, that’s my experience, they don’t like to kiss us, like I used to say, we were fit to fuck but we’re not fit to kiss. They kiss their wives; they kiss their mothers, their children, what ever...we’re not fit to kiss. So they rarely ask for kissing, they rarely, especially during sex, they rarely even put their face next or near your neck, your checks or your face or even attempt to kiss you, rarely, ever.

Did you consider it as work? I asked. She replied sternly, “I never saw it as a job, it was a means to an end but a horrible one it was a place that I hated to be, it was *not* work, you stand there”. I asked her if she always ‘stood on the street’ and she said that she went inside, briefly mainly in winter if it was cold, but never advertised on a site as she did not have a computer and knew that most of the indoor activities “were all controlled by pimps or madams” and added, “Jesus as little control I had over my life I wasn’t fucking going to give it to one of them bastards”. “Imagine”, she added, “being inside, Jesus what would it be like if all of us were trapped in a house together, no control, can you *imagine* how tense”.

I asked Siobhan about her experience regarding other people’s reactions to her whilst ‘standing on the street’. She explained that most of the time people would often look at her and the other women on the street “in a curious way or sometimes in a sad way”. She had the sense that maybe they were thinking, and said as she grimaced, “god love her, but sometimes it was like “*yuck*””. I asked her why she thought this might be and she replied,

Because we weren’t ‘women women’, we were predators, we were the sexually depraved, and we were the thing women must keep their good men from [...].

She remarked that these reactions were mainly from women,

Women tend to be more extremely wary of us, they might hold on to their handbag or hold on a little bit to their men, ye couples coming out, their arms would be linked but linked quite tightly or he will be moved into the inside, and my reaction to that kind of went from one thing to the other.

Her reactions to that went from sadness, to anger and hurt and she could not understand because as she said, “like it really hurt, because I never go looking for them they always come looking for us”. Women, she said, later in the interview, have their role to play in this also, as she points out,

I think I’ve only ever been called a whore by a woman, so they play their part, cos they also put us in that bracket of the sexually depraved and predators and sluts, like that’s the worst think a woman can say to a woman and they do.

Siobhan went on to casually described to me that sometimes people would often drive by and “shout, a word, you know a typical word, like whore, or slapper you know, junkie, you know just random words”. But one specific incident occurred in her story that stands out for both Siobhan and I; a group of young people came down in their cars with eggs and they laughed and throw eggs at her,

... they drove off laughing, and I remember thinking they actually don't see me as human. Yeah my dignity took a blow that night, and there was fuck all of it left to begin with. I don't know why I thought if I speak to them they might see me, but they didn't see me at all, they didn't care, I was just this piece of scum to make fun of.

Turning point

I asked Siobhan to explain her exit from prostitution and she explained, at that time she had spent five and a half years on the street and that she was incredibly exhausted and could not see any choices. She had enough; “my mind had had enough, my body had had enough and I was getting that sense of “I want out””. She was also reaching forty and never anticipated that she would still be on the street. It was only ever meant as a temporary measure, “a means to an end”. Siobhan “never kept it a secret” and did not hide her prostitution from her family but “never talked about it either”. She sheltered her daughter as long as she could, and it was not until she was 14 years old when she fully discovered that her mother was a prostitute.

However, Siobhan explained that she and her daughter were struggling at this point and she was actively seeking help for her but at this stage it seemed to her that “no one cared”. She made it clear to me that she was never under any illusion that her life was not affecting her daughter, and even though she was out there on the streets at home they,

weren't living in a drug haven, we lived a pretty ordinary life our apartment it was kept, it was clean, some of her friends would call, she was home schooled, the teacher was great and I got on well with her, so yeah, it was pretty... not like a mad chaotic house or anything it was quite the opposite, it was probably too much, me and her, me and her, all day every day, except for the nights that I went out, so we had formed a really kinda unhealthy attachment to each other, it was like us against the world kinda thing...so we rarely let anyone in, not that anyone was knocking at the door to get in (anxious laugh).

She anxiously described how she “had tried desperately to get (daughter's name) help... but nobody cared, that's what it seemed” and explained that she and her daughter were “quiet suspicious about the outside world” and went on to add, “I think I would have got more help or more support around her if I wasn't *what I was*”. She explained that *they* did not understand. “*They*”, I questioned, “the system, the health board, you know” she explained and was often “faced with, “look at your own life”, you know judgement”. *They* think, “what, you had this good job, car, house, blaa, blaa, blaa, and now you're a heroin addicted prostitute?”

Eventually her daughter did require inpatient care and it was during this time that she met a social worker who Siobhan describes as a catalyst in your decision to leave. Siobhan speaks about the social worker in positive terms, as someone who understood her and never judged her, never said that she had a choice to stand on the street and who was “smiley and friendly” and asked her

[...] “well, I want to know what life is like for you”, and I kind of looked at her and said to myself “what ya think it’s like?”. But I never answered her. And then she said, “what’s it like to be a mother, and watch her struggle and feel helpless?” And I just looked at her and she said “more importantly, what’s it like to be out there at night all alone?”...and...nobody...had..ever asked me that question. Maybe they would have said, ya know “sure you’re out there” and say it like I choose it and that I choose to stay there as if I had any choice at all. Nobody had asked me, what it was like to be there, and alone, nobody had ever said “alone”, cos I was so lonely, I was so alone.. [...] but I could see something in her eyes that was different, I could see compassion, she never judged me, never judged me [...]

Within 6 week of meeting the social worker, Siobhan stated that she “just had to trust that these people were in a better position to make decisions about my life than I was”. Siobhan left the street where she stood soon after in 2010 and worked with a team from [identifying material omitted], psychologists and supportive services for 18 months. She recalls the memories of this experience and the people involved in positive terms but tended not to take credit for her efforts in the course of her recovery from addiction or her efforts involved in exiting prostitution.

Experience after prostitution

‘Miriam’

I asked Siobhan if she still has a connection with Miriam, and she explained that she never really mentioned Miriam whilst recovering from her addiction at the hospital. But for a long time after she kept the skirt, tops and the boots she wore as Miriam. Miriam is a recurring theme again in this stage of Siobhan’s life and explains, again in great detail, how she returned back to the street some 18 months after she left, as she “wanted absolute closure with Miriam and the street” and described in detail her account of that night;

So I got out of the car and I walked in, cos I used to get dressed in the first house in the side where they used to be an old entrance and there was a shore there where I used to go to the loo and there was steps where I used to leave my other clothes there or sit down and take a break or read my book. So I walked in there, and I could smell it, and I took out Miriam’s boots from the bag and I left them there, and I sat down on the steps and I had a few words with her about life and whatever and then I cried....

Eventually she threw out the skirt and kept the red lipstick, but could not and does not think she will ever throw out Miriam's wig, and added,

... and it's rare but if I ever feel a sense of loneliness or confusion or whatever I have taken out Miriam's wig and hold it and smell it and I feel safe so I still have it, I think I'll be buried with it, I'll never throw it out.

I got a sense that she was still quite fond of Miriam, and asked her if she was, and she smiled and replied "ah yeah", and went on to explain,

If somebody says something too painful or difficult to say, like the gang rape or something, well I'll say "well that's Miriam", it's just that I pass it on to her, or on the other hand, if someone is being really complimentary, or something, or saying like "your incredible", I'll think "ahhh"; it makes me uncomfortable so I'll give it to Miriam. Miriam is the back bone I never had. So I'll pass on the praise, cos it was Miriam as such. But I know that she is me (laugh) which is quite odd cos she's tough, or if someone says something quiet painful, but I know it's me. But I'll do that just to get me through something, ya know!

She sees her fate as different now "my future was set and it was an incredible one" she said and is proud that "only two years" since she walked off the street she entered into "the university of her dreams" and explained how important this was to her as she felt accepted "these people want me" she said. I wondered and asked her if she took credit for this achievement or did she pass it on to Miriam, and she laughed and said "no, I took it, I took it".

Wanting

Throughout Siobhan's story she demonstrates clear memories of her friends on the street and always spoke about them in positive terms but who were in desperate circumstances. This repeats itself when she talks about them again and "wanting to go back" after she left, but felt helpless that she could not and stressed that she "wanted people to see my friends as human"; conveying the idea that people do not. She poignantly explained to me her last night on the street when she went back with Miriam's boots, and reminded me again that she was sitting on the step, she was thinking,

"... if I get out, and stay out and remained sane, I would tell whoever". I didn't know how, who or where, but I wanted to go back for them. I left a lot of good women behind, they were so brave and strong, but damaged, all alone and it isn't fair.

So have you found a good balance in your life now? I asked, "Yeah, ya know shit happens" she said "shit does happen okay", I replied, and we both laughed. And you

still laugh and smile, I questioned. “Yes” she said, “and I still love” and went on to describe what she wants for her future,

I just want people to see why it's wrong. In the first few years when I was in it, I didn't want to be angry and remain angry my whole life and I didn't want to fall into a state of victimhood where everything from missing the bus would be a tragedy, so I had to find a place in the middle, and I think I have found that place.

Stigma related incidences

She explained that it definitely took 18 months to get a sense of who she was after she left prostitution. But a difficulty that Siobhan highlighted was that she had to “come out all over again”; and she did that some 20 years previous. Some people did know about her past, she explained, as the gay scene is quiet small, but gets “the odd comment, like a sideways comment” about her past. She tends to just ignore such comments and now has a “very healthy group of friends, who know me, who I trust”.

Even though she explained that she “ignores such comments” she believes it is because she is a “former prostitute” and explains that because of this she would be “overly conscious” or sensitive. Because of this she explains that she has maintained many of the skills that she picked up whilst in prostitution that protect her from the “sideways comments” directed at her;

I can spot human behaviour, like manipulation pretty quickly. I know when someone is being delicate around me, I know when someone is being insincere, I know when someone is making with me a 'utility friendship' or when someone wants to suck my story and pass it on to someone else. Sometimes I let myself slip but for the most part, life is pretty good now, yeah..

Her level of awareness of manipulative people is seen by Siobhan as an advantage. She has a good group of “healthy friends” who she trusts but the last sentence of the interview “sometimes I let myself slip” is an indication of the effort to cover up, maintain and protect her identity 5 years since she exited prostitution.

4.2: Ava's Story

I can't keep secrets like that because it's so much a part of my identity in my past. So, I'd have to tell them anyway and who wants to be with a former hooker.

Ava, the second woman who participated in this research was 21 when she started to escort until she was almost 25 years of age. I was introduced to Ava a few weeks prior to my interview with her. Both Ava and I spoke and after a while Ava asked me if she could participate. For a few weeks before the interview we spoke and Ava kindly invited me to her home.

We sat in her kitchen drinking tea, as her dog nested in his bed. I began by asking Ava if she would like to start her story and said, "I'd like to know a little bit about what your life was like before you entered into prostitution, your time during it and essentially, we want to focus on the time after. So, if you just want to start - or explain to me some bit about your early life". She began her story, placing herself at 16 years of age.

Ava's experience before prostitution

Throughout Ava's story she gives fleeting accounts of her early life, "so life was normal" "normal, normal, normal" she reiterated. She is the "youngest of lots of kids" was a student "like everybody else, struggling but I wasn't like *poor*" she explained. Everything was "[N]ormal.....I had a boyfriend and everything, like everything was normal ya know". At 16 Ava recalled coming into contact with a "man in his 30s".

The Man in his 30s

In a very quiet voice Ava described that she "had a sexual encounter that wasn't great"; that happened when she was 16 when she met a man in his "mid-thirties" and dedicated the greatest amount of time explaining his role in her life before she entered into prostitution. "it was a mobile phone situation" and he contacted her from time to time and did not meet him face to face for sometime. Eventually they would meet "sporadically over the years" and he would always pay her. "It's amazing how things come back to you", she commented later,

He wasn't looking for sex, he had...he was...had a certain desire let's say. It wasn't sex but it involved hurting, hurting me physically. So...and doing things and...he'd take photos and make sneaky videos, you know - that type of thing.

The pain that he inflicted on her she said was not her idea “it was his” and she did not realise what a prize she was, “he would pay me. I'd no idea how much he wanted to hold onto me at all like, I didn't have a clue. It was awful now thinking back”. Ava wanted to make it clear that this was *not* prostitution, or a relationship: “it was separate thing”,

but it wasn't prostitution cos I wasn't selling sex. And in my mind I wasn't selling anything, I was just...there.

Blurred Lines

So I wanted to be clear, about my confusion of when she began escorting and asked Ava to clarify my confusion and prompted her to explain further. “This isn't prostitution now what I'm talking about; I have to make that clear. Everything that happened with the man in his 30s was “*not* prostitution” she insisted. So you see it as separate then? I questioned. “*Totally separate*”, she said. “There was no selling of sex going on there, *no*”. “He never took his dick out”, she said. But “if you have to pay a girl so you can beat her with a belt, what would you call it?” she asked. What should I call it? I questioned. “[I]t was exploitation I guess is the best word for it, I guess. I dunno what else to call it” she replied. She explained again that this was a “sporadic thing” that he was,

just in the background. He was never a big feature in my life. But I didn't realise the impact of what had happened until much later when I started looking back to all the prostitution happened after that and thinking, holy god, that's why that happened, d'you know and realising that....

But, I just got the sense now that Ava feels somehow to blame for her past situation with the man in his 30s; “he did nothing illegal”, “I was willingly there”, “he never took his dick out”, “[S]o I was real colluding in my own abuse”, she said later. She had the thought that it “did not feel traumatising”, it was just something that she did from time to time; it was an “*extra bit*” of her life. She *never* liked him, “he's a *horrible man* but - to put it mildly- but I just kind of went along with it cos that's what I kinda did anyway in life in general; just went along with other people”, she added. Sometimes she would contact him and say “*hi*”, she feels that she has to “come to terms with that” because she does not know why *that* happened. Perhaps, she said “he had no awareness of his own

power or else he really did - *I don't know*"; she is still, it felt to me, painstakingly working out all these questions in her head.

Ava describes that the lines blurred at 21 years of age and described her "turning point" when she was sent by the 'man in his 30s' to meet his friend, an old man in a hotel room; "he had the same interest let's say, as this other guy" she added. "[A]nd this guy, he did things and it wasn't OKAY but I wasn't able to say "this isn't OKAY" because he was paying me". She described later again, "I was just...there. I wasn't even a person".

The other guy; the old man was so disgusting - I remember hearing him wanking behind me. He was horrible. That was kinda traumatic cos I only ever said OKAY, I'll be there, you can hurt me, pay me and I'll leave, that's fine but this was him wanking behind me. He positioned me and then wanked and I could hear him and it was awful. That was not nice at all because it wasn't within our weird little agreement, d'you know.

At this point in Ava's life she describes that there was a "crossover" and started escorting. She does not remember how it started; again it seemed "blurry". She did not know how it (prostitution) happened to her. "Because there's a blurring" she said.

I don't remember, I don't remember the ...I don't know how the idea of it popped up. It just seemed to happen to me and then I was doing it. That's how it seems. I don't remember the choice that I made. I don't remember going, "ya know what, I'll give it a shot". Like, I probably did have that thought but I don't remember having it at all. And then I was just suddenly doing this (escorting). It was bizarre like.

Both Ava and I reflected for a short time, and she concluded her description reaching the age of 21 by summing up her experience with the "man in his 30s" and the old man and "it was awful, like, it was awful...". She pointed out that this was definitely a turning point for her, and said, "and I...until I'm saying it now, I didn't really realise that". "I think", she said "I'd learned that I could tolerate a lot of pain and a lot of shit and still live a normal life". Somewhere in the "middle of getting rid" of the man in his 30s she "started in prostitution - they kinda crossed over. Because there's a blurring", she said again.

I think my body and my mind had started separating so that I kind of - I don't know, you just became kind of numb or something...it doesn't matter, it's just my body - that kind of thing.

Experience during prostitution

Emotional Management

Ava begins this part of her story in or "around 2004", "not so much of a child basically" as she says. She was almost 21 years of age and she wants to be referred to at this time

as an escort, again reiterating that it “just happened” but could not remember how exactly it happened, “its blurry” she said:

I dunno how it happened; I dunno how it started. I dunno how (long pause). I don't remember putting an ad online. I don't remember researching it. I don't remember anything at all. I remember clients ringing my phone and being like, holy god, they won't stop calling, d'you know?

She explained how she kept this part of her life “completely secret”, escorting independently on a part-time basis whilst maintaining her college course. Addiction was *never* an issue. She explained that she was “completely an independent escort” and she maintained her life and would stop escorting if she was in a relationship. She never brought the escorting in to her “normal life” but felt that she was living two lives, “they were split” she explained. Escorting was her “own choice” and at the time seemed like it was never a major feature in her life; it was she said “totally background noise”. Escorting gave her “[W]hat’s the word.....instant gratification; self-esteem boost”, that's what it was, she said. How do I refer to the person who was paying you? I asked. “[a] punter”, she said.

I asked Ava if she felt safe or if she maintained her safety when with a punter, and she explained that she “never felt unsafe”. However, she did mention that she felt “emotionally unsafe” whilst escorting. She would get the feeling sometimes when with a punter “a sense of keep an eye out”. Sometimes a punter would be aggressive, hold her throat, or pull her hair and she used to gauge their intentions and “think for a second, “watch this one””. She recalled how she used to be “constantly thinking”, “adapting” and “reading the tone of a room or a tone of people (that were in it) and then being able to influence it”. She was, she said,

constantly adapting; constantly monitoring the tone of the session as it goes along. If you sense a shift, adjusting to balance it again. And it's for your own protection. Even during sex you'd be doing it constantly.

“It wasn’t about me getting control of the situation” she added later “it was like if a shy guy comes in I’m gonna be super gentle, and super kind and super friendly and I’m a naturally empathic person anyway”.

Acting

Ava could gauge if a punter was a dominant person and explained “you wouldn’t wanna challenge that”. “It’s all acting”, she explained and “of course you’d be acting very

submissive”. On the other hand if a punter “was a real nerdy, loser kind of guy, you’d be really friendly and happy and try to boost him up”. Not all the punters were bad she explained, some were “normal”, even the “nerdy ones”, but the married ones, well that’s another story. Whoever they were, “[T]hey were always in control, even the nerdy ones. Always”. So she explained that she always monitored the situation, she was “always watching” to keep it safe, because as she explained,

a dominating man and a nerdy, loser guy; whatever, they’re not....it’s not like one is OKAY and one isn’t, it’s just adjusting to him to keep it OKAY and to make sure he’s happy.

Ava explained that she would “pretend” to be “super happy and super confident and super friendly” and play “a bigger version of [herself]”. But in a contemplative tone of voice said that sometimes the punter would see through it, “or they would catch you out” she said. The punters were all men and as she spoke images “popped back” in to Ava’s mind and she remembered the “mental game(s)” punters used to play where they would push her boundaries. For instance she remembered, one man “totally unfriendly, ugly, old, gross little man”, he was so “unclean” and in visceral disbelief remembered thinking “how could you have that audacity to go see a girl, a human girl with your dick looking like that?”. She described the scene, “[I]t was just disgusting the whole tip of it was all crusty and horrible”. As she recounted her story, images flood in to my mind and both our noses crinkled. Then “there was this other guy”, she said who would not put on a condom and described it as a “battle”,

but he kept trying to shove it in and he kept doing it and I was like "STOP" and I would squirm away from him and he was just laughing, and I was saying "stop it's not funny , use a condom, use a condom" and he wouldn't stop.

Ava did not know at the time if he was “chancing his arm” or using this opportunity as a “power trip”, but it certainly felt like a power trip to her, she said. I felt exhausted as she continued, but Ava carried on, her voice gathered pace. In these incidences Ava did not get “aggressive” because as she explained, “you don't want to get too aggressive, because you don't know what they are going to do”. In moments like these she would “do what he says, do what he says, or keep him happy, or keep him, toe the line”. So I encouraged Ava to tell me some more and explain why she described it as acting;

You have to act; if you were yourself you'd be destroyed. That's what they like is when you're being yourself – when they sense you're being yourself. They like that cos they don't want to fuck a “thing”,

they want to fuck a person, but the problem is if you're being yourself then you're just gonna hurt yourself emotionally so yeah, you have to protect yourself by acting for sure.

So, “you were acting, playing a role as an escort”? I asked and she explained

[...] you identify yourself as an escort and then you have your escort persona let's say and then you are just that, depending on who your client of the day is.

“But it was a façade”, she explained later.

Had Enough

Ava was almost 25 years of age at this stage and explained that she had “had enough”, and felt that she could not do escorting anymore. She did not need the money she earned from escorting and would spend it on “frivolous crap” just to “get rid of it quickly”. Was there a specific event or a light bulb moment that occurred that influenced your decision to exit? I asked, and she responded “I don't wanna use the word exiting – it seems weird for me. I stopped doing it”. However, she went on to explain that the punters were increasingly “pushing boundaries” and requesting services she was not prepared to give and she was beginning to “watch out” more. She explained how difficult it was to say “no” as she said,

because if you've been paid its very difficult to say no to anything or its very difficult to change or go back or to say actually " I don't want to do that anymore", once you have agreed- I'll do this act- and then they start doing it, and you're like "actually I don't want to do that then you can't change your mind then and if you do, he'll write a really mean review about you anyway, so..

Ava stopped escorting but described throughout her story how leaving was difficult as she wanted to go back and for some years after had major issues with wanting to; “I call it the pullback – wanting to be involved again”, she explained,

I didn't want to leave that identity behind, so I clung on to it, and that I think is what makes it difficult when you want to leave and makes you go back again cos you don't want to lose that bit of yourself, ya know that kinda way?

Experience after prostitution

Skin, body, head and brain

Throughout our conversation we skip intermittently through time, and throughout she describes her disassociation from her skin, her body, her head, and her brain. Sometimes she has moments and wants to “crawl out of [her] skin”.

Even now, I have to remind myself that like, the skin I have now - we shed our skin so it's not the same that he touched; that anyone.....Just to remind myself that I'm not like, what's the word, infected by him or like, d'you know.....

We both agreed that this is a good thing to remember, “it’s so true” I said “we are always regenerating ourselves”. But I felt that the dissociation between her body and her mind is a huge thing because she explained that she panics and “freak(s) out constantly” about,

having a jaw or having skin or having a head, ya know I just freak out constantly about having a body in general. I can't believe that I have a body sometimes. I just like to be a floating head and if I could just be a head that would be fine, or a brain.

But the consequences of escorting are “getting smaller”, and she reminds herself every day that everyone else is okay with *their* bodies; “it’s not such a big drama in my life any more. Its smaller, but it’s still there niggling away”.

Dilemma

She told me how she is “learning how relationships are not transactional and that’s pretty huge learning”. But Ava explained, that she can “pretend to have a happy time but eventually this (escort) will take it away”. “[W]hats the point she said in continuing”, the guy might be nice but she thinks when in a relationship they might find out about her past, as she said,

because I can't keep secrets like that because it's so much a part of my identity in my past. So, I'd have to tell them anyway and who wants to be with a former hooker.

Ava went on to describe her fears about her escorting “that it will come out eventually”, “somebody will be mean and it will come out” she said. As we spoke about this part of her life I asked her if this was a dilemma, but then I thought about it and apologised and said, “that’s not a great word because it makes it sound smaller than it is”. “But it *is* a dilemma” Ava replied “It’s a big dilemma and it’s daily and I don’t know what to do”. Her past is secret, her fear is palpable, to tell or not to tell, someday somebody will say something, she does not want to hurt her family, she does not want to be known as a “former escort”, “it’s such a stigmatised identity” she explained. If she ‘comes out’ she feels that that’s what she will be known as *this*, “people will be curious, they have their own ideas, from movies and make up ideas of what a prostitute is”. She questions herself constantly over and over during our talk, “would it be worth it to cause so much harm to my family and to stigmatise myself like that, to give myself that identity is it

worth it?” She is “terrified” “in turmoil” constantly thinking “what to do, what to do,*all the time*”.

Regarding post-prostitution stigma, “It’s the small things that matter”, she said. Some years after she stopped escorting she returned back to a woman’s health project and recalls a weird interaction”,

there was a doctor – I went there a few times because I had an abnormal smear thing and I had to go back and get another one [...] I was super nervous and I was getting on the bed thing and she kinda laughed at me for being nervous. I’m sure she meant no harm; she just kind of tried to reassure me. You know if someone is nervous – especially when you know that I used to be a fucking hooker, you might want to be nice and reassure them and say “don’t worry, it’ll be over in a minute” or whatever but instead she was like, “Oh are you nervous? You seem very nervous”. And I was like “yeah, I’m nervous. Of course I’m nervous”. But it was just a weird interaction; it was very strange. Ya know, somebody working in that area wouldn’t be super kind.

“that stigma”

“How do you describe yourself now”, I asked, “as a survivor, a former escort, former prostituted women?” Ava said that she does not “like the term prostituted woman”; and I was not expecting her to say that. Why so? I questioned. It makes her feel like she “has no limbs”, she said, as if she was not able to make decisions; that’s how she feels. She is not “comfortable with survivor” either. But does not really care how she is identified, “as long as no one calls [her] a sex worker”. “There is a lot of grieving going on” for Ava. I felt that there were so many identities lost and new ones to gain; and not all of them were something Ava wanted;

a former escort, as a survivor or whatever and that was kind of annoying as well, because people have their own ideas of what that kind of person is, so your battling that as well. I’m telling people “please don’t say I’m prostituted”.

If someone was mean and exposed her she is anxious and she “wouldn’t just be AVA” she said. And then there’s the thing she said,

I’m a sexual violence survivor as well, and generally in a normal life I think there is such a power in breaking through that stigma and saying “yeah, what of it?”

Seven years since she has stopped escorting and after “lots of therapy” she is starting to “figure out her role” and sorting out “all those little mini-roles you take with different people”. She is “trying to be more of a whole person”, slowly integrating all the different parts of herself, “bringing all the different parts” of herself “back together again”. She is pleasing *herself* more, trusting *her* gut, conquering slowly *her* need not to

people please so much. She looks lovingly at her dog, “I am dog owner first and foremost” she said, and a writer. And she wants to be known as Ava.

4.3: Conclusion of Findings

Throughout each woman’s story their memories were vivid as they replayed their experience of prostitution and how stigmatisation has played a part in how they identify themselves at present. Their stories span many years and social settings and the passage of time has not softened their recollections of the many abuses they have experienced. Both Siobhan and Ava had significant turning points in their lives which triggered their decision to leave. Most commonly their decision was due to an accumulation of abuses from buyers, episodes of rape and an increasing level of violence, exhaustion and stigmatisation. Nevertheless, they had “had enough” and negotiated their exit, Siobhan with support and Ava “just stopped doing it”. Their turning point signified a shift in the course of their life, both towards education. However, both women still continue to feel the effect of prostitution and “that stigma” continues to affect them many years after their exit which impacts on their lives in various ways.

Both women refer to themselves when talking about this issue, as former prostitute, survivor of prostitution, former escort, or sexual violent survivor. However, both are steadfast that nobody refers to them as former sex workers. As Siobhan stated it was not work, “you just stand there” and Ava who escorted independently indoors, explained when with a punter she “was just...there”. Their stories were difficult to listen to and at times challenging for me due to the descriptions of the levels of violence that they received. Regardless, both the women and I considered this an important challenge to overcome. The process of content analysis, whilst difficult and complicated at times, has allowed me to focus and to re-story their account of how prostitution and stigmatisation has affected them now and to analyse if stigmatisation has shaped or affected their identity in their daily lives. Themes which emerged from each woman’s story are different, reflecting their individuality, and also reflected in the time that has elapsed since they have left. Both women faced daily battles, abuse and inhumane treatment from buyers and intolerance and degrading treatment from the general public. Both women negotiated their way through prostitution, in various ways, from keeping it a secret, to the use of pseudonyms selected purposely because it was a name that was attached to goodness. Regardless of where they were physically located, indoors or

outdoors, both women continue to experience emotional pain from their experience in prostitution many years after they have left.

After I wrote each story, I contacted each woman individually and asked them if they would like to read their story, and if they wanted to check it for errors, or if anything that I written made them feel uncomfortable or identifiable before the final report was written. Minor details were changed for clarification purposes at their request. Both women were asked to participate in the analysis, and both contributed to varying levels. From our conversations after they commented that they appreciated that their story, whilst strange to read, was written in the way that it was. Both women were comfortable that their stories be analysed

Chapter Five: Analysis

I'm a sexual violence survivor as well, and generally in a normal life I think there is such a power in breaking through that stigma and saying "yeah, what of it?"

(Ava)

Introduction

In this chapter I will merge the major themes that have arisen from each woman's individual story in the findings chapter. The themes which I have chosen to analyse reflect my research question and represent their cumulative experience of prostitution and stigmatisation with a focus on *after* the women have exited. The themes that will be analysed in this chapter are as follows:

- ***Theme 1: The continual, de-humanising nature of the stigmatisation process.***
- ***Theme 2: Social reactions during prostitution and internalisation overtime.***
- ***Theme 3: Strategies used that protect the 'Self' from stigma and the long term adverse effects of post-prostitution stigmatisation for the individual.***

Both women's experience will be analysed with reference to the literature. From the literature review it was argued that the term stigma whilst widely cited is commonly associated with "an attribute that is deeply discrediting" (Goffman 1963, p.13). This misrepresentation of stigma has resulted in a scholarly gap in the literature and the assumption that stigma is an individual trait difference, owned by the stigmatised, rather than an experience forced on them by prevailing social and cultural conditions (McCordic 2012). The current understanding of stigma tries to capture what a stigmatised group is. Rationally, any group can be stigmatised however some groups are more stigmatised than others (Link and Phelan 2001). Therefore, stigma will be defined for the analysis as follows: stigma is determined to exist as a matter of degree and only "where elements of labelling, stereotyping, separating, status loss and discrimination co-occur in a power situation that allows these processes to unfold" (Link and Phelan 2001, p.382). Taken together, stigmatisation of the individual is a complex process consisting of these five elements (Green et al 2005). For the prostituted woman in Ireland stigma is a well-established part of a historical legacy of women's oppression. It will be argued

that her stigma persists long after she has exited prostitution, affecting the individual, the structures and the people that surround her.

Theme one: The continual, de-humanising nature of the stigmatisation process.

Conceptually, stigma is determined to exist as a matter of degree and only “where elements of labelling, stereotyping, separating, status loss and discrimination co-occur in a power situation that allows these processes to unfold” (Link and Phelan 2001, p.382). The first element in the stigmatisation process describes *labelling and the creation of differences*, and “the recognition of differences and the assignment of social salience to those differences” (Green et al 2005, p.197). Secondly, stereotypical differences become undesirable by others and salient negative attributes such as prostitution, become socially unacceptable. *Separation* “occurs when the reaction of others to these differences lead to a pronounced sense of “otherness” (Green et al 2005, p.198). The fourth element experienced by women in prostitution is *discrimination and status loss*. This immediately occurs when a person is discriminated against because of their negative difference. Finally, those in power tend to have more influence than those who are negatively evaluated. This *power differential* allows the previous element to unfold and keeps those considered different, in, down or away from economic and social resources (Link and Phelan 2014). Taken together, stigmatisation of the individual is a complex process consisting of these five elements (Green et al 2005).

The de-humanisation that both women received from the separation component of stigmatisation was clearly evident in their stories as Ava remembered when with a punter in a hotel room, “I was just...there. I wasn't even a person”, and Siobhan, when standing on the street who stated “I remember thinking they actually don't see me as human”. According to McCordic (2012) and Goffman (1963) those who are stigmatised are discriminated against and stigma can be used by those in power to propagate prejudicial ideologies about such ‘other’ groups and can state sanction ways to curb their growth (McCordic 2012). This discrimination has far reaching implications including dehumanisation of a stigmatised group or person and as a result can be used by institutions of power to justify the incitement of violence (McCordic 2012). To be shunned, singled out, or mistreated are all examples of the separation component of the stigmatisation process (Green et al 2005) and are all evident in Siobhan's story, for example,

... they drove off laughing, and I remember thinking they actually don't see me as human. Yeah my dignity took a blow that night, and there was fuck all of it left to begin with. I don't know why I thought if I speak to them they might see me, but they didn't see me at all, they didn't care, I was just this piece of scum to make fun of

(Siobhan)

As Green et al (2005) noted, such pronounced reactions from society cause the separation of 'us and them', accumulating in a devaluing process, where the person is viewed as less than human (Green et al 2005).

According to Weitzer (2005) Siobhan's high level of 'felt and enacted' stigmatisation was due to her remaining outside or 'tolerance zones' (Raymond 2013) and streets in Ireland that are mentioned in this study that are "reserved for prostitutes" (Rolph ND, cited in Goffman 1963, p.104). Weitzer (2013) Oselin (2010) and Oselin and Weitzer (2005) also argue that data shows that the lower strata of prostitutes or street prostitutes, receive the highest levels of stigma, whereas indoor workers are more publicly tolerated. Oselin (2010) particularly argues that those who work outdoor are often considered to experience a higher level of stigma. Furthermore, Ashforth and Kreiner note (1999) that outdoor prostitution appears to have multiple dimensions of stigmatisation. As Reeve's (2013, p.826) study of the prostitute who is homeless and has a drug habit explains, "I'm a homeless, smack head, prostitute; it doesn't get much worse than that" (Reeve 2013, p.826). Siobhan also experienced stigma on multiple levels. Due to her visibility on the street, her obvious signs of drug use and her "known-about-ness" (Goffman 1963, p.65) regarding her prostitution she explained she received daily humiliation and degradation by passers-by.

However, elements of the stigmatisation process, such as separation, status loss and discrimination continued into Siobhan's private world also; far away from the street on which she stood. Such elements occurred when the reactions from others went beyond benign social awkwardness towards her (Green et al 2005). For example, 'the hospital' where Siobhan looked for support but felt that she was perceived as the "the lowest of the low" and described that she felt they perceived her as a "junkie whore". Theories of reflective appraisals also support the notion that individuals do learn to see themselves based on society's perceptions of them (Rahim 2010). Cooley's (1902) 'the looking glass self' for example theorised that the self arises dialectically and that we "unconsciously develop or mood our self on the basis of our communication with

society”, thus affecting how the individual thinks, feels and acts (Rahim 2010, p.10). Ashforth and Kreiner (1999, p.417) look to the social identity theory that postulates, “Individuals seek to enhance their self-esteem through their social identities” and for the most part grounded in the perceptions of others. As Link and Phelan (2001) explain, if one believes that ‘others’ will reject them based on society’s stereotypical view of a stigma, (such as prostitution), they will have an expectation and a fear that they will be devalued also. Siobhan also remembered how she could “feel” and “see” the dissatisfaction from the doctor and other staff members. Although she felt “entitled to be there”, she was devalued and discriminated against because of her involvement with prostitution, and as a result did not receive the treatment that she was entitled to. As Siobhan described,

[...] they didn't really want me in the hospital but they couldn't really put me out because I had medical insurance, I had been there twice before, I had been his patient for 14 years, so I was kind of entitled to be there, but they weren't about to engage with any help as such because it's a private hospital I came in as a junkie whore and that's nuts.

As Koken (2012) explains, this example has had significant and very real consequences for Siobhan’s health and safety, “not even the people that had looked after me before wanted to know me now” she said, which accumulated in leading her to attempt to take her own life. Even after she has exited prostitution, many years later, this memory is her most powerful and extreme scenario of stigmatisation; “it breaks my heart”, she said.

The devaluing stigmatisation process, as explained by Link and Phelan (2001) show how people in power generally have influence to ensure that the original label is sustained in the culture; ensure the stereotype is kept in place, so that the designation sticks, becomes accepted and recognised by the culture; have the power to separate us from them and maintain the distinction. Finally, those in power have control of major institutions such as education, health, housing, employment and may confer stigma so that such groups have limited access to those institutions. As argued, the Irish State adds to the oppression of women. In her judgment, Ms. Justice O’Malley ruled that the Gardai had failed on a number of grounds to assist a Vietnamese woman who has been trafficked into the state for the purposes of exploitation, which led to her imprisonment for over two and a half years (P. v The Chief Superintendent 2015). As Link and Phelan (2001, p.375) argue, “It takes power to stigmatise” and the role of power in the social production of stigma *is* important to understand. If these elements can be found with the combination and influence of a dominant ideal of those in power who maintain it, the

stigmatised status of the group or individual will be maintained in society, and the individual will bear the consequences of that stigma (Link and Phelan 2001)

Siobhan pointed out that she never went looking for punters, they always came to her. However, as the previous analysis shows us, Irish society assigned prostitution to women (Luddy 2007) separating them into a separate class from other women, and then the same society went on and stigmatised them (Ashforth and Kreiner 1999). Siobhan feels that she was, and still is, put in a bracket of the “sexually deprived”,

Because we weren't 'women women', we were predators, we were the sexually deprived, and we were the thing women must keep their good men from [...].

However, Siobhan still receives remarks and feels particularly hurt, especially those from “other women”,

I think I've only ever been called a whore by a woman, so they play their part, cos they also put us in that bracket of the sexually deprived and predators and sluts, like that's the worst think a woman can say to a woman and they do.

Furthermore, Ava escorted exclusively indoors and her escorting, as she said, was “a huge secret; it was a huge secret. Big time”. She kept her escorting completely “separate from [her] normal life” but received, as Luddy (2007) suggests, “horrific treatment” from the hands of men who bought her. Koken’s (2012) study of active independent women escorts advertising online, found that fear of being labelled a prostitute was a concern for many. Similar to Ava, women in Koken’s research also had concerns about their involvement in sex work as it had marked them for life, separated them from “normal’s and limited their options for careers and relationships” (Koken 2012 p.216).

Theme 2: Social reactions during prostitution and internalisation overtime.

‘Enacted stigma’, can be described as “episodes of discrimination against people with the stigmatised condition on the grounds of their social and cultural unacceptability” (Wong et al 2011, p.51). ‘Felt stigma’ refers to the shame of being with the stigmatised group along with the fear of encountering enacted stigma (Wong et al 2011). Both women in this research experienced physical and sexual assaults from buyers and/or the general members of the public. Siobhan especially received the greatest level of ‘felt and enacted stigma’ whilst ‘standing on the street’; describing the “typical” remarks that were made by passersby; words, like whore, slapper, junkie and sluts, “you know just random words”. Another, when she was hit in the face and body with eggs. Siobhan

remembers how degraded she felt “[Y]e my dignity took a blow that night, and there was fuck all of it left to begin with” she stated.

Many Female Sex Workers (FSWs) in Wong’s et al (2011) study also described similar situational factors where they had been subjected to enacted stigma, with various forms of abuse from clients or members of the public (Wong et al 2011). Degrading language was often mentioned by participants in Wong et al’s (2011) study and included words, such as dirty, shameful or the use of ‘hen’ (a colloquial Cantonese expression, derived from a comparison of picking up worms). Such unwanted terms and insults are patriarchal stereotypical labels and judgments of women in prostitution (Tomura 2011) and are similar to descriptions explained by participants in FitzGerald and O’Rourke (2011). FitzGerald and O’Rourke (2011) analysed how young men in particular consume Irish newspaper coverage of prostitution. Men in this study used words such as ‘invasion’ or ‘swarms’ to describe women in prostitution (FitzGerald and O’Rourke 2011); resonating back to Luddy’s (2007) depiction of prostitution in the 1800s and 1900s and the link to contagion and contamination in Ireland. Given the fact that many believed the popular idea that prostitution was both morally and physically contagious Luddy (2007) explains that women were also seen as a possible site for contagion they were also constructed as melancholy victims, an object of pity, and a source of amusement (Luddy 2007). Women, convicted of prostitution were often portrayed as villainous characters or abandoned females in local newspapers (Luddy 2008). For many women who were highly marginalised their survival behaviour was criminalised; offences for which men were never convicted (Belknap 2010). Articles written between the years 1910-1939, in *The Journal of Criminal Law*, typically acknowledged such “offending women” as victims, however indicated them in a veiled manner, as highly marginalised, with limited education and poor health (Belknap 2010, p.1061). This powerful stigma and stereotype associated with women is an influential tactic and “a powerful source of social separation” in the stigmatisation process (Green et al 2005, p206) used to keep people in, down or away from economic recourses as Link and Phelan (2001) explain. Such descriptions, as Tomura (2011) argues, imply that women who are associated with prostitution are immoral, dangerous, or weak and indicates that the person is not worthy of human rights.

The levels of violence, exploitation and abuse that the women experienced were evident throughout each woman's story and especially heightened during their time in prostitution. They described how this violence and stigmatisation occurred at multiple levels by men which affected them in numerous ways, such as physical, psychological, emotional, financial and cultural. However, the accumulation of such effects combined with social stigma and negative reactions from others are, as Tomura (2011) suggests, internalised over time and can negatively affect the individual. As McCray et al (2011, p.744) also suggest "the degree in which an individual is immersed in the deviant role or job affects the salience of the spoiled identity". Both women remained in prostitution for a significant length of time; Siobhan for almost 6 years and Ava for more than 4 years. In Cobbina and Oslein's (2011) research time spent in prostitution is also a significant factor, as the greater period spent increased the "toll" on women, all accumulating in more frequent violent encounters, exhaustion, heightened stigma, difficulties in family relationships; all common experiences of both women in this research. Such long term negative effects of stigma are explained by Tomura (2011, p.32) in her research and shows that many active 'sex workers' described that their stigma was always present by expressing, "it's just something you can't undo". Sallmann (2010) also describes that many participants in her research, although no longer engaged in prostitution, defined themselves by their prior activities. As one participant explained, "I sold my body. For a long time ... it doesn't go away" (Sallmann 2010, p.153). Prostitution to her was not a temporary activity even when she exited; it became a permanent status. According to Goffman (1963, p.84) the effort that is needed to continually remedy a stigma can overtime become "fixed" and part of personal identity. After such time the realisation becomes part of a person's worldview (Link and Phelan 2001). This was also expressed by Sallmann's (2010) research. As one participant explained "once you've been exploited, then you see everything as a form of exploitation" (Sallmann 2010, p.154). In a similar manner, both women indicated that they have internalised the negative stereotypical beliefs from society at large. They have expressed that their 'personal worldview' has changed which has affected the way in which they interpreted their world. This is especially heightened because of their past exposure to and exploitation in prostitution. Post-prostitution stigma is very much evident in their lives. They are on a daily basis, cautious and careful about meeting new people, aware that others' will probably devalue them because of their past experiences. Regardless of where women were situated during prostitution, indoor or outdoor, they continue to be, as Pfohl (1994,

p.354) suggests, “confronted with social problems not faced by the straight world”, many years since they have both exited prostitution.

Both women still receive and feel the devaluing consequences of stigmatisation. Goffman (1963, p.29) suggest that in mixed social situations, where the non-stigmatised and stigmatised person are together, the non-stigmatised person can feel uncomfortable, as they see the “stigmatised person as too aggressive or too shamefaced”. However he noted because the stigmatised are more likely to receive such incidences than others they are more likely to be adept at managing their stigma. To prevent such *faux pas* or embarrassing incidences from occurring, Goffman (1959) suggest that all the actors, the performer and the audience included, must play along with the interaction. Goffman (1963) provides examples of how such embarrassment can be avoided through collaboration and cooperation. However, this requires team work, a co-operative effort and a working consensus that is usually established in interaction order (Johansson 2007). Given the unpredictability of social interactions, meetings can go un-planned and lead to the person feeling humiliation when the co-operation is not maintained and Ava recalled one such example. Some years after Ava’s experience of prostitution, she received evidence of post-prostitution stigmatisation and recalled a “weird interaction” with a female doctor whilst getting a cervical smear. The doctor, who knew of her past, laughed at her nervousness. Ava recalls incidences such as this, as rare, but as Ava points out “it just shows you how much the small things matter”. As she said,

You know if someone is nervous – especially when you know they were a fucking hooker, you might want to be nice and reassure them and say “don’t worry, it’ll be over in a minute” or whatever but instead she was like, “Oh are you nervous? You seem very nervous”. And I was like yeah, I’m nervous. Of course I’m nervous.

In social interactions, non-stigmatised people can hold negative assumptions and stereotypical beliefs about a person with a stigmatised status (Link and Phelan 2014). As Link and Phelan (2014) explain, in social (face-to-face) interaction this type of stigma power is not always obvious (Link and Phelan 2014). The stigmatisation, in this case, was covert as neither the doctor or Ava were fully aware that discrimination occurred, which allows the stigma to be misrecognised and exercised further (Link and Phelan 2014). For the person who is stigmatised, discrimination and inequality can occur at this level, as they are treated differently by the stigmatiser; with hesitance, superiority or being overly kind for example (Link and Phelan 2014). However, whilst done, “un-thinkingly”, we [normal’s] exercise discrimination in varying degrees,

whether imputing special terms or metaphors to describe the individual, or other imagery without attending to its original meaning (Goffman 1963, p.15). From the vantage point of the stigmatised person they may react negatively to this causing the other person to dislike him or her (Link and Phelan 2014). It is in this situation, states Goffman (1963) that the bearer of a stigma comes to a realisation that he is not “accepted” by others as they,

... fail to accord him respect and regard which the un-contaminated aspects of his social identity have led them to anticipate extending, and have led him to anticipate receiving; he echoes this denial by finding that some of his own attributes warrant it.

(Goffman 1963, p.19)

Theme 3: Strategies used to protect the ‘Self’ from stigma and the long term adverse effects of post-prostitute stigmatisation for the individual.

As the literature suggests, the sex industry is a particular site, where the prostitutes own body or parts of it are consumed by the client and often there is a threat that the entire person is consumed and thus experiences a loss of self-identity in the process (Brewis and Linstead 2000). Stigma coping strategies that were employed by women to protect the ‘self’ in this research will be discussed under headings and highlight the long lasting implications for her.

The emotional management in acting

Sanders (2005) explained that acting in prostitution is not a strategy of denial but is consciously constructed. She argues that producing an identity and creating a separate character is a calculated response and a business strategy which capitalises on the desires of their male clients: unlike the view which sees it the other way around, as victims where the patriarchal system exploits them. According to Sanders (2005) some ‘sex workers’ use emotional management strategies and undergo a re-conceptualization of her own sexuality which increases her marketability for financial gain.

The emotional management involved in maintaining the mask was a theme for both women in this research. Likened to actors on a stage Goffman (1959) explained that people carefully manage their performance in social interaction, creating a positive impression of who they are (Pfohl 1994). Performers dwell more than we might think in the moral world, as Goffman (1959) argues and what we are motivated to do is

constantly manage positive impressions or at least motivated “to appear to realize these standards” (Raffel 2013, p.165). However, when interacting in prostitution, men are the ruling class and meet women “in a potentially intimate activity which involves the very organs which represent the status category of the participants” (Jeffreys 1997, p.206). Siobhan, for example storied her first encounter with a buyer, as “very awkward, humiliated, embarrassed and painful” and indicated how she employed a strategy called ‘emotional labour’; a concept described by Watson (1995, p.130) as, “a type of work activity in which the worker is required to display particular emotions in the course of their work”. Fine (1993) explained that emotion is a ‘dramaturgical skill’, a term described by Goffman (1959) and used by individuals to cope with social order. As Watson (1995) noted if the person’s mask slips and reveals their worry or fear they ‘lose face’ in front of a client and serious consequences can occur. However, maintaining the mask can be hard work (Brewis and Linstead 2000) and the emotional labour experienced by both women was a major theme and they described the intensity of this which placed added pressure on both of the women’s private and public world. Siobhan, for example, remained silent throughout her first experience and never showed her worry or fear to the buyer; even though she “wanted to cry but couldn’t”; she “didn’t make a sound”.

Turner (2013, p.436) explains that “the self is not simply enacted by a performance, but is evaluated by its audience”. This ‘front’ gives the actor the opportunity to offer his audience an idealised version of himself (Goffman 1959). Siobhan for example, spent the majority of her time “standing on the street” and “would just step in to a role” to prepare for ‘Miriam’ and she would put the clothes on; a long black coat, put her boots in a bag “so no one would know”. Ava also employed a range of techniques that ultimately separated herself from the physical involvement of prostitution. She monitored, adapted and acted, and was adept at sensing the tone of the room and the people in it. She shifted her performance to suit the need of the punter; she was,

constantly adapting; constantly monitoring the tone of the session as it goes along. If you sense a shift, adjusting to balance it again. And it’s for your own protection. Even during sex you’d be doing it constantly.

However, as Ava explained, although she presented a controllable front and pretended to be “super happy” or “super friendly”; “it was a façade” she said. Sometimes “the buyer would see through it”, “or they would catch you out” and explained the

importance of playing along; using her escort persona, but it all depended on who the punter of the day was.

You have to act; if you were yourself you'd be destroyed. That's what they like is when you're being yourself – when they sense you're being yourself. They like that cos they don't want to fuck a "thing", they want to fuck a person, but the problem is if you're being yourself then you're just gonna hurt yourself emotionally so yeah, you have to protect yourself by acting for sure.

Likewise, Brewis and Linstead (2000) in their quantitative study explain that maintaining the mask can be hard work, but it is this that makes the sale of sex possible. This hard work, is echoed by Coates (2013, p.289), that whilst emotional management of the self is possible, it is generally “exceedingly stressful and exhausting” to maintain a façade of ‘pretending’ for expectation. Both women expressed exhaustion as a contributing factor in their exit. As Siobhan stated; “my mind had had enough, my body had had enough and I was getting that sense of “I want out””. Ava, also found it progressively more difficult to maintain the façade of her escort persona and the punters were increasingly requesting acts which she was not prepared to perform.

because if you've been paid its very difficult to say no to anything or its very difficult to change or go back or to say actually "I don't want to do that anymore", once you have agreed- I'll do this act- and then they start doing it, and you're like "actually I don't want to do that then you can't change your mind then and if you do, he'll write a really mean review about you anyway, so...

Addiction was a major theme in Siobhan's story and her addiction increased whilst in prostitution. She stated, that her sexuality was never a major issue “I'm gay it doesn't matter”. However, she also explained with reference to her sexuality later in the interview, “if I used cocaine I could cut off what was going on *down there*”. According to Brewis and Linstead (2000) drugs are widely used in the industry, for a number of reasons, to dull the sensation, to play the role, and to distance themselves from the work that they do (Brewis and Linstead 2000). La Toya, for instance, a prostitute working in Sydney, explains, “when I'm down at work I'm not me, Lisa, any more, I'm La Toya and that's where the drugs come in” (Cockington and Marlin 1995, cited in Brewis and Linstead 2000, p.86). However, for Ava drugs or addiction was “never an issue”, she escorted independently, indoors, with no involvement of a third party or pimp. However, she was acutely aware of her surroundings without drugs and constantly mindful of her ‘escort persona’ which, as Brewis and Linstead (2000) note threatened her mask of slipping-affecting her identity.

Control and Resistance

Elements of control and resistance were evident throughout each woman's story and they worked hard to resist stigmatisation and were far from passive of others' reactions. Siobhan, for example recalled challenging a buyer and members of the public in the episode with the eggs. Siobhan emphasised that she chose to remain on the street and only went inside in the winter for a short time, as she had knowledge that indoor prostitution was all "controlled by pimps or madams".

Jesus as little control I had over my life I wasn't fucking going to give it to one of them bastards". "Imagine", she added, "being inside, Jesus what would it be like if all of us were trapped in a house together, no control, can you imagine how tense.

However, her levels of control and resistance were often futile and attempts at maintaining her malleable boundaries would be often transgressed; reminding us that there is a prevailing negative association with certain groups and powerful constraining influences at work (Link and Phelan 2001). Thus, in the power struggle between the stigmatiser and the stigmatised to the extent that power is relevant, "resistance cannot fully overcome constraint" (Link and Phelan 2001, p.378). Literature on the history of prostitution also informs us that sex workers have campaigned and organised themselves as far back as 1790 to resist stigma and oppression (Sanders et al 2009). They have challenged their "derogatory reputation" with social movements but most have proved fragile, uncertain or disappointing (Mathieu 2011, p.46).

Tomura (2011, p.26) suggests that because women in her study worked independently without a pimp, women had "complete autonomy in screening clients", indicating that women had some form of choice in their decision making. However, both women's choice in this research varied, and their options were limited. Both women in this research received daily levels of humiliation from clients, rape, abuse and descriptions of scenes that were the equivalent to torture. People would often look at Siobhan and say "sure you're out there" and say it like I choose it and that I choose to stay there as if I had any choice at all". As Ava explained, regardless of whom the punter was or how she chose them, a dominant man or a "nerdy, loser kind of guy" both "were always in control, even the nerdy ones. Always". She attempted to gain control of the situation whilst escorting and constantly aware of potential dangers. She always monitored the situation when with a punter, but she would get the feeling sometimes when with a punter "a sense of keep an eye out". Sometimes a punter would be aggressive, hold her

throat, or pull her hair and she used to gauge their intentions and “think for a second, “watch this one””.

The word choice implies a rational choice of available alternatives or as Rachael Moran, an Irish survivor of prostitution puts it, “if a woman has no viable choice then she may as well have no choice at all” (Moran 2013 p.161). So, if we are to believe that women freely choose to enter prostitution we ally ourselves with the myth and “a patriarchal culture of blaming women who “make their own beds and therefore must lie in them” (Raymond 2013, p.34). This ultimately put the responsibility of prostitution upon women separating them from other women, obscures male culpability and ignores the notion that “that prostitution is not about or for women, but for men” (Jeffreys 1997, p.135). Because as Ava explained,

a dominating man and a nerdy, loser guy; whatever, they're not.....it's not like one is OKAY and one isn't, it's just adjusting to him to keep it OKAY and to make sure he's happy.

Thus, in the power struggle between the stigmatiser and the stigmatised to the extent that power is relevant, “resistance cannot fully overcome constraint” (Link and Phelan 2001, p.378).

Disassociation

Sanders’ (2005, p.325) considers that protective strategies, such as bodily exclusion zones and name changes can to a degree manage a stigma and is “damage limitation”. Stigma management strategies used by participants in this research, to protect her ‘self’ from the physical involvement in prostitution included kissing, but was *not* ‘off limits’ or used as a ‘bodily exclusion zone’, as Sanders (2005) suggests. This was particularly evident in Siobhan’s story but as she stated she would “only ever kiss if it was more money” as it meant that she did not have to have sex with another buyer, but stressed,

They don't like to kiss us, that's my experience, they don't like to kiss us, like I used to say, were fit to fuck but were not fit to kiss. They kiss their wives; they kiss their mothers their children, what ever...we're not fit to kiss. So they rarely ask for kissin, they rarely, especially during sex, they rarely even put their face next or near your neck your checks or your face or even attempt to kiss you, rarely, ever.

The creation of a pseudonym, argues Sanders (2005) is done to avoid the negative stereotypes associated with ‘whore stigma’ and separates their private and personal lives (Brewis and Linstead 2000). Siobhan, in particular gave vivid description for why she

chose her name 'Miriam' for the street. She chose it because "it was attached to goodness" and,

... obviously I didn't want to use my real name because my father gave it to me and I love my father and no buyer was going to call me by the name my father had chosen for me.

Her name change became a coping mechanism, especially after her experience of the "gang rape". And from that day, she separated herself, everything became separate "it didn't happen to you" she said "it happened to Miriam". Siobhan, almost 5 years since she has left the street, is aware that her and Miriam are separate, but sometimes, even now when she is feeling vulnerable, lonely or confused she takes out Miriam's wig and,

hold it and smell it and I feel safe so I still have it. I think I'll be buried with it, I'll never throw it out.

Ava was not as fastidious when using a pseudonym, sometimes she did, but that was not a consideration of any importance for her. Like Siobhan, however disassociation takes a large part of Ava's story and she began to master this as a protective function as a result of the abuse that she received from the man in his 30s. She can pinpoint the occurrence of her disassociation just before the time she entered into prostitution, she mentioned,

I think my body and my mind had started separating so that I kind of - I don't know, you just became kind of numb or something.....it doesn't matter, it's just my body - that kind of thing.

The intensity of her experience "is getting smaller", however almost 7 years since she has stopped escorting she has major difficulties from her experience of escorting and describes how she still has issues with her body,

I can't believe that I have a body sometimes. I just like to be a floating head and if I could just be a head that would be fine, or a brain.

Physical and psychological numbness was highlighted in both women's stories and Siobhan took drugs, as mentioned heroin and cocaine, to "cut off" or numb herself from the physical and mental involvement of her experience. Now fully recovered from her addiction, she still uses methods of disassociation post-prostitution to cope with social order. She consciously presents a personal front in social situations as Goffman (1959) explained which are moulded and modified to fit and react with the audience's expectations. This gives the actor the opportunity to offer her audience an idealised version of herself (Goffman 1959). Generally, Goffman explained, people aspire to create a front, so to have common accepted moral standards of society. By carefully controlling gestures and the front, the audience begins to see the person (actor) at "face

value” and do not have to waste their energy deciding that she or he is not what she or he claims to be (Goffman 1959, p.57). In Siobhan’s post-prostitution situation she worries as “the gay scene is quite small”, sometimes people find about her past through others. She is not ashamed about her past; she understands why prostitution happened in her life. However, this fear is very real for her and something she must consider whenever in a social situation. Five years post-prostitution Siobhan’s stigmatising identity is very much present in her life, but not as a result of personal attributes or traits (Link and Phelan 2001). Her internalised stigmatised identity and beliefs from society continues to result in social separation (Green et al 2005). As Rahim (2010) suggests, people who receive negative stereotypes are labelled, which can be internalised affecting how the individual, thinks, feels and acts.

Post-prostitution, Siobhan’s confidence and self-esteem are constantly challenged and whilst she manages her life and has achieved education to university level, recovered from addiction and prostitution, she does not always accept her achievements or have self-belief in her abilities. Even now, she always gives credit for her achievements to Miriam, the person who she believes is her “backbone” and stated,

If somebody says something too painful or difficult to say, like the gang rape or something, well I’ll say “well that’s Miriam”, it’s just that I pass it on to her, or on the other hand, if someone is being really complimentary, or something, or saying like “your incredible”, I’ll think “ahhh”; it makes me uncomfortable so I’ll give it to Miriam. Miriam is the back bone I never had. So I’ll pass on the praise, cos it was Miriam as such. But I know that she is me (laugh) which is quiet odd cos she’s tough, or if someone says something quiet painful, but I know it’s me. But I’ll do that just to get me through something, ya know!

Avoidance

Goffman (1963) highlighted, that in intimate relationships especially, the owners of an invisible stigma have the dilemma of confessing her or his secret or feel guilty for not doing and falls somewhere in between keeping the secret or exposing it. As a result, generally people make a “concerted and well-organised effort to pass” (Goffman 1963, p.95). By rearranging their life to avoid such situations, the individual avoids close relationships or keeps distance so that the stigmatised individual is less likely to divulge secrets thus preserving their identity (Goffman 1963). But this strategy, of avoidance, whilst it restricts the tendency for others to build up a personal biography of her, the person can become “cut-off”, intentionally or not, from others (Goffman 1963). In a social scenario, the individual faces the dilemma of revealing her perceived hidden

stigma so her stigma is discovered and causing rejection, losing face, social isolation, discrimination and disownment from close associates (Pachankis 2007). The tendency of a “discreditable person” to divide their world into who to tell and who not to tell is a common strategy designed to alleviate the risk of rejection (Goffman 1963, p.117). Siobhan, after her exit from prostitution, explained that it definitely took 18 months after she left prostitution to get a sense of who she was. She has moved beyond the immediacies of the “chaotic” lifestyle of prostitution. Her immediate needs were recognised and she continues to receive support to assist her in her recovery. Her perspective of who she was in the past has changed from a “junky whore”, but other’s perspective of her are still based on her former identity, which impedes her growth to full potential. She highlighted that she has to “come out all over again” regarding her past experience with prostitution but generally feels “accepted”. She explained that she receives “the odd comment, like a sideways comment” about her past. Even though she explained that she “ignores such comments” she believes it is because she is a “former prostitute” and explains that because of this she would be “overly conscious” or sensitive. She has “a healthy group of friends” who she trusts and as Goffman (1963, p.118) suggests would often “feel out” beforehand so that the revelation of a perceived secret stigma will be well received. “[S]ometimes I let myself slip”, noted Siobhan which highlights the extent of the use of stigma management strategies that must be employed five years post-exit from prostitution to protect the self from the devaluing process of stigmatisation.

Post-prostitution she works hard for respect and acceptance, but this has become more of an aspiration for Siobhan rather than her human right. The respect that she receives depends on the company she keeps and as she suggested often avoids those who she feels will not accept her. The impact that prostitution has had for Siobhan has resulted in enormous consequences in her personal life also. Although, she does not care much about what people think about her sexuality there is always anticipation and fear that in new company she will receive negative devaluing remarks about her prostitution. She tends to limit her social circle which decreases her social-capital and personal relationships; limiting her chances, future and self-worth (Link and Phelan 2001).

Avoidance was also noted by Koken (2012) who suggested that many active sex workers in her study avoided police and services and hid their identity as a sex worker

from family and friends and this has led to unintended consequences of isolation and loneliness. Siobhan “never kept it a secret” or hid her prostitution from her family but “never talked about it either”. However, she did approach support services for assistance. In her description of remembering how she was treated by services she explained “that *they* did not understand”. Siobhan referred to “*they*”, as “the system, the health board” and was often “faced with, “look at your own life”, you know judgement”. “*They* think”, she explained, “[W]hat, you had this good job, car, house, blaa, blaa, blaa, and now you’re a heroine addicted prostitute?”” As Ashford and Kreiner (1999) suggest putdowns and discrimination by others and demeaning questions, such as ‘how can you do it?’ were communicated to Siobhan in subtle and direct forms. Phillips et al (2012, p.686) also found that individuals who provide front line services to ‘sex workers’ in Canada, felt that funding was unstable due to the “fiercely contested moral and ideological views associated with the prostitution stigma”. Furthermore, they noted, because of the stigma association, or ‘courtesy stigma’, staff also found a lack of sector wide supportive agencies willing to offer complementary support to their clients or their families (Phillips et al 2012). In Siobhan’s story her daughter received what Phillips et al (2012) term as ‘courtesy stigma’ as she believed she did not receive supportive services for her daughter because of her involvement in prostitution, and stated “I would have got more help or more support around her if I wasn’t *what I was*”. These factors along with funding restrictions, all contributed to Siobhan not receiving the support that her and her daughter were entitled to and as Phillips et al (2007) argued further exacerbated her position. Link and Phelan (2006) examined the health implications of stigma and showed that “stigma places people at a substantial social disadvantage” and that persons who are stigmatised experience significant emotional distress as a result. In essence, as Link and Phelan (2006; 2001) argued a person who has internalised such stigma from society will avoid seeking help, leading many to forgo treatment, ultimately limiting their life chances. Siobhan never received treatment, in any form, after her ordeal of the gang rape in case of ‘judgment’, she just “took Miriam’s body home and spent three weeks repairing it”; where her drug use increased as a result. Similarly, for some women in Koken’s (2012) study they found that such anticipatory stigma and fear of judgment leads some ‘sex workers’ not to seek help from authorities or health services (Koken 2012). As a result many women in prostitution become isolated (Pachankis 2007), have lower self-esteem (Wong et al

2011) and experience depressive symptoms (Brody et al 2005), suicidal ideation, and death (Potterat et al 2004); factors which were present in Siobhan's story also.

Despite the similar lack of services in Ireland available to women who have exited or who remain in the sex industry (Valiulis et al 2007) Siobhan described her positive meeting with the 'social worker' and storied this meeting as a turning point for her and her daughter and a catalyst which supported Siobhan's exit from prostitution. The importance of this positive meeting is significant for Siobhan, especially for her as she was reaching a crisis point. After spending nearly 6 years in prostitution at this stage she was incredibly exhausted and could not see any choices. She "had, had enough", she said; "my mind had had enough, my body had had enough and I was getting that sense of "I want out"". It was, in Siobhan's story human intervention that supports her to exit prostitution. She feels that the social worker simply understood her situation and, unlike the others' never judged her as a "junkie whore":

but I could see something in her eyes that was different, I could see compassion, she never judged me, never judged me.

Occupational Ideology

According to Watson (1995, p.113) occupation is important to us all and as a result "the work that people do becomes closely bound up with their conception of self". Thus job titles are important as society ascribes occupational identities which become prominent identity badges (Ashford and Kreiner 1999). Goffman (1963, p.13) also argued that occupation is closely related to a person's social identity and some 'jobs' which are considered undesirable are kept a secret by the holder "lest they be marked as failures and outsiders". For many women in Koken's (2012) study who advertised on-line did not wish to reveal to others their real 'occupation', due to being identified or labelled as a part of a stigmatized group. Ashforth and Kreiner (1999) also argue that typically people seek to view themselves and their situation in a positive light, even if engaging in prostitution is challenging for them due to the stigma attached to it. Research including Wilson and Butler (2013), Cobbina and Oselin (2011) and Tomura (2009) also indicated that participants recognise their current situation as work, not prostitution, and in Sanders (2005) research active sex workers referred to themselves with entrepreneurial titles, such as 'career girl' or 'working girls'.

Techniques, such as reframing, rationalising or recalibrating can transform the meaning of prostitution and the use of such techniques can neutralise the negative stigma associated with their work, and to a degree can enhance self-esteem (Arnold and Barling 2003). However, unlike Tomura's (2011) or Wong et al's (2011) research where participants hid or lied about their 'work' or likened themselves to 'workers', occupational ideology was *not* a defining feature in this research. Siobhan for example never hid her prostitution, nor identified herself as a worker whilst in prostitution, as she explained, "I never saw it as a job, it was a means to an end [...] it was not work, you stand there". The use of workplace language in Ava's story however was used from the punters; this never made any sense to her, especially one punter who said to her "the customer is always right", after an argument over payment. Nevertheless she stated that she is "learning how relationships are not transactional" but worried that she can "pretend to have a happy time but eventually this (past escorting) will take it away".

Secret Keeping

The extent that Ava has hid her past identity is significant in her story. She explained that she keeps her past completely secret, but cannot keep secrets because it is so much a part of her identity in her past. For Ava, information management continues to be a large part of her life, it is "a big dilemma and it's daily" she said. If she 'comes out' she feels that she will be known as "*this*". Seven years since she has stopped escorting she feels in turmoil, as Goffman (1963, p.57) argued, "to tell or not to tell; to lie or not to lie; and in each case, to whom, how when and where?" For Ava, and many individuals who conceal their stigma, preoccupation with 'keeping the secret' can be used as a strategy to control unwanted thoughts and serve as a protective function (Pachankis 2007). However, as Pachankis (2007) notes that suppression of a secret overtime is difficult as it can seep into the consciousness and leads to thought intrusion and has been described as 'a private hell' for many individuals who conceal their perceived stigma.

In intimate relationships, Ava also has the "dilemma" of confessing her secret or feels guilty for not doing so (Goffman 1963). Post-prostitution she has an enormous fear that her past will be exposed, and constantly questions "what do to what to do?" When with a new partner does she tell them? She does not want to be rejected, but "somebody will be mean and it will come out". They might be nice and they might understand, but it is

“niggling away” in her mind. As she described, she cannot keep secrets, so, she has to “tell them anyway and who wants to be with a former hooker?” Ava’s involvement with prostitution has come at a personal cost to her and feels as Goffman (1963) suggests;

foredoomed to these scenes: new relationships are often ones that can easily be discouraged before they take hold, making immediate honesty necessarily costly and hence often avoided.

(Goffman 1963, p.118)

To limit the chance of stigmatisation and the effects from it, a person often conceals a past stigma (Goffman 1963). However, the person must manage an anticipation of stigma in social situations whilst at the same time limit and manage the information. Goffman explains,

To display or not to display; to tell or not to tell; to lie or not to lie; and in each case, to whom, how when and where.

(Goffman 1963, p.57)

This is a tactic; Ponse (1991) calls ‘counterfeit secrecy’. These options, however, are neither “simple nor dichotomous” and depending on the social situation the information relating to one’s sexuality differs from person to person and shaped by a variety of situational factors (Cain 1991, p.67). Goffman (1963, p. 93) also makes it clear that these two extremes of possibilities fail to cover the range of cases that fall in between the dichotomy. The prostitute, for example, must keep her ‘occupation’ a secret from one class of persons, such as police or family, whilst simultaneously exposing her ‘failing’ to others such as customers, pimps or other members of society. Goffman (1963) also describes this scenario, especially when the stigma is concealed. Long-term, the consequences of concealment can have a “highly underestimated impact” which can cause significant bearing on life chances such as careers, wages, social ties, health, or even life itself (Link and Phelan 2001, p. 381). The extent that both Ava and Siobhan must manage, hide, lie and conceal their perceived stigma and the consequences if this must not be underestimated, as Ava noted, escorting was so much a part of her identity in her past. Stigma, argues Link and Phelan (2001) places people at a significant social disadvantage and those who are stigmatised experience significant emotional distress, avoid help seeking and lead to worsening conditions of mental wellness. Their ability to lead a normal, fulfilling, healthy or happy life is impeded.

Coming out

Women's identities in this research are somewhat defined by their previous experience in prostitution and words used by Siobhan to describe this are; survivor of prostitution, and former prostituted woman. Ava does not accept such labels and does not see herself as "a former prostituted woman"; it makes her feel "like she has no limbs". She had major issues with leaving her old identity behind and describes her difficulty with wanting to go back to escorting, "I call it the pullback – wanting to be involved again", she said,

so I clung on to it, and that I think is what makes it difficult when you want to leave and makes you go back again cos you don't want to lose that bit of yourself.

Ava fears 'coming out' or being 'found out' by her family and friends and that her exposure will devalue her further again. In Koken's (2012) study those who choose to 'come out' to family and friends were in the minority and mostly confided in other sex workers, resulting in ongoing reinforcement of their positive beliefs (Koken 2012). The findings in Koken's (2012) and Pachankis' (2007) research suggest that 'coming out' can have negative consequences and the process can result in loss of social status, social isolation, family abandonment, violence, impact on personal relationships. Ava feels that "because people have their own ideas of what that kind of person is" she does not want to stigmatise herself or her family like that or to give herself that identity "is it worth it"?, she questioned. Her fear is based on the prevailing social belief that women in prostitution are, as Siobhan says, "sexually depraved, predators and sluts" which are transmitted in the media (Fitzgerald and O'Rourke 2012) or else portrayed in academia as a practice that is sex positive (Jeffreys 2005) or choice and agency (Weitzer 2005). Simmons (1965;1966) also found that stereotyping of deviant individuals are mostly negative and they are often regarded as lazy and lacking self-control (cited in Bernburg et al 2006). The individual is often seen and defined by his/her behaviour and stereotypical images of the 'criminal' from society "are driven to the forefront of the person's life" (Bernburg et al 2006, p.69).

Self-Blame

Self-blaming is commonly felt by the person who is stigmatised and is "a powerful source of social separation" (Green et al 2005, p206). In this way stigma and discrimination cannot be contributed to a perpetrator leaving the discrimination

misrecognised (Link and Phelan 2014). Ava also gave the impression that she feels somehow to blame or responsible for her past situation with the man in his 30s; “he did nothing illegal”, “I was willingly there”, and “he never took his dick out”. Looking back to her 16 year old self she feels that she was colluding in her own abuse. She mentioned that she still has “come to terms with that” and does not understand why *that* happened. Perhaps, she said “he had no awareness of his own power or else he really did - *I don't know*”; she is still, working out all these questions in her head. Self-blame was also present in Sallmann’s (2010, p.151) interpretive phenomenology of prostitutes lived experience of stigma. Many women spoke of their experience of sexual violence in prostitution with statements such as, “I guess it comes with the territory” (Sallmann 2010, p.151). Another woman when reporting a kidnap and rape was told by the police officer that she “deserved it” (Sallmann 2010. p.151). Another FSW explained, when being with an abusive client, “since they paid, they had every right to your body” (Wong et al 2011, p.56). What these experiences of reveals to us is that there is a social belief that prostitutes are “unrapeable” (Sallmann 2010, p.151). However, these myths also become accepted by the women involved and are framed as normal expected aspects of prostitution (Sallmann 2010). This normalisation of harm was described by Ava as she stated “it doesn't matter, it's just my body”.

Conclusion

Siobhan and Ava’s stories tell us a number of important points; that firstly the social reactions that they experienced from buyers and the members of the public have been internalised over time having a powerful impact on their health, lives and their futures. The reactions and the level of violence that they experienced are a reflection of the values and beliefs of society in which the participants lived. Before and during prostitution Ava avoided disclosure to services that may have assisted her, and accessed support sometime after she stopped escorting. Siobhan did seek support whilst in prostitution but was often met with derogatory remarks from services such as “look at your own life”. Many years since the women have exited prostitution they continue to experience the devaluing process of stigmatisation. They are cautious and sometimes suspicious about meeting new people, extending mere social awkwardness and still receive levels of humiliation in their daily lives because of their perceived stigma. Stigma management strategies used by both women were analysed and highlighted was

the consequences for them. From their time in prostitution they have managed their stigma to varying degrees; never passive recipients and worked hard to manage their identities. Both women still use various stigma coping techniques that they learned whilst in prostitution and have employed strategies such as, detachment from the experience and ‘keeping the secret’ which impacts significantly on their personal life and self-fulfilment. For one woman she identifies herself as a survivor or former prostituted woman. For another she fears about ‘coming out’ to family, friends or future partners as she may be rejected, “who wants to be with a former hooker”, she stated. Her biggest fear is being labelled “a prostituted woman” or a “former hooker”; she does not want to stigmatise herself like that or to give herself that stigmatised identity, showing how social the selection of human differences still are (Link and Phelan 2001). Both women continue to negotiate their way through life. They point out to us their daily dilemmas and turmoil about their past identity being exposed and express that their personal worldview has changed since their experience of prostitution. Regardless of where the women were situated during prostitution, indoors or outdoors, “standing on the street”, or independently in a hotel bedroom, their interpretation and their perception of the world have altered. As one participant in Sallmann’s (2010, p.154) research explains, “once you’ve been exploited, then you see everything as a form of exploitation” (Sallmann 2010, p.154). Both women have internalised a stigmatised identity from society. Post-prostitution, they are cautious of meeting new people, wary of new relationships and careful not to let themselves slip whilst in the company of others. When each component of the stigmatisation process is combined, stigma can become a chronic negative condition, which offers an explanation as to why stigma can be so difficult to eradicate (Link and Phelan 2001). Evidence of the history in Ireland has shown us that there has been an acceptance of the sexual double standards and that woman more than men have been victimised and stigmatised as a result of prostitution (Luddy 2007).

Chapter Six: Conclusion of Thesis

[...] *I never go looking for them, they always come looking for us.*

(Siobhan)

Overview of this research

The question addressed in this research was, ‘Does stigmatisation affect the identity of former prostituted women in their post-prostitute life?’ Through narrative inquiry and participatory action research this study has examined Siobhan and Ava’s subjective experience of stigmatisation and its impact *after* they have exited prostitution. Both PAR and narrative aim to give voice to the subject, reveal the truth and to unsettle power (Ewick and Silbey 1995). Both aspire to be an emancipatory and empowering activity (Bogg 2003), have a commitment to social justice (Hennick et al 2011) and have also challenged traditional methods of inquiry and are responsive to the needs of those being studied (Kemmis and McTaggart 2003). Furthermore, this field of social research emphasises “the paths toward greater humanization and away from dehumanization” (Herr and Anderson 2005, p. 16). Both women’s experiences were chronologically re-storied and developed into themes that represented their individual lives. Combining narrative with PAR has resulted in new understandings of the social determinants that regulate the outcome of women’s health, safety and lives.

Whilst analysing Ava’s and Siobhan’s combined stories, three major themes emerged revealing to us how their past experience of prostitution has impacted on their lives today. These themes are: *The continual, de-humanising nature of the stigmatisation process; Social reactions during prostitution and internalisation overtime; Strategies used that protect the ‘Self’ from stigma and the long term adverse effects of post-prostitution stigmatisation for the individual.*

The stigma that they experienced during their time in prostitution has been internalised overtime and still has a powerful impact on their health, lives and their futures. During their time in prostitution each woman experienced stigmatisation at varying degrees. Siobhan in particular experienced high levels of abuse and intolerance from members whilst ‘standing on the street’ and elements of labelling, stereotyping, separation, status loss and discrimination also occurred in her private sphere also. Ava, who

escorted independently indoors was objectified by punters and treated as sub-human. Ava continues to hide her past and keeps it “completely secret” for fear that her new identity as a former prostitute will discredit her and that she will face further rejection. Post-prostitution both women are careful not to let themselves slip and Ava stories her memories of an embarrassing incidence; a “weird interaction” with a doctor who knew about her past,

I'm sure she meant no harm; she just kind of tried to reassure me. You know if someone is nervous – especially when you know that I used to be a fucking hooker, you might want to be nice and reassure them and say “don't worry, it'll be over in a minute” or whatever but instead she was like, “Oh are you nervous? You seem very nervous”. And I was like “yeah, I'm nervous. Of course I'm nervous”.

Regarding receiving elements of stigmatisation post-prostitution, in social interaction “It's the small things that matter”, as Ava suggested and such moments are not inconsequential. The signs of stigma post-prostitution are not always obvious, however, the women themselves internally hold on to this stigma which they have internalised over the years. The nature of stigma and the elements within it, impact on women and they carry this with them; if not quite forever more, certainly for a long time post-prostitution.

As discussed earlier, many women with a perceived stigmatised status, hide or lie about their prostitution, some conceal it completely. Siobhan sought support but was met with salient remarks or anticipatory stigma that contributed to her addiction, attempted suicide, continued abuse, violence, rape, and heightened stigma. The stigma management strategies, such as secret holding, that women continue to use to protect their identity only exasperates a continuum of deep oppression for the women in this research.

During her time in prostitution Siobhan felt labelled as, “as junkie whore” by services, and derogatory stereotypical terms such as “slapper” ‘whore’, ‘slut’, ‘a typical word’ or ‘junkie’ were used by society. She felt devalued, hurt and dehumanised especially by comments which were and still are delivered to her by “other women”. These memories still haunt her. To varying degrees, both women continue to experience fear that they will receive rejection from society if their perceived stigma of prostitution is revealed.

Limitations and strengths of this research

With an emphasis on people's 'lived experiences', qualitative data is well suited for locating peoples meanings and connecting these meanings to the social world (Miles and Huberman 1994). However, the limitations of this study are important to consider and were discussed in the methodology chapter. One potential limitation is that of representativeness. Due to the small size of the sample in this research it cannot make claims for the entire population (Sarantakos 2005) of women involved in the sex industry. However, as Harrington (1962) points out, what *must* be observed is the enormous fact that there is a great mass of people who are in need. Women in this case have experienced oppression and they exist in our society and must live with the consequences of prostitution. Even though it may be visible to some it is often underestimated and overlooked because of "statistical quibbling".

Nevertheless, the principles of qualitative research do not claim representativeness or generalizability. Furthermore, the truth or plausibility in narrative is different from scientific positivist assumptions as "the outcome of any one telling is necessarily a re-telling" and what I strived for in this research was "narrative probability" (Sandelowski 1991, p. 164-165). The main intention and aim in this research was to 'give voice' to usually muted and marginalised groups. Using Lieblich et al's (1998) method of selecting principal sentences and the creation of themes, the 'content universe' of the participants were captured which represents their story through their experience of prostitution and stigma in the story of their lives.

Potential for future research

Focusing on women who have lived the experience of prostitution has revealed rich, new detail and has added to our understanding of the barriers women in the social world continue to experience many years after they have left prostitution. The implications of work for future research should include collaborate research with women who have survived sexual exploitation. This should be carried out with those who have lived that experience as it would further add to our understanding of how services in particular can impact on women not receiving support that can impede their life chances. Women's voices are essential, their knowledge is extensive and they understand the conditions that forced them into prostitution in the first place. Gómez, Racionero and Sorde (2010)

and Beltrán and Gómez (2005, emphasis in original) argue that in response to this dialogic turn in society, exploration into social problems leads the researcher to investigate *with* participants rather than *on* them. Critical Communicative Methodology (CCM) is one such methodological response and a worthwhile consideration for further collaborative research. CCM is a particular ‘worldview’ grounded in “equity, democracy and respect” and seeks to understand those who are marginalised by directly including those who are being studied in the research (Gómez et al 2011, p.239).

Another worthwhile consideration for future research is the issue of concealment and information control that women use especially after exit from prostitution. Concealment in particular can have serious implications for women’s health and safety and limit their life chances. Beyond the ordinary obstacles of social interaction Siobhan must navigate and assume the “coming out” scenario “all over again” regarding past prostitution; and this was difficult to achieve in the first place. Ava also receives subtle gestures and anticipatory stigma about her past, causing her great anxiety which in her future could jeopardise her sexual and physical health. Siobhan mentioned that it took 18 months to get a sense of who she was again after her exit and continues to receive specific support services that are relevant to her needs, including, addiction, housing, education, psychiatric, and counselling. Ava, however, stopped escorting, but it took her about 15 months she explained after to access services herself in the form of private counselling: not specific to services that support women in prostitution. Understanding prostitution is vital and specific services that support women in prostitution must be established with an understanding that many women, especially those standing on the street, like Siobhan, are in a role or using their “escort persona” as Ava suggested.

Siobhan and Ava were born and raised in Ireland and entered prostitution at different life stages. Both women defined themselves as middle class, and as Ava suggested she had a “normal” upbringing. Ava, in particular has a history of childhood sexual abuse, and did not indicate the profile characteristics of the entry routes as suggested by Kelleher et al (2009) of: a lower socioeconomic background, poverty, addiction, homelessness, education disadvantage and social exclusion (Nelson et al 2010; Kelleher et al 2009; Valiulis et al 2007). However, both women’s stories highlighted a causal sequence of events and spoke of a combination of multiple human rights violations long

before they entered into prostitution, similar as those described by Farley and Kelly (2000),

sexual harassment, economic servitude, educational deprivation, job discrimination, domestic violence, racism, classism, vulnerability to frequent physical and sexual assault, and being subjected to body invasions which are equivalent to torture.

(Farley and Kelly 2000, p.29)

Both women were also involved with a significant person / partner in their lives prior to entry that either coerced or influenced their 'decision' to enter into prostitution. The presence of such significant social actors, suggests like Hawthorn (2011), that there is shifting patterns in how prostitution is operating, and a trend that is forming away from the pimp controlling the prostitute dynamic towards a more insidious partner relationship, which can be traditionally classed as domestic violence / intimate partner exploitation. Based on this, a final recommendation for future research should examine if elements of partner coercion exists in other women's entry, as such reasons for entering could influence their decision to exit and an added barrier in their choice in exiting prostitution.

Final Thoughts

The emergence of the pro-sex work lobby and the discourse used contributes to society's belief that prostitution is a form of choice. As Raymond (2013) explains, discourse used by the pro-prostitution lobbyists have transformed, prostitution into sex work, pimps into third-party business agents or sex work service licensees, brothels are safe places, and victims of trafficking are migrant sex workers facilitated by helpful people movers (Raymond 2013, p.xiii). The language used sanitises what is an inherently dangerous industry where women are held in check, controlled, exploited and keeps "sex work" chic and safe (Raymond 2013, p.xiii).

As with prostituted women throughout history, the women in this research received horrific treatment at the hands of the men who bought them; an indication of their dehumanisation which separated 'us and them' brought about by a long history of a socio-cultural process (McCordic 2012). Women in this research continue to experience the effects of prostitution years after they have exited and have internalised their devaluing identity which has impacted their lives in various ways. It is argued by Deegan (2014, p.82) that the task of the feminist sociologist is to unmask oppressive

structures and “explore systemically how sociological theory is formed, transmitted and embedded in history”. In order to fully understand prostitution and the role of power in the social production of stigma, a logical analysis should include the subject of patriarchal power, since in terms of domination prostituted women face brutal realities (Barry 1995). This type of analysis offers a fuller understanding of the terrain of male domination and the matrix of sexual exploitation, as well as the possibility of revolutionizing the oppression of women (Barry 1995). When examining the hierarchies of power through Irish history as I have argued in this research it shows, men are constructed as superior to women. Female subordination and the desire for male supremacy eroticise objectification. It is not just socially constructed, “but constructive of the political system of male supremacy, [and] cannot regard the sex of prostitution as in any way natural or inevitable” (Jeffreys 1997, p.208). When examined from a human rights perspective.

the determination of harm must rest on the act, not only individually but collectively in women’s class condition. If the act exploits, it is in itself destructive of human life, well being, integrity, and dignity. That is violation. And when it is gendered, repeated over and over in and on woman after woman, that is oppression.

(Barry1995, p.70)

The prostitution of women is therefore among the most “oppressive aspects of the sex of male supremacy” (Jeffreys 1997, p. 225). For the women in this research prostitution was oppressive and agency under oppression is hard to achieve (Raymond 2013). When we look back at the broad sweep of Irish history one thing becomes clear, the stigma of prostitution is a well-established part of a historical legacy of women’s oppression by those in power. When each component of the stigmatisation process is combined, stigma can become a chronic negative condition, which offers an explanation as to why stigma can be so difficult to eradicate (Link and Phelan 2001). Evidence of the history in Ireland has shown us that there has been an acceptance of the sexual double standards and that woman more than men have been and continue to be victimised and stigmatised as a result of prostitution (Luddy 2007). The stigma of prostitution only serves the interests of those in power not the powerless. As Siobhan correctly pointed out, “I never go looking for them, they always come looking for us”.

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Appendix 1: Letter to the Participant

Dear

I am a post Graduate Research student in the Department of Applied Arts at the Waterford Institute of Technology and for my thesis I am conducting a study on women who have left prostitution. The title of the study is, *Other Voices: Assessing the phenomenon of the stigmatisation of former prostituted women*. The study has the ethical approval of the Ethics Committee of the Waterford Institute of Technology

I am writing to you to ask for your assistance with my study. Would it be possible for you to participate in my research? The study involves in-depth interviews with women who are over the age of 18 and who have, at some point in their lives engaged in prostitution, for money or for other material goods. This research will include **only** women who are **no longer engaged** in prostitution. You can find more information about my study in the accompanying information leaflet. If you are in a position to participate in my research I am very happy to talk to you about the best way to do this. Please find my phone and email details below.

I am thankful for the time you have given to read my letter and I would be greatly appreciative of any help you can give me. I believe that my research is of importance to the lives of women who have been through the experience of prostitution as very little research has been conducted in this area.

Thanking you in anticipation and please do not hesitate to contact me if you seek further information or clarification.

Yours etc

Rebecca Beegan

Department of Applied Arts
Waterford institute of Technology
College Street
Waterford
Ph: []
Email: []

Appendix 2: Information Sheet for the Participant

Other Voices: Assessing the Phenomenon of the Stigmatisation of Former Prostituted Woman.

Researcher: Rebecca Beegan, Postgraduate Research Student, Waterford Institute of Technology

Supervisor: Joe Moran, Department of Applied Arts, Waterford Institute of Technology.

1. Introduction

I am carrying out research on women who are survivors of prostitution. I would like to learn about your experiences of prostitution. I am particularly interested in how that experience has affected your life since you have left the industry. I will share with you my knowledge of prostitution from studies that I have read. I hope that through our discussion we both can better understand your experience of prostitution and what that has meant for your life. Through my research I want to tell the very important story of what it is like to be a formerly prostituted woman.

2. What is the research about?

The research is trying to examine a number of questions and to come up with answers to these questions.

1. The research is about finding out what it is like to be a woman who has had sex for money, drugs, shelter, clothing or other material goods.
2. It is also about listening to and improving, through reflection, the voices of women who were involved in the sex industry: before the woman entered, during and after a woman has left the sex industry.
3. It is about learning if women who have left the sex industry feel stigmatised.
4. This research also hopes to learn through women's experiences, appropriate ways to respond to the needs of women who have worked in the sex industry.

3. Who benefits from this research?

- I will benefit from the research because it will help me to gain a higher degree - masters from the Waterford Institute of Technology.
- I would like to think that our politicians and relevant support services would listen to the stories of the women who participate in the research and that this research will deepen understanding of prostitution. But that is a hope more than a promise.

4. My commitment to those who participate in the research

I am committed to being up front and honest with the participants and I will do the following:

- At all times I will be sensitive to the rights of participants and will place their well-being before any other objectives, personal or otherwise.
- I am committed to involving the participants in all aspects of the research process in so far as this is possible.
- I will not put pressure on anyone to take part in the research if they do not wish to do so, and I will not put pressure on anyone to discuss any issues that make them feel uncomfortable.
- Any participant can at any time withdraw from the research.
- I will inform participants about how I intend collecting information and will not use any means of collecting information without the prior agreement of participants.
- I will explain my findings and my analysis to the participants.
- All participants will be given the opportunity to read draft copies of my study or for those who may have literacy difficulties I will provide verbal feedback. Where a participant believes that what I have written may affect their privacy, identity them or breach their confidentiality, or if what I have written is inaccurate, such material will be re-written or withdrawn.
- The information gathered will be for the purpose of research only and will not be given to anyone else. The information will be used in a thesis, possible publication and conferences.

- Most of the information will be stored electronically in a password protected system and other typed or hand-written materials will be stored in a locked cabinet in my office.
- 12 months after the interview has taken place and you have verified what you have told me is correct, the transcript, all identifying information, personal details and the recording will be destroyed.

Appendix 3: Consent Form

To the Participant,

You are invited to take part in a qualitative (descriptive) research study. The purpose of this research will examine your past experiences of the sex industry and how that has impacted on your life now. The findings from this research will be reported in written form for a postgraduate research degree at Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT). The findings of this research may also be reported in future reports, conferences, articles or/and in publications.

The research is trying to examine a number of questions and to come up with answers to these questions.

1. The research is about finding out what it is like to be a woman who has had sex for survival, money, drugs, shelter, clothing or other material goods.
2. It is also about hearing your experience of stigma in three phases; before you entered, during and after you left the sex industry.
3. It is about learning if women who have left the sex industry feel stigmatised.
4. This research also aspires to learn through your experiences appropriate ways to respond to prostituted women who remain in or who left have the sex industry.

Procedures

The interview should take about an hour. The interview will be taped and I will transcribe it. All identifying information, such as names, age, places or locations will be disguised to ensure you cannot be identified. As such, to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of all participants, no person can be identified in this research or any reports, articles or in publications used in the future. Once the interview is over, it may be necessary to contact you again by phone or email to clarify what you have told me. Once the interview stage is over and I have written up your experience, you will be offered an opportunity to meet with me again in person or by email. This will allow you to review the information you have shared with me and to verify that I have correctly understood your experiences.

Your participation

Risks to you

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary; no compensation will be given for this research. You may refuse to answer any questions during the interview. If you decide not to participate or wish to withdraw at any stage you are free to do so, without fear of penalty or negative consequences of any kind.

I am very aware that some questions are of a sensitive nature. However, I will make every reasonable effort to minimise any discomfort. If at any time during or after the interview or research process you feel you have experienced any distress, please contact me. I will provide you with my own contact details and relevant support services in your area that will be sensitive and suitable to your needs.

Benefits to you

I hope this research will have some positive benefits for you. We will examine your experience of stigma and this process may provide you with new insight into this. Your participation may add to knowledge that can support other women who have experienced this and contribute useful information to service providers that support women to exit the sex industry. I also hope that your contributions to this research will also allow policy makers to understand prostitution.

Confidentiality and limits to confidentiality.

The tapes which I use for the interview will be kept in a locked office in a location in WIT in a secured file. After we have discussed the final written report of your experiences, the tape will be destroyed after 12 months. The transcript will also be kept in the building of WIT and kept for no longer than 2 years after completion of the thesis, after which it will be disposed of accordingly.

I have to let you know that there are circumstances where, under law, I am obliged to report allegations or disclosures made by you to the relevant agency for investigation. If you inform me of suspected child abuse, that is someone under 18 years of age, or abuse of a vulnerable adult. In this circumstance I will be obliged to inform the relevant authorities.

Appendix 4: Signing the Consent Form

- I am over 18 years of age.
- I have read the information sheet (or I have had it read to me) informing me about this research and I fully understand it.
- I understand that the information I give will be confidential, for the purpose of the research as explained, and will not be given to anyone else.
- I can decide to stop participating in the research at any time of my choosing.
- I do not have to discuss any issues I do not want to.
- I give my permission to have the information gathered in this research used for a thesis, for possible publication and use in conferences. Before a final draft of the thesis is completed I will have the opportunity to read the transcript of the interview. I also understand that if I am unhappy about how information portrays me or impacts on my privacy, or breach my confidentiality, I can withdraw my permission for its inclusion in the thesis or in any other publication or in conference papers.
- I understand that most of the information will be stored electronically in a password protected system and other typed or hand-written materials will be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's office.
- I understand that the personal information gathered will be held for 12 months after the interview has taken place and then it will be destroyed. The written transcribed will be held for 2 years after the completion of the thesis and will be destroyed.
- Your signature on this consent form indicates that you have understood the information explaining the purpose, your rights and responsibilities as a participant of this research. You will also receive a copy of this consent form.

I give my consent to take part in this research through an individual interview.

Sign _____ **(Interviewee)**

Date _____

Sign _____ **(Interviewer)**

Date _____ **Researcher: Rebecca Beegan**

Postgraduate Student
Department of Applied Arts
Waterford institute of Technology
College Street
Waterford
Ph []

Supervisor: Joe Moran

Department of Applied Arts
Waterford institute of Technology
College Street
Waterford
Ph: []

If during your participation in this study you feel the information and guidelines that you were given have been neglected or disregarded in any way, or if you are unhappy about the process, please contact the Secretary of the Waterford Institute of Technology Ethics Committee Suzanne Kiely at skiely@wit.ie or +353 (0) 51 30 2000. Please be assured that your concerns will be dealt with in a sensitive manner.

Appendix 5: Siobhan’s Story Map

Principal sentences and categories representing Siobhan experience before she entered into prostitution.

Category	Principle Sentences
<i>Chaotic Partner</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was trying to (nervous laugh), contain, my ex who, was quite chaotic, well when she relapsed she relapsed quite chaotically but eventually I took it to sleep. • I remember, I remember nights, I kind of said to her, “look, you can smoke a bag before you go asleep”, because then I knew that she was not out in the car or wherever, but that’s a big line to cross actually, when I think now, that you let your partner smoke a bag of heroin in the bed beside you, that’s how many lines I actually crossed... • Well (Partner’s Name) had briefly been involved with the street some years before, and she had said “we could always, you know, do that...”
<i>Rational</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [...] I had those thoughts like, “oh my God, I’m gay”, like but that doesn’t matter, but I worried because I had not been physically with a man, in like, Jesus eleven years or something, so that kind of thing I worried about, but like I took cocaine to get the confidence I kept thinking that this is the better thing to do, this is the rational thing to do. • It’s completely different to heroin and I was kind off, right “now I don’t have to sleep, now I don’t have to eat, now I can figure this shit out • It’s a bit crazy, haha, crazy logic <i>now</i>, but at the <i>time</i>, it seemed, you know, it seemed logical, so anyway it was a hell of a lot more expensive, crazy logic <i>now</i> , but at the <i>time</i>, eh, it seemed, you know, it seemed logical.

Principal sentences representing Siobhan’s experience during prostitution

<i>Miriam (pseudo name chosen for the street)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the street I was Miriam [...] I had picked the name Miriam because obviously I didn’t want to use my real name because my father gave it to me and I love my father and no buyer was going to call me the name my father had chosen for me. • [...] after the gang rape, which had... a profound effect...on me [...]and I caught site of an eye in the mirror, cos I never saw myself in the mirror in all those years, I just said, “it didn’t happen to you, it happened to Miriam”. And that was it, something happened, then I took Miriam’s body home and spent three weeks repairing it, and when it came to going back out, cos my
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	<p>drug habit increased to two bags a day, because I was haunted by what happened, but eh...but that was it from then on Miriam's stuff became Miriam's stuff, make up everything, everything was separate, everything.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ye I never saw my full face, I never saw what Miriam looked like, I didn't have a full mirror, I never caught a glimpse of my face, even during the day passing a window, I never looked at myself for nearly six years.... and that's how I would prepare for Miriam, and then I would put on the wig, and once the wig was on then that was Miriam [...].
<p><i>The Hospital</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [...] they didn't really want me in the hospital but they couldn't really put me out because I had medical insurance, I had been there twice before, I had been his patient for 14 years, so I was kind of entitled to be there, but they weren't about to engage with any help as such because it's a private hospital I came in as a junkie whore and that's nuts • There wasn't the help that I thought that there would be here, I was the lowest of the low, not even the people that had looked after me before wanted to know me. • They did not care, nobody cared, nobody came near me, nobody, nobody..... they just watched me. I would have been just another dead drug addicted prostitute and ye that told me a lot.
<p><i>Stigma related incidences (how she perceived the 'public' saw her)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because we weren't 'women women', we were predators, we were the sexually depraved, we were the thing women must keep their good men from • You often get people driving by where people shout, a word, you know a typical word, like whore, or slapper you know , junkie, you know just random words. • I think I've only ever been called a whore by a woman [...] they also put us in that bracket of the sexually depraved and predators and sluts, like that's the worst think a woman can say to a woman and they do.
<p><i>Turning Point</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [...] my mind had had enough, my body had had enough and I was getting that sense of "I want out". • [...] but she (the social worker) just said, "well, I want to know what life is like for you", [...] "what's it like to be a mother, and watch her struggle and feel helpless?", [...] "more importantly, what's it like to be out there at night all alone" .and..nobody.. had..ever asked me that question. Nobody had asked me, what it was like to be there, and alone, nobody had ever said "alone", cos I was so lonely, I was so alone.. • Ye and I wanted out, and I told her (social worker) "it's in my head, and that I was getting tired but I don't want to leave".

Principal sentences and categories chosen to represent Siobhan's experience after prostitution

<p><i>Miriam</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If somebody says something too painful or difficult to say, like the gang rape or something, well I'll say "well that's Miriam", it's just that I pass it on to her or on the other hand if someone is being really complimentary or something or saying like "your incredible", I'll think "ahhh", it makes me uncomfortable, so I'll give it so Miriam. • Miriam is the back bone I never had. • I don't think I ever will throw out Miriam's wig and its rare but if I ever feel a sense of loneliness or confusion or whatever I have taken out Miriam's wig and hold it and smell it and I feel safe so I still have it, I think I'll be buried with it, I'll never throw it out
<p><i>Wanting</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I just want people to see why it's <i>wrong</i> • I wanted people to think differently I wanted people to see my friends as human • I wanted to go back for them. I left a lot of good women behind, they were so brave and strong, but damaged, all alone and it isn't fair.
<p><i>Stigma related incidence</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cos one of the things for me is that I have to come out all over again, and I did that 20 years ago (laugh). • I do get the odd comment, like a sideways comment but I tend to just ignore it and I tend not to build relationships with people who have that line of thinking • Sometimes I let myself slip but for the most part life is pretty good now, ye.

Appendix 6: Ava's Story Map

Principal sentences and categories that represent Ava's experience before prostitution

Category	Principal Sentences
<i>The Man in his 30s</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [...]in the same year a man came into contact with me and he was in his thirties, mid-thirties. • So, life was normal, normal, normal and then every few months I'd meet him for a couple of hours; get paid a hundred quid. • The paying made it so I couldn't say if I didn't want something or didn't like something.
<i>Blurred lines</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [...] somewhere in the middle of him leaving, getting him out of my life and starting in prostitution - they kinda crossed over. Because there's a blurring [...] • [...] he sent me to meet one of his friends in a hotel one time and that was, I think, a turning point for me and I.....until I'm saying it now, I didn't really realise that. This old man was there in this hotel room; this old man with and he had the same interest let's say, as this other guy, which is why yer man sent me there. • [...] at some point I was kicking yer man out of my life and there was some crossover there and I started escorting.

Principal sentences and categories that represent Ava's experience during prostitution

Category	Principal Sentences
<i>Emotional Management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I never felt unsafe; I felt emotionally unsafe. • So you're always monitoring the situation to keep it safe. Because a dominating man and a nerdy, loser guy; whatever, they're not.....it's not like one is OK and one isn't, it's just adjusting to him to keep it OK and to make sure he's happy. • Yeah, constantly adapting; constantly monitoring the tone of the session as it goes along. If you sense a shift, adjusting to balance it again. And it's for your own protection. Even during sex you'd be doing it constantly.
<i>Acting</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's all acting of course but you'd be acting very submissive. • You have to act; if you were yourself you'd be destroyed. • [...] but sometimes they could see through it though, you know or they would catch you out, I don't know, I don't know (contemplative).
<i>Had Enough</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was already kinda going ugh, I just didn't need the cash and I left that night; I was like, I don't think I need to do this anymore. • I don't wanna use the word exiting – it seems weird for me. I stopped doing it.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think my body and my mind had started kinda separating so that I kind of - I don't know, you just became kind of numb or something like em.....it doesn't matter, it's just my body - that kinda thing.
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Principal sentences and categories that represent Ava's experience after prostitution

Category	Principal Sentences
<i>Skin, body, head and brain</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can't believe that I have a body sometimes. I just like to be a floating head and if I could just be a head that would be fine, or a brain. Even now, I have to remind myself that like, the skin I have now - we shed our skin so it's not the same that he touched; that anyone.....Just to remind myself that I'm not like, what's the word, infected by him or like, d'you know..... I freak out constantly about having a jaw or having skin or having a head, ya know I just freak out constantly about having a body in general.
<i>Dilemma</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> But I know that it will come out eventually, somebody will be mean and it will come out. [...] <i>I can't keep</i> secrets like that because it's so much a part of my identity in my past. So, I'd have to tell them anyway and who wants to be with a former hooker. But it is, dilemma is fine, it means what is sure. It is a dilemma, and it's daily. I don't know what to do.
<i>"that stigma"</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When I was leaving I didn't want to leave that identity behind, so I clung on to it, and that I think is what makes it difficult when you want to leave and makes you go back again cos you don't want to lose that bit of yourself, ya know that kinda way? I' a sexual violent survivor as well, and generally in a normal life I think there is such a power in breaking through that stigma and saying "yeah, what of it?" I don't want to have a public profile as a former prostitute cos that's what I'd be called I wouldn't just be AVA, you know. And then I was known as a former escort as a survivor or whatever and that was kind of annoying as well because people have their own ideas of what that kind of person is, so you're battling that as well. I'm telling people "please don't say I'm prostituted" that makes me sound like, ya know.