

Male Prostitution in the Twentieth Century: Pseudohomosexuals, Hoodlum Homosexuals, and Exploited Teens

Kerwin Kaye, MA, PhD (cand.)

New York University

ABSTRACT. Male prostitution altered its form dramatically over the course of the twentieth century. While some of these changes relate to economics and general cultural shifts (the Depression of the 1930s, the rise of a counterculture during the 1960s and 70s), some of the most important changes have arisen in response to transformations in the idea of “homosexuality,” and the growing influence this idea had within middle-class and then working-class culture. This essay identifies the diverse forms male prostitution has taken since the late-Victorian period, and also examines the way in which male prostitution has been written about by various commentators in different eras. *[Article copies available for a fee from The Haworth Document Delivery Service: 1-800-HAWORTH. E-mail address: <docdelivery@haworthpress.com> Website: <<http://www.HaworthPress.com>> © 2003 by The Haworth Press, Inc. All rights reserved.]*

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Kerwin Kaye is currently a PhD student in the American Studies program of New York University. In 2001, he received an MA in Cultural Anthropology from San Francisco State University. Correspondence may be addressed: <kab316@nyu.edu>.

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In his classic essay on the rise of contemporary male prostitution in nineteenth century Europe, Jeffrey Weeks begins by highlighting the simultaneous emergence of writings on male prostitution and those on homosexuality. As he notes, the sexologists Havelock Ellis, Iwan Bloch, Magnus Hirschfeld, and psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud all commented upon the prevalence of same-sex prostitution for men. "The early studies of male prostitution . . . were also the first major quantitative studies of homosexuality" (Weeks, 1985 [1980]: 113). Weeks's observations draw attention to the social circumstances within which male prostitution came to be known as a topic of concern. They point toward the conditions which led to the identification of "prostitution" as a practice in which men might engage. As with many other sexual practices, middle-class sexologists—doctors—took the lead in identifying the existence of male prostitution, and it was their political agenda which initially framed its representation.

What most concerned many of the early sexologists, and what continues to concern many contemporary commentators, are not the daily living conditions of men who trade sex for cash, but rather how one might characterize the sexual orientation of the participants. As a man who frequently claimed a normative identity, yet who simultaneously engaged in homosexual activity, the male prostitute posed a problem for the new theories of "inversion" being developed by Victorian-era sexologists. Was a man still inverted if he engaged in sex acts with other men for money? Was he to be believed when he said his motivations were strictly financial? Did it matter that he only took the "top" role, and never allowed himself to be penetrated, either anally or orally? Early writings on male prostitution took on questions such as these, striving to define the "inner nature" of the male prostitute far more than they focused on the social conditions of his existence.

In the following essay, I attempt to trace something of the history of male prostitution from the late 1800s to the present. I focus particularly upon the ways in which the emergence of "homosexual" identity decisively shaped the social patterns of exchange which characterized male prostitution, turning it from something engaged in by "normal" men into something only "queer" men practiced. Issues of class also played a significant role in shaping outsider evaluations of male prostitution, however, and, as will be seen, even served as an important touchstone in relation to the formation of homosexual identity. My research into these areas draws primarily upon the writing of sexologists and other observers of male prostitution, and therefore I also examine the interests and ideologies which shaped their perceptions, using their characterizations

both as data regarding the phenomenon of male prostitution, but also as data regarding the values and perspectives of the commentators themselves. In this way, I hope to illuminate not only the social practices of male prostitutes, but also to document their changing status in relation to the gay subculture and society more generally. By way of conclusion, I additionally offer some brief remarks regarding the discursive difficulties that the consideration of “male prostitution” necessarily entails.

SEXOLOGY AND THE “DISCOVERY” OF MALE PROSTITUTION

As Foucault has pointed out, the early sexologists were engaged in a project of socially constructing “the homosexual” as a distinct type of individual, a separate “species” of humanity, as it were (1978: 43). More recent gay scholarship has refined Foucault’s observation, and further clarified what was at stake with the new identities. Silverstolpe’s and van der Meer’s independent investigations into early modernity have suggested that medico-sexological discourse followed (rather than preceded) the self-naming practices and popular belief systems of men who regularly engaged in same-sex contact (Silverstolpe, 1987 [cited in Weeks, 2000: 61], 1991; van der Meer, 1996: 139; see also Hirschfeld, 2000 [1913]: 1077-8; Hansen, 1992; Oosterhuis, 2000: 12, 16, 174, 212, 280). Other historical inquiries have highlighted the additional fact that not all men who engaged in homosexual practices were identified as deviant in any way whatsoever. George Chauncey’s insightful study of gay culture in pre-World War Two New York (1994) argues that the sexological discourse of the medical professionals initially had little impact upon the largely working-class worlds in which “fairies” and “queers” (to use the self-chosen terms of the time) resided. While sexological categorizations became generally hegemonic within the middle-class, working-class culture was characterized by an entirely different system of sexual categorization. Chauncey writes:

In important respects the hetero-homosexual binarism, the sexual regime now hegemonic in American culture, is a stunningly recent creation. Particularly in working-class culture, homosexual behavior per se became the primary basis for the labeling and self-identification of men as “queer” only around the middle of the twentieth century; before then, most men were so labeled only if they displayed a much broader inversion of their ascribed gender sta-

tus by assuming the sexual and other roles ascribed to women. . . . Only in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s did the now conventional division of men into "homosexuals" and "heterosexuals," based on the sex of their sexual partners, replace the division of men into "fairies" and "normal men." . . . [T]he transition from one sexual regime to the next was an uneven process, marked by significant class and ethnic differences. Multiple systems of sexual classification coexisted throughout the period in New York's divergent neighborhood cultures. (14-5)²

While the outlines of a hetero/homo divide first began to be articulated as early as the 1690s (Trumbach, 1992 [1991], 1998; van der Meer, 1996), and was somewhat well established (at least for men)³ by 1730, Chauncey's detailed historical work demonstrates that a different set of sexual categories continued to operate, especially among the working-classes, well into the twentieth century. As he comments, "If many workingmen thought they demonstrated their sexual virility by playing the 'man's part' in sexual encounters with either women or men, normal middle-class men increasingly believed that their virility depended upon their exclusive sexual interest in women" (1994: 100).⁴

The claim to normality which men who penetrated other men made was buttressed by an ideology of male sexual imperative, the idea that men simply "had to" have sex and that masturbation was not an acceptable option. Prior to the notion that hetero and homosexual desire represented entirely distinct forms of eroticism, it was commonly presumed that "normal" men had sex with other men out of sexual *excess* (rather than sexual *difference*), and that same-sex contact between men would take place "naturally" if no women were immediately available. Krafft-Ebing, for example, wrote that "The strength of the sexual instinct is most markedly shown by the fact that such circumstances ['where abstinence from normal sexual indulgence is enforced'] are sufficient to overcome repugnance for the unnatural act" (1999 [1903]: 490-1; see also 505-6). Even as recently as the 1920s, one man interviewed in a saloon noted bluntly that, "In a place like this people turn if they never get any cunt or never talk to girls or go any place" (cited in White, 1993: 95). Indeed, many of those who campaigned against female prostitution, both in the eighteenth century and the early twentieth, sought only to regulate the trade rather than to eliminate it, fearing that if men did not have easy access to women, they would turn to each other (Trumbach, 1992 [1991]: 98-100; 1998: 185-6, 204; Chauncey, 1994: 82, 147). Though "normal" men had to be careful to at least present the social fiction that they had

taken only the “man’s role” during sex with other men, little opprobrium attached to their same-sex activities, certainly no more than would be entailed by visiting a female prostitute.⁵

Sexologists frequently identified “true homosexuality” with “inversion,” linking same-sex sexual practice with gender deviance. In many ways, however, this sexological notion of gendered difference simply reflected the social practice of the time. Despite exceptions to the rule—themselves noted by many sexologists—a general trend toward bifurcation of social role among men having sex with each other was widely recognized by middle-class sexologists, eventually becoming reified within medical terminology as a distinction between “homosexuality” and “pseudohomosexuality” (or “congenital” versus “acquired” homosexuality). In later years, psychiatrists reframed this difference as a contrast between the “invert” (as embodied by feminine-acting “fairies”) and the “pervert” (a term which referred to conventionally gendered men who nevertheless at least occasionally had sex with other men) (e.g., Terman and Miles, 1936: 256-7; see also Chauncey, 1994: 122-3; Weeks, 2000: 30). While working-class cultures typically only applied stigma to those in the “fairy” category, middle-class medical commentators generally held “perverts” in the same low esteem, negatively classing both types of participants as “homosexuals.” In placing the masculine-acting “pervert” in the same class as the feminine-acting “invert,” the sexological literature, and middle-class culture as a whole, appropriated stigma which had previously applied only to the fairy and gave it a much wider scope.

The figure of the male prostitute appeared within the sexological literature precisely because he represented one of the potentially liminal cases which middle-class doctors wished to specify as being deviant. Indeed, as a “pseudohomosexual,” his morality was subject to even greater levels of critique than those displaying signs of “true homosexuality.” Many of the early sexologists advocated legal leniency and social understanding for those with the “sickly perversion” of true homosexuality (the middle-class pattern), while calling for punishment and moral reform for those manifesting “immoral perversity” (the working-class pattern) (e.g., Krafft-Ebing, 1909 [1903]: 421, 479; see also Terry, 1999: 48-9; Weeks, 2000: 30; Oosterhuis, 2000: 283). Indeed, class politics played a foundational role in the very inception of the invert/pervert distinction, and in opinions about those placed into each category, as Hirschfeld’s offhanded comments make clear:

As long ago as the eighties of the past [nineteenth] century, Leopold v. Meerscheidt-Hüllessem, a higher police official, had a marked influence. When he first took over the “Pederasts Squad” at the Berlin Police Headquarters, he harbored the same opinion about “unnatural and indecent sex acts” as did most people. He considered them to be promiscuous acts called forth by sexual excesses. As it says in his obituary in our *Jahrbuch* (Annual), “He began to wonder when he had the opportunity to observe that many of the accused were clear-thinking, were often in high social positions, or in general were in respectable occupations, and that in almost every case the accuser turned out to be the lowest class of blackmailer [*sic*; a racist term], miserable riff-raff extorting money. Once v. Meerscheidt-Hüllessem noticed that, he did not let the matter rest. He suspected a psychological motive, the research into which fascinated him. . . .” (2000 [1913]: 1114)⁶

By making “true homosexuality” a ghettoized identity and making it clear that heterosexual “dabbling” would not be sanctioned—that the boundaries of normative heterosexuality would be maintained—the sexological tendency to condemn working-class “perverts” helped to legitimize the call for compassion toward middle-class “inverts.” Homosexual “seduction” of youths was also prohibited within the frame, and medical reformers often spoke in favor of raising the age of sexual consent as a necessary precondition for the decriminalization of homosexuality (see, e.g., Ellis, 1942 [1905]: v.4, 349-50; Oosterhuis, 2000: 172). As time went on, however, the distinction between pseudo-homosexuality and true homosexuality became less tenable, and the categorical “box” of homosexuality extended to include anyone who displayed any tendency toward same-sex sexuality whatsoever. As Havelock Ellis noted in 1905: “A heterosexual person who experiences a homosexual impulse is not today easy to accept. . . . We may expect, therefore, to find ‘pseudohomosexuality,’ or spurious homosexuality, playing a dwindling part in classification,” as indeed it did (1942 [1905]: v.4, 87).

HOMOSEXUAL IDENTITY AND MALE PROSTITUTION IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY⁷

Given the initially limited impact of sexology—the term “homosexual” itself only became widely known in the 1920s and 30s (Freedman,

1987: 103; Katz, 1994: 49, 52)—many working-class men felt free to pursue sex with “fairies,” and some of them were willing to pay for that pleasure. Some of the early “fairies” who sold sex to “normal” men wore clothing more or less identical to that worn by female prostitutes, socially differentiating them from their clientele in the clearest of terms. Transgendered workers often walked the same strolls as female prostitutes (Trumbach, 1992 [1991]: 92; Gilfoyle, 1992: 220; see also Katz, 1983: 258), though their physical appearance generally made them visibly distinguishable from their female counterparts (Chauncey, 1994: 69). Alternatively, female-acting and garbed men might work in fairy-specific establishments, either in saloons where they formed a main attraction for their straight clientele, or in entire brothels devoted to cross-dressing fairies (these were known in the U.S. as “slides”) (Krafft-Ebing, 1999 [1903]: 491-2; Bloch, 1914 [1907]: 519; Hirschfeld, 2000 [1913]: 831-2; Hyde, 1970: 140; Katz, 1976: 40; Evans, 1979: 125; Roberts, 1992: 175; Chauncey, 1994: 33-4, 37-40, 67-8; Katz, 2001: 54; for references on the term “slide,” see Chauncey, 1994: 68; Katz, 1983: 582; Katz, 2001: 290; Minton, 2002: 149). Other commentators likewise noted that even brothels proffering mostly women featured an occasional man in women’s clothing, just in case a client might prefer him to a female (Krafft-Ebing, 1999 [1903]: 492; Rodgers, 1972: 137; Gilfoyle, 1992: 136-7; Katz, 1983: 582; Katz, 2001: 159-60; Minton, 2002: 149, 155). In all-male environments such as the military, gay-identified fairies might simply make it generally known to others that they were available, and thereby advertise to potential clients (Chauncey, 1985: 194). There were also brothels filled with young men (generally 15-22 years of age) who took on feminine mannerisms and even names, but who did not cross-dress. Similarly non-cross-dressing, yet effeminate, young men solicited straight clients while working on their own distinct strolls (Hyde, 1970: 139; Evans, 1979: 237; Katz, 1983: 380; Chauncey, 1994: 67-8, 89-90, 191; Sibalis, 1999: 25; Trumbach, 1999: 105, 107; see also Minton, 2002: 25-6, 151). As Hirschfeld describes the streetwalkers:

[T]hey darken their eyebrows, apply rouge to their cheeks, put on dark or light makeup, apply lipstick, powder themselves, remove every little hair from their face or even their body, put hot curlers in their hair, use drops in their eyes to dilate their pupils, polish and color their nails pink, clean themselves in the most careful manner, and use perfume very discreetly. . . . [G]reat value is placed on so-called “charming clothing”: finely woven, colorful shirts; long, expensive socks with openwork and colorful patterns; whenever

possible the same color as the tie. . . . colorful vests; suits and hats in the latest fashion, as extravagant as possible; and especially truly eye-catching footwear, such as patent leather shoes with wide ribbons and bows or laced shoes in rich yellow with deerskin or spats, as the very latest fashion demands. Rings and bracelets are also frequent. (2000 [1913]: 823)

Though some of these effeminate-acting young men did not self-identify as gay,⁸ their clothing and affectation indicates that they were most likely seen as such by their mostly straight clientele.⁹

As noted, however, “fairies” did not simply act “like women,” but like *particular types* of women, namely female prostitutes (Chauncey, 1994: 60-1; Oosterhuis, 2000: 244). Through occupying the same social spaces as female prostitutes, wearing similar make-up and dress, and taking the “women’s role” in sex, male fairies, whether “working” or not, achieved a similar social position within working-class culture as that held by female prostitutes (Chauncey, 1994: 61, 81-2). Thus, while some “normal” men might accept and enjoy the company of a fairy, others might denigrate, harass and even sexually assault him, particularly if the fairy was in an alien neighborhood where he was not known (60). In some cases, the very same men who had sex with a fairy might beat him up, just as prostitute women sometimes suffered violence from their clients (60; see also Minton, 2002: 26).¹⁰

But while these forms of male prostitution, in which men and youths identified as fairies sold sex to straight men, were predominant at the turn of the century, by the 1910s and 20s they were in rapid decline (Chauncey, 1994: 67). With the spread of sexological discourse and the hetero/homo divide, fewer and fewer “normal” men were willing to hire other men, even if the worker was clearly identified as a fairy.¹¹ Increasing cultural suspicion that the clients of gay men were themselves “homosexual” slowly drove away business, and the figure of the dress-clad fairy in particular became an increasingly marginalized figure amongst male prostitutes. While “straight” strolls featuring effeminate-acting young men continued at least into the early 1930s before dying out (Chauncey, 1994: 89-90; Minton, 2002: 309n99), by 1913 the majority of male prostitution clients were gay-identified (Hirschfeld, 2000 [1913]: 836). Likewise, Berlin at this time featured only around 30 male prostitutes who went about in full female clothing, and Hirschfeld suggests that these few frequently tried to pass as women (2000 [1913]: 821; see also Minton, 2002: 155).¹² During these transitional years (1900-1940), gay-identified men continued to have some success pick-

ing up “normal” men, at times openly and directly approaching them on the street, but this increasingly became limited to a form of non-paid cruising rather than a cash-earning venture.¹³ As in prior historical eras, female prostitutes and gay-identified men essentially competed against each other for straight men’s attention (Hyde, 1948: 11; Chauncey, 1994: 60-1, 64, 81-5), though now a gay men’s lack of cost became one of his selling points (the fact that many gay men were willing to engage in certain sexual practices which female prostitutes typically refused—notably “cocksucking” [Chauncey, 1994: 85, 396n45]—became another selling point, along with their reputed immunity from venereal disease).¹⁴

In its place, a growing gay world generated an increasing consumptive demand for sexual services, and many “normal” men in the working-classes supplemented their wages by prostituting themselves to gay-identified men. If fewer straight men were willing to pay for sex with fairies, many remained willing to have sex, particularly if some sort of material benefit sweetened the exchange. As Chauncey notes, this shift in gendered exchange was reflected in changes to the vernacular terminology:

The term *trade* originally referred to the customer of a fairy prostitute, a meaning analogous to and derived from its usage in the slang of female prostitutes; by the 1910s, it referred to any “straight” man who responded to a gay man’s advances. As one fairy put it in 1919, a man was trade if he “would stand to have ‘queer’ persons fool around [with] him in any way, shape or manner.” *Trade* was also increasingly used in the middle third of the century to refer to straight-identified men who worked as prostitutes serving gay-identified men, reversing the dynamic of economic exchange and desire implied by the original meaning. (1994: 69-70)

Having “normal” men sell sex to “fairies” was not new, however, to the 1920s or 30s. The most notorious form of such prostitution, in which soldiers sold sex to gay-identified men, has its roots at least as far back as the 1700s (Weeks, 1977: 35), when a “homosexual” identity was undergoing its initial stages of development. Within certain regiments, non-commissioned officers (NCOs) apparently began initiating new recruits into prostitution immediately upon enlistment, giving the practice a great deal of subcultural legitimacy and perhaps an element of ritualized structure as well (Simpson et al., 1976: 57 [citing Saul, 1881]).

Havelock Ellis, along with many other medical commentators, noted that "A considerable lack of repugnance to homosexual practices may be found among the lower classes," a fact he directly linked to the widespread prevalence of "barracks prostitution" in which masculine-acting soldiers met fairies at saloons and public houses located near the military bases (1942 [1905]: v.4, 21). "If normalsexuals were to enter these bars," wrote Hirschfeld, "perhaps they would wonder why so many finely dressed gentlemen were sitting there with soldiers; however, they would hardly find anything offensive" (2000 [1913]: 837). Alternatively, many of those seeking extra cash walked along the "soldiers' promenade"—sometimes in full uniform—in order to solicit their clientele (Krafft-Ebing, 1999 [1903]: 251; Bloch, 1914 [1907]: 516, 518; Katz, 1976: 51, 575n47; Hyde, 1970: 140, 299-303; Tripp, 1975: 211-4; see also Krafft-Ebing, 1999 [1903]: 553-4, 556; Oosterhuis, 2000: 141, 193-4, 202, 249).¹⁵

Generally speaking, the availability of soldiers was far greater than the number of clients (Hirschfeld, 2000 [1913]: 620, 824, 839), and soldiers therefore attempted to maintain long-term regulars in order to better guarantee some degree of financial stability (616-7). Soldiers also might desire more from their clients than a straightforward cash for sex transaction, finding in the company of middle-class and aristocratic men an opportunity to be taught manners and tastes which would enable them more opportunity at upward mobility within bourgeois-dominated society (Hirschfeld, 2000 [1913]: 826; see also Minton, 2002: 132). Relations between soldiers and clients could therefore involve a good deal more emotional intimacy than was typical between female prostitutes and their clientele, and at least a few of these relationships developed into a domestic arrangement in which the gay-identified "fairy" would cook, clean, and sew for his soldier-partner during periods of leave (837-8). Of these longer-term engagements, Hirschfeld wrote "One needs to have often had the opportunity to observe the depth of such relationships, the pride in one partner and the devotion of the other, in order to recognize that the concept we associate with the word prostitution does not enter into the matter" (2000 [1913]: 836). Some clients, however, found it impossible to escape "the taint of prostitution in these proceedings" (Ackerly, 1968: 135-6), or complained that the soldiers simply "remained cold" (in Krafft-Ebing, 1999 [1903]: 251; see also Minton, 2002: 132). In any case, whatever social and sexual bonds formed in the course of these relationships, they were generally severed at the conclusion of the soldier's tour of duty (Hirschfeld, 2000 [1913]: 617).¹⁶

Military prostitution was supplemented by a large number of straight-identified youths who also sold sex to gay-identified “fairies.” Although some clients preferred soldiers because their profession was considered a guarantee against the possibility of extortion or robbery (which was an uncommon, but real possibility; Hirschfeld, 2000 [1913]: 29, 522, 659, 616-7, 671, 819-20, 982-3; Bloch, 1914 [1907]: 516, 520, 524; Ackerly, 1968: 137; Hyde, 1976: 19; Chauncey, 1994: 59-60), there were still numerous “normal” men who irregularly supplemented their incomes through prostitution, and in any case, most of these men refused to engage in either extortion or robbery as the practices drove away business (Hirschfeld, 2000 [1913]: 982-3). An Austrian informant of Hirschfeld’s offered the following:

As far as prostitution in civilian life is concerned, for the most part, these people are recruited . . . from individuals without any kind of occupation: failures, youths with police records who have nothing more to lose, and wandering clerks and workers. If people want to be specific, let the following possible categories be given as especially representative: waiter, bartender, typesetter, baker, painter, butcher, and the different kinds of laborers. (2000 [1913]: 617; see also 567, 571, 819)

In other words, prostitution involved a broad cross-section of the male working-class. Most were young, being typically fifteen to twenty, and a small number (Tardieu suggests 13%) were under fifteen (in Hirschfeld, 2000 [1913]: 563; see also 826). While a small number of adult men began to work regularly for a gay clientele—in some cases adopting masculine garb that recalled various iconic figures of the working-class¹⁷—the majority worked only occasionally, even on a happenstance basis, gaining their clients only from those mostly gay men who approached them directly. Pherender estimated that turn-of-the-century Berlin featured some 400 full-time male prostitutes, and some 10-12,000 part-timers (in Hirschfeld, 2000 [1913]: 821; see also Weeks, 1991: 58, 61; Mayne, 1975 [1908]: 221-2, 426-38, 638-41).

Like soldier-prostitution, the prostitution of working-class male youth had an extended history. Michael Rocke presents powerful evidence from fifteenth century Florence that a significant percentage of adolescent aged male youth (12-19 years old) in that town developed long-term sexual relations with wealthy benefactors (who were most commonly in their 20s, but who might be older as well). According to Rocke, these liaisons sometimes met with the support of their youth’s

parents as they too benefited financially from the arrangements (1989, 1994: 175-82; see also Trumbach, 1992 [1991], 1998 who argues that this pattern was common in much of Europe).¹⁸ Be that as it may, the social practices and meanings associated with such intergenerational contacts had changed significantly by the end of the nineteenth century, and they would change even more until the practice was completely transformed and then virtually eliminated during the twentieth. While youths in Renaissance Florence apparently came from all classes (Rocke, 1989: 15), the young men involved at the end of the nineteenth century were overwhelmingly limited to the working-class. Hirschfeld's Austrian informant specifies that it was in fact the poorer youths among the working-class who were most involved, yet this 1913 portrayal already indicates that a shift may have occurred from the 1890s, when very respectable elements of the working class—lower level civil servants, for example—participated in prostitution as a means to gain extra cash. Indeed, the relatively high status of the youths involved in several male prostitution scandals during the 1880s and 90s was a matter of official concern, and served to make the already troubling incidents that much more disturbing. During the Cleveland Street Affair of 1889, for example, in which a small handful of messenger boys from the royal General Post Office were found to be moonlighting at a nearby gay brothel, the lead investigator wrote an internal memo stating that it was the duty of his office "to enforce the law and protect the children of *respectable* parents," especially as these youths were public servants (emphasis added; Simpson et al., 1976: 73).¹⁹ By the first decades of the twentieth century, this type of state scrutiny had effectively pushed even moderately esteemed youth out of the sex trade.

But, given the widespread poverty associated with the increasing industrialization of the era, this limitation left a tremendously large number of youth who might still be available. Darkened movie theaters, many with private rooms (Hirschfeld, 2000 [1913]: 791) and public lavatories were the most notorious pickup areas, but prostitution might also happen in any of the gay cruising zones throughout the city: public gardens, bars, riverwalks, etc. (616). Indeed, pickups could happen practically anywhere, particularly as there was no particular "look" which identified who was and who was not willing to prostitute; *most* of the young poor and working-class were willing to participate. For example, Hirschfeld describes one gay man who sent telegrams to himself simply in order to contact random messenger boys, whom he then propositioned with apparent success (Hirschfeld, 2000 [1913]: 822-3). A second case de-

scribed by Hirschfeld similarly suggests the ease with which gay men solicited working-class youths from the general population:

Many years ago in Hamburg, there was an Urning [homosexual] who had the habit of going to the labor market whenever the unemployed went there in throngs to find work. He looked over the young men to see which ones best matched his type and asked him in the low German of Hamburg if for a small fee he would help him move a chest of drawers in his residence. All of them were most willing, and when they reached the gentleman's abode, they did not resist when they understood that he had totally different desires in mind. After these events had been repeated many times and word gradually got around, whenever the gentleman appeared at the labor market, a whole group of young lads would already be approaching him with the words, "We also move chests of drawers." This statement gradually assumed the character of a standard quotation that went beyond the gathering spot of the unemployed, especially among the dock workers at the harbor, the homeless in the park, and among the destitute willing to offer themselves to homosexuals for a small amount of money. (2000 [1913]: 829)

However apocryphal, this case illustrates the sheer normality of selling sex among poor and working-class male youths. While scandal and punishment could sometimes result from approaching straight youth (e.g., Krafft-Ebing, 1999 [1903]: 323, 562; see also van der Meer, 1996: 158), gay-identified fairies had enough success with working-class men in general as to approach random individuals on the street; "ninety-nine normal men out of a hundred have been accosted on the streets by inverts," as one observer put it (quoted in Ellis, 1942 [1905]: v.4, 351).²⁰ The practice of prostitution was extremely widespread, and in fact constituted a primary means of sexual interaction for many gay men (especially those in the middle-class or above). As Weeks notes, "given the furtiveness, the need for caution, and the great disparities of wealth and social position among the participants, the cash nexus inevitably dominated" in the emerging gay culture as a whole (1985: 120).²¹

Weeks comments upon the nature of these sexual contacts between gay-identified middle- and upper-class men and their paid working-class partners, referring to it as a form of "sexual colonialism." Oscar Wilde, for example, was reported to have said he preferred sex with working-class youths because "their passion was all body and no soul" (in Weeks, 1977: 40; 1991: 55-7). Other gay men felt that their class privi-

lege gave them added confidence in dealing with working-class men, or even that their economic advantage enabled them to maintain relationships with semi-dependent others (in Minton, 2002: 191, 217). In a less critical vein, some commentators argue that middle-class gay men simply sought to escape stifling bourgeois mores through their engagement with working-class men (Oosterhuis, 2000: 201-2; Minton, 2002: 190). A number of middle-class gay men, in fact, believed that sex offered an opportunity for reconciliation between the classes. "Eros is a great leveller," wrote the early gay rights advocate and sexologist Edward Carpenter (1908: 114-5; see also Weeks, 1977: 41). Another gay man, J.A. Symonds, wrote of similar hopes in a letter to Carpenter:

The blending of Social Strata in masculine love seems to me one of its most pronounced, and socially hopeful features. Where it appears, it abolishes class distinctions, and opens by a single operation the cataract-blinded life to their futilities. (quoted in Weeks, 1977: 41)

Sexual liaisons sometimes did have a positive political impact upon men of higher status. A certain Count Cajus was sufficiently moved by his experiences with working-class men to declare "I see my brother in the lowest, and that is the way it is with almost all of us" (in Hirschfeld, 2000 [1913]: 728). Indeed, many observers who were critical of male homosexuality feared it precisely because of its tendency to blur class distinctions (Terry, 1999: 38, 346; also see Trumbach, 1999: 105). But whatever good came from this mixing of the middle and working classes, it clearly did not erase class difference. Middle-class gay men often fetishized the "genuine manliness" and class difference of working-class men, seeing sex with them as akin to "feasting with panthers," as Wilde put it (quoted in Weeks, 1977: 43; see also Davidoff, 1979, on heterosexual "sexual colonialism" during the Victorian period).

For their part, many working-class youths approached prostitution as a simple means to an end. As Maynard comments, "[F]or many . . . poor boys, sexual relations were rooted in a distinct moral economy in which working-class boys traded sex in exchange for food, shelter, amusement, money, and companionship" (1997: 196). Interested adolescents openly shared information with each other regarding who was a client and what exactly they wanted: "men and their acts of indecency are the talk of boys all over the city," offered one observer (quoted in Maynard, 1997: 206; see also Hirschfeld, 2000 [1913]: 819). Working-class parents did not necessarily approve of this behavior, and at times they took

action against the adult clients, particularly if a relationship was ongoing and deemed to be exploitative (Maynard, 1997: 229-30). Yet parents sometimes knew about and condoned their sons' activities, being in need of the additional income that their sons brought in (230-1; Hirschfeld, 2000 [1913]: 818, 829; Henry: 1948 [1941]: 433). Working-class boys were generally expected to contribute to the household economy, often taking dangerous jobs in the process (indeed, children had a rate of workplace-related accidents that was three times that of adults; NCLC, 1927: 10), and these facts helped shift the moral calculus in favor of toleration. Maynard writes:

Although it is relatively easy to document that working-class parents had a range of responses toward boys' sexual relations with men, it is less easy to explain what accounts for this mix. We might speculate that working-class boys and their parents had their own sense of what posed real dangers and threats. In contrast to moral reformers who singled out sex on the streets, boys were more likely to point to their work and workplaces [as sites of danger]. . . . Even though child factory labor began to decline from the 1890s, many Ontario boys continued to work in dangerous and demanding jobs well into the early twentieth century. In view of the dangers and meagre remuneration of the workplace, it is perhaps not so hard to understand why some boys chose the streets and sex with men, in which a few minutes up a laneway or in a theater might earn them as much as or more than a long day at a mill or factory. The actions of mothers [*sic*; and fathers] who hired out their sons or who attempted to capitalize on the discovery of their sons' sexual relations were also rooted in the often harsh economic realities of working-class life. Certainly, some of the boys understood it this way. Dominick's final response to the court's inability to understand his sexual relations with a man were the words, "My mother is poor." (1997: 231-2)

For many youth, prostitution served as an important source of income for survival; one youth, for example, explained that the reason he traded sex for money was straightforwardly "So I won't steal" (Hirschfeld, 2000 [1913]: 818). Other less desperate youth, however, found in paid sex a means through which to obtain extra money for entertainment purposes, sometimes even simply trading sex for free admittance into a moviehouse (Maynard, 1997: 207). While some youth used paid sex as a bridge toward their own adoption of a gay identity (Chauncey, 1994:

194-5; Maynard, 1997: 212), for most prostitution remained simply a means to an end. This attitude of sexual pragmatism, in which sex with other men was not necessarily seen as a tremendously important happenstance (Maynard, 1997: 234-5), dominated much of the working class.²²

Despite their willingness to have sex with men, sexological ideas concerning gay identity made certain acts more acceptable than others. Like many other straight, working-class men, adolescent working-class male youth in the early 1920s and 30s tended to not see themselves as being “fairies” if they took only insertive roles. This represented a contraction from previous centuries in which adolescent males (though not adults) could take “passive” roles and not automatically become “queers.” Even in the late nineteenth century, for example, typical sex acts between middle or upper-class gay adult men and working-class male youth involved “passive” and effeminizing behaviors on the part of the youth. Older clients frequently took dominant positions with younger prostitutes, sometimes anally penetrating the youth (Krafft-Ebing, 1999 [1903]: 463, 468, 493, 498), or alternatively engaging in interfemoral sex or having the youth orally stimulate them (for example, Hyde, 1976: 21-3). Similarly, one of the youths at Oscar Wilde’s 1895 trial testified that Wilde had indeed “committed the act of sodomy ” upon him two years prior (when he was nineteen):

I was asked by Wilde to imagine that I was a woman and he was my lover. I had to keep up this illusion. I used to sit on his knees and he used to . . . as a man might amuse himself with a girl. Wilde insisted on this filthy make-believe being kept up. (Hyde, 1948: 193)

However, although these young men were willing to take on the “feminine” role, there was some embarrassment and shame when the acts became publicly known. Another of the young men testifying against Oscar Wilde, for example, said that he had left his job because his fellow clerks teased him about the affair, calling him “Mrs. Wilde” and “Miss Oscar” (215; his father also asked him to leave his home even though the youth denied ever having been sexual with Wilde). Thus, even during the mid-1890s, a young man could have difficulty maintaining his masculine identity if it became publicly identified that he had taken on an effeminate sexual role.

Powerful outsiders often brought even harsher judgements than the youth’s peers. Calling male prostitution “the darkest stain on the history

of humanity" (1999 [1903]: 497), Krafft-Ebing referred to men who sold sex to men as "human monstrosities" (494). Likewise, one of the tabloids at the time of the Wilde trial ran an editorial which called the young men involved a "gang of harlots," continuing in no uncertain terms:

These unsexed blackguards [sic] are the putrid spawn of civilization. It did not require Wilde to degrade them. They were brutes before he ever set eyes on them. It is appalling to think that the conviction of any man should depend upon the testimony of such loathsome creatures. (from *Reynolds' Newspaper*, May 26, 1895; quoted in Cohen, 1993: 255-6n8)

Other newspapers made more oblique references to "the depraved life of certain lads" (*Star*, April 30, 1895, in Cohen, 1993: 198) or criticized the working-class youth as "unhealthy boys who posed as sharers of his [Wilde's] culture" (in Weeks, 1977: 20). A "respectable" class standing could, however, mitigate against such harsh criticism. In the earlier Cleveland Street case, for example, House of Commons MP Henry Labouchère argued that the involved youths were not akin to most "professional wretches" simply by virtue of the fact that they worked in the Post Office (Hyde, 1976: 28); as he saw the matter, the youth were truly "more sinned against than sinning" (28). Nevertheless, the young men working at the Post Office eventually lost their jobs because of their indiscretions (Simpson et al., 1976: 134). This was a minor trifle, however, in comparison with the treatment sometimes meted out to those without the benefit of class privilege: England's Vagrancy Act, passed in 1898, specified whipping as the punishment for male solicitation (both paid and unpaid), though it is not entirely clear how frequently this punishment was actually meted out (Hyde, 1970: 325). In France and Germany, alternate forms of discipline might involve being sent to a correctional institute until adulthood (Hirschfeld, 2000 [1913]: 840; Mackey, 1985 [1926]).

Regardless of class standing, Victorian society did not hold underage boys (those under fourteen) legally responsible for sex with an older man, and generally sought to protect "unblemished" youth from the seductions of older men (Simpson et al., 1976: 131; see also Katz, 1976: 35-6; 1983: 233). Krafft-Ebing, for example, suggested that boys and young men were "ruined in body and soul" through sex with older men, and argued that more care be taken to prevent such misfortune (1999 [1903]: 365).²³ In practice, however, when sex actually occurred,

the young man was generally treated as an accomplice who was at least partially responsible for seducing the older man, particularly if the youth accepted any money or gifts in the exchange (Maynard, 1997: 201-4, 222-3, 228; see also Trumbach, 1992: 94 for similarities with other cases in the 1750s).²⁴ Krafft-Ebing, for example, writes with apparent disdain for

individuals of the lowest class who, having had the misfortune to be seduced in boyhood by debauchees, endured pain and disgust for the sake of money. They thus became morally depraved to the extent that, even when they were more mature, in more mature years, they take pleasure in being male prostitutes. (1999 [1903]: 506)

In this regard, Krafft-Ebing suggested that only certain “predisposed” youth would be negatively impacted by sexual experiences with older men (365, 368), and argued that biological and social factors “predestined” certain young men for “this abominable career” (494). Sexologist Albert Moll likewise argued that “He only can be seduced who is capable of being seduced,” (an opinion reiterated by Havelock Ellis (1942 [1905]: v.4, 323). While sexologists frequently made subtle distinctions between such “seduced” youth (who became immoral “pseudohomosexuals”) and “true” homosexuals (who were morbid, but morally blameless), their opinions regarding male prostitution and psychological “predispositions” blurred this line. Popular opinion, meanwhile, was less ambivalent, and clearly identified both the youth and their seducers as being of one and the same type. François Carlier, for example, head of the Paris vice squad from 1860 to 1870, straightforwardly asserted that homosexuality and male prostitution were simply “two parts of a whole” (1887; quoted in Smith, 1997: 95). In either case, however, male prostitutes were seen as thoroughly depraved individuals. Being identified as a prostitute thus effectively rendered young men “unhealthy” and unworthy of being saved, particularly if the youth’s class standing already rendered him morally suspect.

Despite these harsh judgements, it seems that most male youth in the working class paid more attention to the sentiments of their peers and parents than to the thoughts of respectable society. By the 1930s, many working class male youth were still engaging in occasional prostitution, but a growing internalization of the hetero/homo divide had by this time made most of them unwilling to engage in “passive” sex acts. This shift can be seen in the direction of questioning present in later investigations

of the issue, as in this interview from the early 1930s with a New York youth who had been paid for sex in a local theater house:

Q: Did you ever run up against a fag?

A: Plenty.

Q: How often?

A: I don't know.

Q: Did you ever have anything to do with them?

A: Sure, if I got paid for it.

Q: How much would you get?

A: Whatever they had, take it.

Q: What do they do, blow you?

A: That is all.

Q: How do you feel after that?

A: I feel all right. (Thrasher, 1935: 236)

The leading nature of the question, "What do they do, blow you?," reveals that this was the common conception of sexual activity in the theaters, while at the same time informing the youth what the proper answer to the question might be. While not all youth limited themselves to receiving oral sex (see many examples in Maynard, 1997), the general trend away from "effeminizing" acts is clear. Even as early as 1913, Hirschfeld estimated that 40% of sex acts between men involved nothing more than mutual masturbation (2000 [1913]: 339-43; see also Ellis, 1942 [1905]: v.4, 282; Bloch, 1914 [1907]: 509).²⁵ The new restrictions upon sexual behavior were not always happily welcomed by clients, and one gay man who cruised both young, working-class men and soldiers during the 1920s complained that "those normal young men who request for themselves this form of amusement [oral sex] never offer it in return" (Ackerly, 1968: 130).

Young men were not only less willing to engage in "passive" sex acts, however, they were also less willing to take on the effeminate mannerisms and clothing which had previously acted as signal of male sexual availability (Chauncey, 1994: 56). While at least a small number of straight but "professionally-minded" young men had worn rouge and powder in order to attract their mostly straight clientele (as noted

above), this aspect of the trade began to diminish. Instead, a growing number of full-time prostitutes became “aggressively masculine in their self-presentation,” thereby gaining the name “rough trade” from gay men (192; Minton, 2002: 139). During the Depression years, when many men were pushed into prostitution by economic want, rough trade effectively overwhelmed the old effeminate-style of streetwalking, joining the soldier-prostitute strolls and pushing the remaining fairy prostitutes to more marginalized locations (Chauncey, 1994: 192; Minton, 2002: 47, 139). This transition, which Chauncey identifies as occurring in New York City during 1932 (though see Minton, 2002: 139), marks the final passing of widespread straight cruising of fairy men. While fairy prostitutes continued to exist, and although some straight men even cruised the new generation of young but “normal” youth (Chauncey, 1994: 89-90), gay men now dominated the client base. Gay men’s preferences typically inclined them toward hiring “real men” (i.e., straight, masculine-acting and preferably working-class men), leading to the establishment of a new type of brothel in which straight men provided services for a mostly gay clientele (Minton, 2002: 149-50). Known as “peg houses,”²⁶ these new institutions rapidly supplanted the older, fairy-dominated “slides,” which were on the decline. A small number of gay men also began to hire other gay men in the 1920s, marking the first time in which gay men regularly purchased sex from each other. This pattern represented only a small minority, however, and the men selling sex within this new scene were discreetly normative in appearance, not effeminate.²⁷ In New York City, Chauncey notes that these “well-dressed” and “mannered” gay-identified prostitutes worked on the very same streets (in Times Square) as the rougher-looking straight men who offered themselves as “trade,” but he suggests that the two groups had very little contact with each other (1994: 191; Minton, however, points out that in contrast to the mostly white workers of Times Square, straight African-American hustlers in Harlem worked side-by-side their flamboyantly fairy counterparts; 2002: 149; Minton also points out that at least some homosexual hustlers had ongoing sexual relationships with heterosexual hustlers; 309n99).

While the rise of a gay subculture brought with it an expanding commercial demand for new types of male prostitutes, straight and gay, the increasing visibility of the subculture brought with it much unwanted attention. Prosecutions for sodomy, for example, dramatically increased from 1880s to the 1920s (Chauncey, 1994: 140), and a wave of new anti-homosexual laws in several European countries and the

United States marked the final quarter of the nineteenth century.²⁸ At the same time, the definition of “childhood” began to change and be expanded by middle-class reformers, greatly emphasizing the importance of “childhood innocence” on sexual matters (Weeks, 1977: 19-20; Beisel, 1997). Concerned with the prevalence of youth prostitution, advocates in the United States successfully raised the legal age of sexual consent during these years, commonly pushing it from 10 (and as low as 7) in 1886 to an average of about 14 in 1895 (Pivar, 1973: 139-46). Age of consent reformers were mostly concerned with heterosexual prostitution,²⁹ but nevertheless, in the years prior to World War One, the confluence of anti-gay sentiment and an increased emphasis on maintaining children’s innocence lead the U.S.-based Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (SPCC) to initiate a campaign against the sexual exploitation of underaged boys (Chauncey, 1994: 140). Additional police scrutiny against homosexuality more generally followed during World War One (141-8), and a full-fledged police crackdown was initiated from 1916 to 1920 (148). Hirschfeld commented upon the effects that similar sentiment against homosexuality was beginning to have in Austria, where he had visited:

[I]t is absolutely incredible what curiosity, espionage, and denunciation have caused. For example, on the street, an older gentleman asking a young fellow for some kind of information is enough for several passers-by to stop and listen, and when the older gentleman leaves, to ask the young man what the gentleman wanted from him. The police have carte blanche with regard to homosexuals. With my own eyes I have seen how in the city park in broad daylight two distinguished gentlemen, without any direct cause, were stopped right in public and asked for identification. The police forbade a young fellow, who is in fact not a homosexual, from entering the city park, because, after standing for a rather lengthy period of time on the banks of the pond, he suddenly asked a gentleman he found himself standing next to what time it was. (2000 [1913]: 618).

Campaigns such as these, and a general rise in anti-gay sentiment, made it increasingly difficult for gay men to search for “trade,” whether with youths or other adults. Gay-identified men continued to see masculine-acting prostitutes throughout the first third of the century (as seen above), but the rising tide of heterosexism, and heterosexuality, would eventually take a toll.

**MID-CENTURY ACCOUNTS:
LIMITING THE FIELD**

Two waves of anti-gay hysteria swept across the United States, the first from 1937 to 1940 (when FBI director J. Edgar Hoover called for a “War on the Sex Criminal”; Freedman, 1987: 94), and the second from 1949 to 1955 (the McCarthy period). Media and police focused tremendous national attention upon the “sex fiends” and “sexual psychopaths” who allegedly threatened both boy and girl children across the country (92). Pamphlets distributed in schools during the McCarthy period warned children to “keep together” and not play alone, while boys in particular were told to “NEVER wait around in toilets” (capitalization in original; Chauncey: 1993; 174).³⁰ While the “sexual psychopath” was not exclusively a gay figure, gay men as a group were identified as violent child molesters (103-4), and therefore bore the brunt of the heightened negative attention. Most of the newly-created “peg-houses” were shut down by the police (Minton, 2002: 152-3), and police round-ups of gay men cruising the street became common, particularly after any child, anywhere, was indeed found to be murdered (94; see also Miller, 2002). The national hysteria concerning “sex fiends” served to draw even stricter boundaries between “normal” men and “perverts,” significantly sharpening the hetero/homo divide in the process (Freedman, 1987: 100). Very little remained of the earlier categorization based on the linked categories of gender (effeminate versus butch) and sexual position (bottom or top), and in its place a division based upon “sexual object” (male or female) came more fully to the fore. As the sexological perspective on “homosexuality” moved toward hegemonic status, it became increasingly difficult for working-class men to engage in sex with men without finding their status as “normal men” threatened. While Hamilton’s 1929 survey showed that 56% of men had engaged in some sort of same-sex activity during their lives (17% after the age of 18; cited in White, 1993: 153), and Kinsey’s more authoritative mid-century study documented that an even more surprising 37% of adult men had experienced at least one same-sex contact to the point of orgasm (Kinsey et al., 1948: 623-4), their figures most likely documented a declining trend. Over the decades, fewer and fewer straight, working-class men were willing to engage in sex with other men, leading some gay men to complain because of the increasing lack of sex partners (Chauncey, 1994: 22). Thus, while at first the growing hegemony of the homosexual ideology reduced the number of “normal” men who were willing to actively seek out fairies as clients, it eventually cut

down upon the number of working-class men who were willing to act as trade, even for a price. As the increasing use of the term *trade* to refer more directly to monied exchanges suggests (see Chauncey, above), the pool of available straight men slowly became restricted to undisguised cash for sex transactions with specialists: “street hustlers.” Male prostitutes could no longer regularly be found among the poor and working-class as a whole, but instead began to restrict their activities to the strolls and bars which had formed only a subset of the trade in prior years. Public exceptions to heterosexual manliness were now physically confined to discreet zones of “homosexual” activity.

The ongoing rise of the hetero/homo dichotomy affected men engaging in prostitution in a variety of other ways as well. While previously a wide-cross section of the straight male working-class had been willing to trade sex for money, by mid-century only the most marginalized were willing to deal with the stigma associated with gay identity. The literature concerning male prostitution in the 1950s, 1960s, and even into the early 1970s is replete with stories of “deviants” or “hoodlum types” who engaged in prostitution as a means of obtaining spending money. For example, Albert Reiss’s classic sociological essay, “The Social Integration of Peers and Queers,” argues that “Boys who undertake the peer-queer transaction [i.e., those youths who engage in prostitution] are generally members of career-oriented delinquent groups” (1987 [1961]: 355).³¹ Likewise, the psychiatrist George Henry noted the presence of “hoodlum homosexuals” who “become prostitutes or, at least, must be entertained lavishly before they submit to sexual intimacy. . . . They readily admit intimacy with effeminate men, but only as a means of earning a livelihood” (1985 [1955]: 43). Henry’s description confirms other reports while adding a few details:

The majority of these men are not homosexual by preference. They yield to homosexuals because, in the beginning at least, hustling appears to be an easy and exciting way of maintaining themselves. Hustlers vary in age from sixteen to twenty-six. The period of their activity varies from a few months to several years. They are or become delinquents, and they usually engage in a variety of criminal activities. Like most delinquents, they are rebellious against authority, law and social order. They have few scruples as to the manner in which they satisfy their immediate personal needs. (150)

Gone for the most part was the “barracks prostitution,” so common in the prior decades.³² Gone also was the widespread participation of many sectors within the working-class: the messenger boys and newspaper sellers so common in Victorian-era scandals.³³ In its place remained mostly those “delinquent” youths who, while they generally lived at home and had their survival needs taken care of, nevertheless were unable or unwilling to secure work in the formal labor market, and who used the cash they obtained to finance their recreational activities: “autos and heterosexual dates,” according to sociologist Laud Humphreys [1972 (1971): 75; a small minority, however, also began using prostitution as a means to support drug habits (Henry and Gross, 1941: 440, 441; Gerard and Kornetsky, 1954: 120; Rioux, 1956: 303; Minton, 2002: 128)]. In the larger cities, these youths were supplemented by unemployed men who relied upon prostitution for their survival (or for drugs),³⁴ a small population of straight-identified body-builders who posed in muscle magazines and occasionally prostituted for men on the side (Minton, 2002: 188-9, 192, 317n91), and by a number of gay men who followed the 1920s pattern of selling sex to gay men while remaining somewhat discreet.³⁵ An even smaller number of cross-dressing fairies also continued (see the photographs in Clébert, 1956), but the field was now clearly dominated by the teenaged “delinquent.” One rather late representation of this scene, from a 1977 gay liberation tract, described this type of hustler as follows:

Let's look in on a gang of toughs sitting on the steps in a poor part of a Southern city. They wear leather jackets, blue jeans, and sneakers; they smoke, spit, talk tough, punch each other around. Finally one of them says it's about time to go “fruit-hustling,” it time to “get a queer.” They all agree; the weekend is coming and they need money. Fruit-hustling means standing around on any one of various corners downtown where certain adult male gays know they can be found. (Hunt, 1977: 28-9)

Hunt offers this description without offering any indication as to his sources, and his fanciful prose suggests the scene may have been somewhat apocryphal by this date. Nevertheless, the general contours that Hunt describes are well established.

As in the earlier part of the century, observers made distinctions between two different types of street workers: “part-time hustlers” and “full-time professionals.” As sociologist Edwin Schur put it: “There appear to be two types of prostitutes: hustling delinquents who do not con-

ceive of their activity as a career, but simply view the homosexual as fair game, as hustling as another way to make money; and male prostitutes who are definitely oriented to hustling as a career. Both types typically insist they are not themselves homosexual" (1965: 90). As in prior decades, only a small minority of street hustlers used their earnings in order to provide for daily survival, while the majority used the cash, in the words of sociologist Laud Humphreys, "to supplement allowances" (1972 [1971]: 75). Other differences between the two groups also existed, as noted by psychologist Wainwright Churchill: "A significant number of unemployed youths—dropouts from school, and other young men who cannot find work—hustle in order to make a few dollars. Some boys who are employed in other work also hustle on the side to supplement their income, often in order to earn enough money to date girls. But the professional, full-time 'hustler' tends to become involved in a way of life largely unknown to the part-time 'hustler' who is just out of school" (1967: 185-6; see also Schur, 1965: 90). Churchill suggested that full-time workers, most of whom were straight, "intermingle" with the gay community, whereas those working on a more part-time basis do not (186). Whereas most "professionals" in the early part of the century had been fairies themselves, working for a mostly straight clientele, now the full-timers were overwhelmingly straight and working for gay men. A great difference existed between the larger cities and smaller townships on this point, however, in that full-time professional hustlers only existed in the larger cities, as did the larger concentrations of unemployed men. It is notable, however, that even a moderate sized town in the Midwest—Boise, Idaho—with a population of approximately 50,000 at the time, had a male street hustling scene in the 1950s, made up mostly of "delinquent" youth (Gerassi, 1966; see also Minton, 2002: 309n95).

The shift in sexual ideologies impacted the dynamics of male prostitution in ways that extended beyond narrowing down its participants to "delinquent" youths and unemployed men. While many "delinquent" youth remained willing to participate in sex acts with other men for cash, the threat that they themselves might be homosexual increasingly tainted their work. While the growing hegemony of "homosexual" identity had led most youth to abandon "effeminizing" sexual practices as early as the 1930s, by the 1960s many of the "delinquent" youth working as prostitutes began to develop a practice of denying that pleasure drew them in any way toward the sex, even denying that any pleasure was obtained in the act whatsoever. The social distance that hustlers were ultimately required to display in relation to pleasure

marked a significant contrast with the sexual practices of the prior generation. While the sexual ideology of the earlier period required working-class, masculine-acting “normal” men to act only as the inserter during sex (or at least to admit only to such acts in public), it was clearly understood that pleasure was the goal of the act. As noted above, early sexological explanations similarly recognized that “perverts,” while unusual in their object-choice, desired something recognizable as sexual pleasure; the pervert suffered from an overabundance of sexual desire, rather than from desire of a different sort. During the 1950s and 1960s, however, the increasing dominance of the hetero/homo divide made it necessary for those who had sex with men for cash to socially distance themselves from the idea that pleasure had played any role in their motivation. More and more, in fact, it became necessary to entirely deny any pleasure they might have experienced during the acts in order to avoid the onus of the homosexual identity. Prior to this transition, it was possible to identify a sexual ideology among hustlers which openly accepted sexual pleasure within the work. “I like to have a sex party with a man every now and then,” claimed one hustler (in Henry, 1948 [1941]: 472). Referring to such cases, New York City psychiatrist George Henry remarked as late as 1955 that the “hoodlum” types who worked the streets “claim that sex is pleasurable wherever it can be found, and it matters little whether it is obtained from men or women” (1985 [1955]: 43). Six years later, the sociologist Reiss described a much more complex relationship to sexual pleasure:

[A] boy must undertake the relationship with a queer solely as a way of making money; sexual gratification cannot be actively sought as a goal in the relationship. This norm does not preclude a boy from sexual gratification by the act; he simply must not seek this as a goal. Put another way, a boy cannot admit that he failed to get money from the transaction unless he used violence toward the fellator and he cannot admit that he sought it as a means of sexual gratification. (emphasis in original; 1987 [1961]: 354)

Even this small concession to pleasure apparently became dangerous, however, and a mere four years later Schur noted that hustlers took pains to deny that any pleasure was obtained through the sex whatsoever: “The customer gets only what he pays for, and the hustler, as businessman, obtains no sexual satisfaction (or at least seeks to convey that impression)” (1965: 90).³⁶ While the shift from one social practice to another was no doubt more uneven and complex than the linear ten-year

progression represented here, it is clear that over time hustlers were forced to go to increasing lengths to establish themselves as “straight” in the face of an increasingly hegemonic ideology that emphasized the “queer” status of everyone who engaged in same-sex sexual practices for any reason whatsoever. Pleasure ceased to make the work of sex more fun, and instead became increasingly dangerous in its ability to threaten the identities of those being paid.

Other changes in the dynamics of hustling occurred during this period as well. Writers from the 1950s and 1960s report that hustlers sometimes used violence against their clients when they felt their heterosexual status threatened by the interaction. According to Reiss, a potential customer ran little risk of violence “so long as the fellator conform[ed] to the norms governing the transaction in the peer-queer society” (1987 [1961]: 358). These norms precluded “attempting to go beyond the mouth-genital sexual act” (358), calling the hustler by a diminutive, implicitly feminine, nick-name (such as “sweetie”) (359), or violating the affectively neutral stance which allows the hustlers to present their actions as being motivated exclusively for cash (358-9). While sexual norms earlier in the century prohibited “normal” men from engaging in sexual acts other than being fellated, the lack of historical commentary upon violence suggests that physical means were not regularly relied upon as a means to enforce this constraint. The increase in violence by hustlers, operating as a form of “heterosexual panic” in the face of threats to one’s social identity, indicates the comparative difficulty men in the mid-century had maintaining a straight identity while engaging in homosexual acts. In a song loosely based upon his experiences as a teenaged hustler in New York City during the late 1960s, for example, the musician Dee Dee Ramone sang:

Then I took out my razor blade
 Then I did what God forbade
 Now the cops are after me
 But I proved that I’m no sissy.
 (The Ramones, 1976: lyrics from “53rd and 3rd”)

While Dee Dee’s violence is most probably imaginal—or perhaps based upon partial accounts of incidents which circulated on the street—the sentiments he expresses nevertheless exemplify the difficulty young hustlers increasingly faced in coming to terms with the newly risen sexual implications of their work. The song thus provides a sharp contrast with the matter-of-fact tone exhibited by the theater-going youth inter-

viewed in the 1930s (above). Reiss presents still other norms which those involved in sex for cash exchanges had to follow, most notably foregoing any sort of self-identification as a prostitute (360), a category which was associated with homosexuality and applied disparagingly to the smaller number of “punk kids” who traded sex for cash more regularly (perhaps the same “career-oriented professionals” referred to by other commentators, above) (358).

Despite these attempts by many hustlers to stabilize sexually straight self-identities, by 1963, the presumed homosexual identity of hustlers had become a challenge or taunt which could be issued by various outsiders, as illustrated in the following vignette from John Rechy’s semi-autobiographical account of street hustling, *City of Night*:

Suddenly she looks mean, “Why don’t you get out of that scene?” she snaps. “All of you keep telling yourselves you’re straight—and you make it with chicks to prove it—and when you make it with other guys, you say it’s only for the bread—and besides, with them, you don’t do anything back in bed—if you don’t! . . . Sure, maybe it’s true—Now!” She turns the record off. “Why don’t you split the scene, man, *if you really want to!*” (1963: 146)

While the above narrative condenses many separate objections into a single tirade, Rechy notes that challenges to the straight identity of street hustlers were common, acting as a form of “petty vindication” from clients who “put down the hustler’s masculinity—whether correctly or not” (40).

If popular understandings challenged the normality of “delinquent” hustlers, the sexological and psychiatric literature offered even more negative representations, as the moniker “hoodlum homosexual” suggests. As whipping was no longer a viable form of punishment, a more “humane” series of punishments and treatment were proscribed in its place. An early report from the *Delaware State Medical Journal* (Freyhan, 1947), for example, diagnosed a nineteen-year-old street worker as “a rather malignant type of psychopathic personality,” for whom “one may consider lobotomy as a somewhat desperate attempt to change present personality patterns” (quoted in West, 1993: xi).³⁷ A more liberal approach was suggested by William Butts in the *Journal of Psychopathology*:

A law that would allow these boys to be sentenced for an indeterminate period to an institution designed to treat rather than punish

them would be in keeping with modern correctional practices and might at the same time give many of the boys normal useful lives and save society the horror and cost of later crimes. (1947: 676; see also Henry and Gross, 1941: 442n7)

It is unclear how many young men might have been sent to prison or how many, if any, might have been lobotomized as a cure for their prostitution and their “psychopathic personalities.” A 1943 study by a New York psychiatrist, Lewis Doshay, suggests that lobotomies were in fact extremely uncommon. Comparing youths who had been convicted of only prostitution versus those who had been convicted of prostitution and other “delinquent” crimes as well, Doshay found that the majority had simply been given probation (83.3% of those convicted of prostitution alone, and 53.5% of those convicted of other crimes as well). Only .9% of those convicted for prostitution alone were sent to psychiatric institutions (compared to 1.3% of those convicted with additional crimes), and a mere 3.7% were sent to correctional institutions (33.8% of those with other crimes as well) (1943: 72).

Interestingly, however, despite the active persecution of homosexuals during the McCarthy period, the issue of male prostitution tended to elicit little concern from the mainstream populace, surfacing in the popular press only in exceptional instances. Indeed, during a three-decade period spanning from the 1940s to the 1960s, contemporary documents reference its appearance within the mainstream media on only two occasions—once in Boise, Idaho, during 1955-6 (Gerassi, 1966), and the other in Waukesha, Wisconsin, during 1960 (Lloyd, 1976: 56-7). Of these two instances, the case in Boise is particularly well documented and illustrative. According to former *Time* and *Newsweek* editor, John Gerassi, a group of city fathers instigated an anti-homosexual witch-hunt in a political ploy designed to defeat a competing local power broker who happened to be gay. This group arranged for a private investigator to gather details regarding same-sex contact between a few local teenagers and adult men who paid them to receive oral sex. One of the individuals involved in the plot, the editor of *The Idaho Daily Statesman*, ran a highly emotional editorial entitled “Crush the Monster” which suggested that about 100 boys were involved and calling upon city and county agencies to “disinfect” the city (Gerassi, 1966: 3-4). An article in *Time* magazine subsequently suggested that Boise sheltered “a widespread homosexual underworld that . . . had preyed on hundreds of teen-age boys for the past decade” (in Gerassi, 1966: ix). Significantly, none of these accounts mentioned the fact of prostitution. During the next sev-

eral months, fear spread though much of the local population, most noticeably in the form of a rumor that several national airlines had added special flights into Boise in order to accommodate the large number of homosexuals who traveled to the city to procure sex with young boys (40). Several men were ultimately arrested and convicted on charges of homosexual contact, including a number who had sex only with other consenting adults (46). Meanwhile, the opposing power broker who had originally been targeted managed to avoid arrest or any mention in the press throughout the entire affair (289).

Although at first glance it may seem that the politics of the McCarthy period might have more regularly utilized such scandals as a politically useful tool, the reality was that working-class youth were not generally a part of the protected status quo. Gerassi's discussion of the case in Boise makes it clear why the uproar which surrounded the events of that town was so exceptional. In reviewing the incidents, Gerassi downplays the significance of the sexual acts involved, characterizing one of the teens as "a tough juvenile delinquent who knew the score," someone rather unlike the "stupid and innocent kid" portrayed in court documents (58; see also 35-6). A local psychiatrist involved in the case similarly commented "That hard core of kids supposedly seduced by homosexuals were actually made up of tough gang members," adding that "technically they were minors. . . . but they were much too developed to be considered children" (36). Gerassi also argues, in similarly telling manner, that "many of the so-called minors were male prostitutes. . . . family units were not at stake at all" (1966: 26). These attitudes suggest the class-bound notions of "childhood" and "family" which were at stake in the mid-century persecution of homosexuality, attitudes which did not typically make the occurrence of male prostitution a "crisis" in need of immediate solutions. While middle America proved ready to jump into action when the victims were neutrally described as "teenagers" (a group many parents clearly feared included their own children), they were much less concerned when the participants were "tough gang members" or "male prostitutes" whose status as minors existed only in a "technical" sense. The low status of working-class "hoodlum homosexuals" made it more likely that they would be seen as co-conspiring sexual deviants, rather than as sexually-exploited victims. Lobotomies, while not exactly the order of the day, were perhaps closer to the spirit of the times than child-saving crusades.

**GAY LIBERATION:
VALORIZING THE HOMOSEXUAL PROSTITUTE,
EVEN AGAINST HIS WISHES**

The ascendancy of the sexological ideology of homosexuality dramatically accelerated with the rise of “gay liberation.” By the late 1960s and early 1970s, gay writers were forcefully questioning the “straightness” of any man who had sex of any sort with another man. The male prostitute appeared frequently within the early literature of gay liberation, again assuming his role as a borderline figure lying precisely on the frontier zone between the two sexual ideologies. While a middle-class observer in 1915 had a difficult time determining if the soldier prostitutes of his day “were really homosexual or just prostitutes” (quoted in Katz, 1976: 51), by 1971, Dennis Altman had identified the practice of “selling oneself as a means of coming to terms with stigmatized homosexual desires.” “Hustling,” he argued, “becomes a means of denying one’s homosexual impulses” (1971: 27). As in Rechy’s narrative, even sexual relationships between hustlers and female partners were now identified as resulting from internalized homophobia, being engaged in “as though to establish their heterosexuality beyond any doubt” (Fisher, 1972: 57). Some debate did, of course, exist in this boundary dispute between the two sexual paradigms. One writer of the time argued against the grain, noting that, “Although certain psychoanalysts have claimed that all male prostitutes whose clients are men are ‘really’ homosexual, it appears that most contemporary students of the subject have concluded that there exists a significant number of these male prostitutes who are not basically gay” (Hoffman, 1968: 149). One of the more “definitive” studies upon this topic was performed as recently as 1974, when sexologist Kurt Freund measured the erections of male prostitutes while showing them gay and straight pornography, concluding that most of the workers were basically heterosexual (1974: 30). Yet the “gay lib” perspective on straight-identified prostitutes suggested that such men were living in the closet and thereby holding up the revolution: “As for the hustler,” wrote one observer, “most gays look down upon him for maintaining that he’s really straight” (Hunt, 1977: 136).

The rise of gay liberation made it still more difficult for men to engage in same-sex sexual relations without being forced to take on the onus of the homosexual identification. The older paradigm in which working-class men experienced sexual pleasure with “fairy” men and maintained their normative status became virtually untenable with the

increasing visibility of gay life. For straight-identified hustlers, the increasing hegemony of the ideology of homosexuality meant that the fact of engaging in sex with another man placed one's own sexual identity into doubt, particularly if any sexual pleasure resulted from the act. In this sense, the rise of an openly gay community not only made it more possible for men who experience same-sex desires to claim a gay identity for themselves, it also made it more difficult for such men to *avoid* the designation. For prostitute men who identified as straight, the work now had the potential to conjure physical and emotional responses whose newly associated meanings were difficult to ignore: pleasure signified homosexuality.

Yet if the ideology of homosexuality brought difficult personal challenges for some hustlers, for others, the rise of gay liberation led toward an increasing acceptance of gay or bisexual self-identity. One of the first openly gay authors of this period was, in fact, a formerly straight-identified hustler who wrote more or less autobiographically of his life. The previously mentioned *City of Night* (Rechy, 1963), which remained on bestseller lists for months and is now considered a gay classic, documented precisely the central character's confrontation with his own inclinations toward homosexuality. Both Rechy and his main character represent one of the more "professionally-oriented" hustlers identified by Churchill, Schur, and Humphreys (above). As such, Rechy does not present an accurate image of the "delinquent" type of worker; he is, as Churchill reminds us, "involved in a way of life largely unknown to the part-time 'hustler' who is just out of school" (1967: 186). As is clear from Rechy's story, this full-time orientation led to a much greater degree of involvement with gay people and in gay cultural life, even before he himself came to identify as gay.

Rechy's movement from straight to gay identification was, however, somewhat ahead of the general cultural trend—indeed, for a time, his work stood at the forefront of the movement for gay liberation—yet Rechy's experiences highlight tendencies which impacted many hustlers who succeeded him. While Rechy was an early innovator, he was far from the last hustler to adopt a gay identity. In a later nonfiction account, Rechy connected the rise of gay power to the increasing openness of hustlers toward gay identity.

[D]uring a gay parade on Hollywood Boulevard, groups of malehustlers of a breed notorious for their posture that they are not gay—"just hustling for bread"—cheered marching contingents of open homosexuals. . . . That very night on Selma [one of the streets

known for hustling activity], a group of girls sped by in a car and yelled, “Queers! Queers!” at the masculine, tough-looking hustlers milling about on the street. Only a few years earlier that breed would have answered with a ball-wounded, “Come back and I’ll show you who’s queer!” Not that night. There was an almost total indifference. One of the most masculine of the street hustlers southern-drawled at the shouting women: “Yeah, we queer, so what?” (1977: 157-8)

While some hustlers undoubtedly maintained a straight self-identity, the willingness of others to accept a queer label, even on a momentary, purely tactical basis, marked a growing acceptance of not only gay identity, but of middle-class sexual categorization schemas. Despite this tentative dialogue between gay liberation and street hustlers, most male street prostitutes continued to occupy only very marginal spaces within the gay social world (Sonenschein, 1973: 84), and did not generally participate in the gay political struggle (McNamara, 1965: 4). Quite the contrary, street hustlers often felt quite hostile to gay liberation, seeing in it a movement which excluded them and their concerns. As gay activist Arthur Bell narrates it:

I ask Eddie [a bisexual-identified, New York hustler in his late teens] about gay liberation and its effect on the hustling scene. A spray of four-letter words comes out: the movement doesn’t understand hustling, those guys don’t give a shit about hustlers, hustlers are an embarrassment, they can take their liberation and shove it. Plus, he doesn’t need gay lib’s protection, he can handle himself. (1973: 139)

In added irony, for the majority of those who worked on the street, identifying as straight often retained an economic benefit due to clientele preference for “trade,” despite gay liberation. In a 1974 interview, for example, Rechy noted that he typically projected a straight identity when hustling, having found himself generally unable to announce his actual gay identification: “I have on occasion made a definite statement [proclaiming himself gay], and the person has lost interest in me” (1978 [1974]: 266). Psychiatrist Martin Hoffman similarly commented that, “Many hustlers . . . admit to being gay,” yet they might refuse to perform oral sex on a client “because they either know or think they know that their scores would prefer to believe that they are straight” (1979 [1972]: 281). Perhaps as a result of these conflicting impulses, a new

sexual identification emerged amongst some street hustlers, identified by Rechy as “the masculine bisexual” (1977: 155). Bisexual identification in this sense may have acted as a useful compromise between client demands for straightness and broader social mandates which recognized an essentially gay identity.

However, while a preference for straight (or semi-straight) trade was manifest on the streets in the late 1960s, other sexual markets began to open up in which the clients displayed no such tendency. As early gay author Samuel Steward noted, “The hustling business really began to grow in the 1960s. There were even more male whorehouses. . . . There were lots of escort services in San Francisco in the 1960s” (1991: 39; on male brothels during this period, see Pittman, 1971; Adam, 1973; Nicosia and Raff, 1977). Writing in 1971, Laud Humphreys commented that these men did not work the streets, but instead advertised in the underground newspapers or relied upon escort agencies to generate business. He wrote that “In general, the call boys share a gay or ambisexual identity and take pride in their professional status” (1972 [1971]: 75-6). Pop gay author Bruce Rodgers similarly remarked that “Models, unlike the average run-of-the-mill hustlers, admit to being gay” (1972: 136). Rechy noted that even among the street hustlers, a growing number (like himself) began to cruise the streets in pursuit of their own sexual interests, rather than just for money (Rechy, 1977: 155). Although a limited number of gay men had bought sex from other gay men prior to the 1970s (as noted above), the gay liberation era marked the first time that the *majority* of gay men began to buy sex from other gay men, rather than from straight outsiders who lived the bulk of their lives outside the gay world.

The new relationship between client and prostitute produced new sexual practices. The rise of gay liberation and the emergence of the gay-identified prostitute resulted in a resurgence of male prostitutes who were willing to engage their own pleasure in their work. But while the new gay-identified prostitutes resembled their “straight” peers from the turn of the century in their acceptance of pleasure, they differed dramatically in their willingness to participate in a variety of acts and roles. While clients in the late eighteenth century had only sought to act as “tops” with youths, gay men could now pay to take a “dominant” role with adult men. This type of sexual exchange was most common in off-street arrangements, where gay-identity amongst the workers was typical. One commentator, for example, noted that clients calling agencies often sought much more than to give oral satisfaction to the hustler, seeking “versatile” partners who they could anally penetrate, workers

willing to participate in three-ways with another worker, or others who would help create sexual fantasy scenes via costumes (Rodgers, 1972: 136).

While some clients continued to prefer “straight” hustlers, many others came to expect that they would be able to receive sexual stimulation for their money. The resulting possibilities transformed the work dynamics even for those on the street who continued in the prior, “insert-only” modality, as the following interaction, recounted by Rechy, vividly illustrates:

“How much?” a man calls out bluntly to him through the open window of his car. “Twenty.” He’s sure the man isn’t a cop. “And I don’t do anything,” he adds. “What do you mean?” the man asks indignantly. “Oh, hell,” he understands; “you mean you expect me to pay you just to lay back and let me suck your prick? Go fuck yourself in front of a mirror!” (1977: 252)

Although some writers continued to speak of hustlers only taking on the active role (Fisher, 1972: 57), others more carefully noted that “[S]ome straight hustlers (and many gay ones) will do anything in bed, provided especially that the price is right” (Hoffman, 1979 [1972]: 281). While this trend toward “versatility” was most prevalent off the street, it clearly impacted street workers, pushing at least some of those who were least inclined toward the new sexual norms out of the scene. Rock performer and author, Jim Carroll, wrote about his experiences as a 14-year-old hustler in New York City during 1965:

The fag hustling scene gets hairier and hairier all the time. I mean what happened to the old fashioned homo who just wanted to take you home and suck his dick? . . . You just don’t know what the next trick is going to whip out of his attaché case these days . . . Handcuffs, masks, snakes (yeah, that’s right, real ones), chains, whips . . . It’s all out of hand as far as I’m concerned, I’m taking a vacation for a few weeks . . . I’d rather go back to ripping off old ladies or something sensible. (1987 [1978]: 104)

Carroll later, in fact, become “so disgusted with hustling queers” that he decided to give up the practice entirely in favor of mugging people in the park, despite the increased risks and dangers posed by robbery (1987 [1978]: 199).³⁸

The openness many of the gay liberation-era hustlers displayed toward sexual pleasure, combined with their acceptance of a bisexual or gay identification, lead to a significant reworking of the meanings associated with prostitution. While the act represented a simple means of supplementing one's income or allowance for a previous generation of "delinquents," for the first time it became a possible means of affirming one's sexual identity. Speaking more or less autobiographically, John Rechy writes:

There is a terrific, terrible excitement in getting paid by another man for sex. A great psychological release, a feeling that this is where real sexual power lies—not only to be desired by one's own sex but to be paid for being desired, and if one chooses that strict role, not to reciprocate in those encounters; a feeling of emotional detachment as freedom—these are some of the lures; lures implicitly acknowledged as desirable by the very special place the male hustler [sic] occupies in the gay world, entirely different from that of the female prostitute in the straight. Even when he is disdained by those who would never pay for sex, he is still an object of admiration to most, at times an object of jealousy. To "look like a hustler" in gay jargon is to look very, very good. (1977: 153)

Even Jim Carroll acknowledged that at least occasionally he experienced a "strange pleasure" in prostitution, speaking of the "incredible rush of power" he felt having sex in a bathroom "with all those faces staring at my body fucking a mouth on its knees" (1987 [1978]: 188; see also 114). These levels of social meaning were generally alien to a former generation of hustlers, and were only generated as the social power of gay liberation began to introduce new desires and subjectivities into the social field which surrounded male prostitution.

Indeed, for a brief time, the gay-identified prostitute came to represent the new spirit of gay liberation. Just as earlier writers used the figure of the prostitute male in order to illuminate aspects of "homosexuality" more generally, a new generation of gay writers took to the image of the hustler in order to rework the theme. John Rechy's 1963 *City of Night* began this trend, becoming the first gay-themed book to reach national best-seller lists and offering its readership the most explicit scenes of gay sex that had been published to that point. Rechy's characters, however, lived in the nether world of street life: they were uncertain in their gay identities, were mostly unsuccessful in developing the deeper interpersonal ties which they desired, and in fact were quite capable of be-

traying one another. Rechy defended his writing by claiming that “I must tell what I experience” (1978 [1974]: 254), yet he received numerous criticisms from others who wanted a less despairing image of gay life and gay possibility.

The more positive alternative that emerged, tellingly enough, also dealt with hustling, and was first printed as pornography. Samuel Steward, writing under the pen name of Phil Andros, published the first of his pornographic vignettes, “The Poison Tree,” in 1963. Although Steward’s stories, collected into a book entitled *\$tud* (1966), never achieved the popular success of Rechy’s novels, the sensibilities affirmed within the books acted as a forerunner to those within the movement for gay liberation (Preston, 1982: 13). The stories in *\$tud*, along with Steward’s later volumes (including *My Brother the Hustler* [1970] and *San Francisco Hustler* [1970]), all followed the sexual exploits of a gay-identified prostitute as he moved through a social world that was decidedly more friendly, and more humorous, than Rechy’s. Preston writes of the appeal the stories held:

Phil Andros—who was always the main character and narrator of these works as well as the credited author—was a bright, college-educated man who pursued every form of sex, including affection, without apology. A hopeful longing for love was also part of his drive. He lived totally within a gay world, supporting himself as a hustler or a bath house attendant or by some other means that almost never included a compromise with the straight world. Gay sex was good in Phil’s judgment. The only true sin in his world was hypocrisy. . . . It was in many ways the beginning of a gay ethic. (1982: 13)

Unlike his literary predecessors, Phil Andros, the imaginary hustler, did not lead a closeted life. The gay-identified prostitute stood at the forefront of a shift in gay writing, transforming it from what has been called “a literature of guilt and apology” into one of “political defiance and celebration of sexual difference” (Hall, 1988; quoted in Miller, 1995: 477).³⁹

The new social meanings which were applied to male prostitution in the 1960s and 1970s derived from the progressive integration of prostitution into the gay cultural orbit. As noted above, this transformation did not occur evenly within all sectors of the hustling world. Workers on the street typically maintained greater social distance from the gay world than their agency-based counterparts. Nevertheless, gay libera-

tion also brought shifts to street hustling which made it easier for men selling sex to operate, whatever their self-defined sexual identity.

Perhaps most notably, a shift in the gendered norms of the gay community accompanied the rise of gay liberation, the newly found power of the community perhaps making possible an increasing masculinization of the culture. As Dennis Altman noted, "The world of exaggeratedly effeminate gay men that John Rechy portrayed in the early sixties in *City of Night* is fast disappearing" (1982: 58). Laud Humphreys remarked upon the significant ways in which the increasing "virilization" of gay culture altered the work practices of hustlers. According to Humphreys:

Arrival of the new bold masculinity on the gay bar scene has made the bars more suitable for hustlers of drinking age. As recently as 1967, I have seen hustlers ejected from a Midwestern bar that now plays host to them. In those days, they were too easily identified by their rough, masculine appearance that contrasted with the neat effeminacy of the other customers. On both coasts, and increasingly in other parts of the country, bars and coffeehouses are now replacing the streets as sexual markets for hustlers and their scores. (1972 [1971]: 77)

For most street hustlers, this increased intimacy with gay social life marked a sharp departure from the days in which young toughs would from time to time stand on a street corner, having no other contact with gay life. At the same time, the movement of many adult men into the bars altered the dynamics of the street scene for those who remained. As Humphreys noted, only those "of drinking age" were able to enter the bars. An age divide thus began to separate hustlers, with older men being more integrated into gay life than ever before, but leaving the under-age youth who had so characterized the 1950s and 1960s increasingly isolated from the rest of the hustler scene.

THE RISE OF THE RUNAWAY PROSTITUTE: IDENTIFYING INNOCENT VICTIMS⁴⁰

Increasingly, however, the youth who worked the streets no longer fit the descriptions which had characterized them in the past. In correspondence with this shift, fewer and fewer descriptions of "delinquent" hustlers emerge in both sociological and popular literatures of the 1970s,

and instead a new social category begins to predominate: the runaway. A dramatic increase in runaway behavior occurred between 1967 to 1972.⁴¹ In the early 1970s, the imagery used to describe the population of street hustlers began to change to reflect this new social reality. During a 1973 interview, for example, John Rechy spoke of a new type of hustler, “the androgynous, young, usually blond, slender boy” (a description in line with the norms of the middle-class youth culture) (1978 [1974]: 260), and contrasted that with the older type, described as being “quite masculine, wanting to flex our muscles and so on” (260) (a description more in line with working-class “delinquents”). Rechy furthermore noted that the androgynous and muscle-oriented types did not socialize together on the street (268), a fact that seemingly reflects the class-based cultural divide which existed between the two groups. Writing a few years later in 1977, Rechy’s comments suggest the ongoing development of this trend toward middle-class runaways, speaking of “an increasing breed of the young, with no options but the streets—which is when it is all mean and ugly” (154). This new group, Rechy comments, are “eager or desperate” (154), “less proud” than before (155), and willing to work for \$10 “or less when you’re desperate for a place to sleep” (160). By 1976, journalist Robin Lloyd argued that “a large majority” of male prostitutes were runaways (226). The first academic study to provide specific data regarding the topic appeared in 1980, finding that 70% of the full-time prostitutes on the street were runaways (Allen, 1980: 411).⁴²

The new group of runaway youth differed from previous “street kids” in a number of respects. Perhaps most significantly, these new runaways frequently came from white, middle-class families. The rapid supplantation of working-class youth with middle-class runaways set the stage for a dramatic change in the representation of male street prostitution. While a prior generation of impoverished children who had left home during the 1940s, 50s, and early 60s were treated as delinquents in need of either imprisonment or psychiatric control, widespread concern for the new group of runaways spawned a much more sympathetic image. With the social reproduction of the white middle class now at issue, public support began to mount rapidly, resulting in the quick establishment social service agencies designed to assist runaway youth and remove them from the streets. Even a potentially stigmatizing increase in drug use among male street prostitutes (and youth in general) did not impede this newly found concern for runaway youth (Hansen et al., 1966: 9, 13; Bell, 1973: 138-9; Minton, 2002: 210).⁴³ The alternate youth services movement heralded this change, creating more humane

alternatives than typically offered within psychiatric programs or the criminal justice system and explicitly rejecting ideas of deviance and delinquency in favor of a service model (Bresnahan, 1995: 112). Congressional hearings regarding the new runaway phenomenon were subsequently held in 1972 and 1973, culminating with the enactment of the Runaway Youth Act of 1974 (Weisberg, 1985: 4). In keeping with the shift away from punitive approaches designed to counter "delinquency," the new legislation decriminalized age-based status offenses (such as running away) and appropriated monies to support the already-burgeoning shelter system. A feedback loop was created through this means, with journalists going to the social service agencies for information, popularizing the perspectives of the agencies and thereby providing a context for state action; subsequent state action again justified the newsworthiness of the story, adding further momentum to the movement which was created (Brock, 1998: 126).

The new discourse which emerged from this activity framed the youths as socially needy "victims" in need of help, frequently relying upon the depiction of worst-case scenarios in order to generate sympathy and mobilize public support. Popular book titles, such as Robin Lloyd's best-selling *For Money or Love: Boy Prostitution in America* (1976), highlighted the highly unusual mass murder of twenty-seven street hustlers in Houston in 1973 (47-9) and other "commonplace" stories of violence against young boys (110-1). In England, a television documentary entitled *Johnny Go Home* (Deakin and Willis, 1975), which won a British Academy Award and was seen by an estimated 10 million viewers, devoted more than half of its time to a story of a homosexual pedophile who posed as a bishop and extorted sexual favors from runaway boys in his care. Newspaper exposés told similarly frightening stories, screaming with headlines which emphasized the danger of street life and prostitution: "Teen Hooker Tells Sordid Tale: Sex at 10"; "The 18 Month Nightmare of a Mother Whose Child was Trapped by a Pimp"; "Young Street Prostitutes Vulnerable, Alone in World"; and "Street Kids Fight Their Desperate Existence" (the headlines cited are drawn from Canadian newspapers during the mid-1980s; quoted in Brock, 1998: 118; more examples are available in Langum, 1994: 243-4). Journalistic accounts also tended to strongly emphasize the youth and vulnerability of the young street prostitutes, frequently calling them "children" although they cited data which included individuals of up to twenty-one or even twenty-five years of age (120). Despite the hyperbole, these media depictions represented the only source of information many people had, as social scientists tended to neglect the is-

sues of runaway youth for many years (Hagan and McCarthy, 1998: 6-7).

The success these representations had in the mainstream of public opinion resulted not only from the fact that they identified sympathetic victims—white, middle-class youth—but also from the fact that they defined the difficulties these “children” faced in terms of values which supported the bourgeois family, ironically the very institution from which the children had run in the first place. As Brock argues regarding the similarly flawed Canadian Badgley Report (1984) on juvenile prostitution, “No critique was provided of the social institutions (such as the family, homophobia, sexism, racism, structural poverty) that caused or exacerbated young people’s troubles” (1998: 108). While mainstream portrayals sometimes critique parents for not fulfilling their role, this criticism was raised within a context which reasserted the same familial structures that facilitated the abuse. Sereny, for example, concludes her examination of “child prostitution” by arguing that “[t]he children we have met here appear to demonstrate a desperate *need* for family life, for structure in their environment, and for the kind of support found in a faith or in some kind of intellectual discipline” (emphasis in original; 1985: 250). Thus framed, the scandalous nature of teen prostitution acted as a wedge issue against the youth counterculture which had developed in the prior decade. As punk historian Jon Savage noted, “This form of prostitution became an issue at exactly the time as the beginning of the real backlash against the 1960s and ‘permissiveness’” (1992: 103).

Whatever its associated difficulties, prostitution has become increasingly important as a means by which young people can resist abusive family situations, finding in paid sex an independence which society seems otherwise reluctant to provide (to a lesser extent, prostitution served this role historically as well; e.g., Maynard, 1997: 215, 234). Yet rather than identifying systemic problems which cause young people to run away from home, or to be thrown out or otherwise made homeless, journalists typically focused upon the socially-identified dangers of impersonal sex. “The act of prostitution, the selling of self to uncaring strangers, is a traumatic process that destroys self-esteem,” writes Johnson (1992: 18). Prostitution is thus depicted as the primary problem faced by street youth, rather than as an equivocal *solution* to yet other problems (being hungry and homeless, for example). Likewise, these depictions emphasized the danger posed by outside Others rather than acknowledging that runaway behavior can be a reasonable response to abuse. The exclusive focus upon dangerous outsiders has thus created a

narrative of risk on the streets which implicitly supports the reestablishment of a “traditional” family unit. This desire to dramatically render the dangers of street life often outruns the acknowledged facts, as in the following instance:

A study of male hustlers in Denver found that most male prostitutes contracted the disease through intravenous drug use and unpaid homosexual activity, rather than from clients. Unless, of course, one of them turns a trick with someone like Steven Farmer, an AIDS carrier who was sentenced in July 1988 to seven and a half years in prison for knowingly having sex with juvenile prostitutes. (Johnson, 1992: 127-8)

Similarly, Visano reports that workers at social service agencies significantly overestimated the involvement of pimps and other exploitative adult men in introducing new runaways to street prostitution, nearly disregarding the primary role actually played by other friends on the street in the process (1987: 136-7). In focusing upon “official enemies”—pimps and gay male clients—while virtually ignoring the causes which led these youths to leave their homes, these tropes reaffirmed the viability of the “traditional” family model in the face of its increasing disintegration (Brock, 1998: 135).

ANITA BRYANT, NAMBLA, AND THE STRUGGLE BOTH FOR AND AGAINST HETEROSEXISM

The heightened social status held by the new generation of male street workers turned them into official victims, a category which now made them useful figures in the politics of heterosexist backlash. Given the affinity that the discourse of exploited and vulnerable runaways had with a conservative vision of family values, it was not difficult to turn the new focus upon runaway prostitutes into a tool with which to stigmatize the gay community. Anti-homosexual organizers of the early 1970s, such as Anita Bryant, spoke of “saving our children” from the menace of gay liberation, in the process invoking imagery which equated “homosexual” with “gay child molester.” Notably, the cases which she cited as instances of child molestation often involved underage male prostitutes who, in all likelihood, were runaways who had turned to prostitution in order to survive (Bryant, 1977: 95-6, 122, 160-3, 203; see also Mitzel, 1980). Unlike the case in Boise, however,

anti-gay crusaders now did not find it necessary to avoid mentioning the fact of prostitution in establishing that the youth were victims. Even as prostitutes, these youth were innocent victims of “recruitment” from older homosexuals. The closest Bryant comes to holding the youth responsible is to suggest that it is easier to “recruit” “a teenage boy or girl who is surging with sexual awareness” than a domesticated 35-year-old father or mother of two. While in the early part of the century, the young male prostitute was assumed to be already essentially gay and thus “morally depraved,” in Bryant’s representation he is still only *in danger* of becoming gay; though “seduced,” he retains his air of innocence and is portrayed in a sympathetic manner rather than automatically condemned. Given the reconfiguration of street prostitution as the exploitation of youth—or, perhaps more to the point, given the “respectable” class status of many of the youth involved—the invocation of the term “prostitute” no longer held enough stigma as to automatically revoke any claim that those involved were “children” (and hence, victims).

Heterosexist rhetoric such as Bryant’s prompted large-scale police round-ups of homosexual men, especially clients. Police raids occurred in Los Angeles, New Orleans, Seattle, Chicago, Baltimore, and Boston, all under the rubric of protecting innocent youths from homosexual seduction (Mitzel, 1980: 34). In Boston, a 1977 police offensive against a gay “kiddie porn ring” resulted in the arrests of twenty-four individuals who had allegedly paid for sex with boys aged 13 to 15 years old (44). As in Boise, the crusade in Boston did not end with men accused of having sex with minors, but soon expanded to include the arrest of 103 men on charges of “open and gross lewdness” while attempting to have sex in a public library bathroom (52).

Popular book titles sometimes joined in with similar themes. While Robin Lloyd, author of the best-selling *For Money or Love: Boy Prostitution in America* (1976), sometimes attempted to disavow any sense that the gay men were more violent or exploitative than their straight counterparts (e.g., 47, 111-3), his discussion suggests a certain degree of ambivalence on this point. The prostitution of young boys, he writes, “is *not only* about the still-misunderstood world of the homosexual but about a sub-rosa culture that spans both the homosexual and heterosexual societies” (emphasis added; 1976: xvii). Despite this initial caveat, in practice, the only cases he discusses involve same-sex prostitution between teen boys and adult men. The cover of Lloyd’s book is also revealing in this respect, depicting a very young, wide-eyed, and well-groomed (read middle-class) white boy on the cover, printed over numerous gay personal ads seeking young partners (see Figure 1). Notably, however,

[illegible]

only two of the ads specify that an underage partner is sought, while several ads indicate that they seek partners over 18 years of age. The haphazard mix of overage and underage advertisements on the cover of a book about “boy prostitution” suggests that the entire gay community—and not merely the small subgroup which seeks underage youths—is taken to be a threat. Taken as a whole, the image suggests that the boy’s innocence is threatened by the predatory sexual culture of gay men. Similarly in the United Kingdom, the 1975 documentary *Johnny Go Home* mentions the sexual exploitation of both boys and girls, and yet devotes significantly more of its attention to the difficulties faced by boys. In a later book version of the documentary, in fact, the producer and director acknowledge that “one very concrete result” of their film had been “to shut down the places where homosexuals meet” (a solution they criticize not for its oppressive nature, but because it is ineffective, simply pushing runaways and their clients to new locales) (Deakin and Willis, 1976: 183). As the UK example makes clear, the oppression of gay men as “pedophiles” was clearly not dependent upon the *overt* bigotry of an Anita Bryant. Subtler forms could suffice.

Concerned with the use of intergenerational sex as a means to harass and discredit the gay community, some gay activists sought to portray the teens in question as sexually interested in other men and fully capable of consent. For example, in commenting upon the use of pedophilia as a means to attack the gay community, Dennis Altman argues that “the most common form of pederasty involves timid men and teenage boys, already sexually mature, who are clearly in control of the situation” (1982: 198). Altman’s comments occur directly within a discussion of the arrests of men in Boston, and thus the implication seems to be that he is at least partially referencing prostitution, both in the above remark, and when he goes on to note that “Nearly all the accounts of man/boy love with which I am familiar stress the extent to which the boys manipulate the situation” (201). In Boston itself, the 24 arrests which initially arose from the men’s alleged involvement with underage male prostitutes prompted local activists to form the Boston/Boise Committee, the organization from which the North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA) emerged in 1978 (Mitzel, 1980). The involvement of many NAMBLA members with runaway hustlers was generally downplayed within their own depictions of man/boy relations. While prostitution was not entirely hidden, supporters of NAMBLA typically emphasized mutual desire, portraying the youths as being in search of gay sexual contact and mentorship (Durkin and Bryant, 1999). While it would be an exaggeration to identify NAMBLA as an organi-

zation of clients, it is clear that many members sought out partners from the population of street hustlers, and that many (perhaps most) transactions included some sort of material exchange for sex.

The majority of the gay community failed to be swayed by stories emphasizing the beneficial effects of sex between adult men and either children or adolescents. As the president of the National Lesbian and Gay Health Foundation put it: "A young person, if he has a stable living situation, money in his pockets, and friends he feels safe with, is not generally interested in older men. It's the kids on the streets, abused or unloved, I worry about" (Joyce Hunter, quoted in Green, 1996: 123-4). Shortly after its creation, NAMBLA found itself increasingly isolated within the gay community, frequently prohibited from marching in Lesbian and Gay Pride Day marches, and finally expelled from the ILGA in 1993 (Green, 1996: 96-7). Instead, the greater part of the lesbian and gay movement joined with the growing popular concern for the plight of middle-class runaways, especially those forced into prostitution. In doing so, they helped to generate a discourse which was much less heterosexist than earlier expressions of concern for teens who had been "seduced" by homosexual syndicates. Later journalistic exposes, such as Gitta Sereny's *The Invisible Children* (1985) and Joan Johnson's *Teen Prostitution* (1992) carefully avoided the suggestion that all gay men might be child molesters (despite occasional overemphasis upon the now AIDS-infected gay pedophile, as in Johnson, above). Although the discourse equating homosexuality and pedophilia is still sometimes invoked—as recently as 1992, advocates for a state constitutional amendment in Colorado outlawing "special rights" for lesbians, bisexuals, and gay men falsely claimed that "73 percent of homosexuals incorporate children into their sexual practices" (quoted in Green, 1996: 112)—such framings are increasingly taken as a sign of anti-gay bigotry and have lost at least some of their political efficacy.

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL SCIENTIFIC REPRESENTATIONS: REFIGURING SEXUAL IDENTITY

By 1977, the fact that many runaways were turning to prostitution had become a governmental concern, and officials in the Youth Development Bureau of the Department of Health and Human Services began to initiate a small number of studies designed to determine the most effective means of addressing the issue (Weisberg, 1985: 11). This effort

led a much broader call for research into the field in 1980 (Johnson, 1983: 33-4), a watershed year in terms of academic writings on male street prostitution (Weisberg, 1985: 30; see also 80n1). While the academic literature does not generally rely upon the literary tropes of “lost innocence” in describing male prostitutes, to the extent that they focus upon the difficulties faced by the workers—homelessness, family conflict and abuse, drug use—the political agenda has clearly shifted away from incarceration and toward the provision of services. While not as extreme as the portrayals produced by social agencies and journalists, academic depictions of male prostitutes also tend to move toward an imagery of victimhood (the creation of a deserving Other) and away from images of pathology (the creation of an undeserving Other).⁴⁴

Recent social scientific examinations have created portrayals which are much more variegated and complex than in prior eras. While a decided emphasis upon the sexual elements of street hustlers’ lives is still clearly discernable (whether in questions of sexual identity, sexual practices with clients, or sexual abuse as a causative factor), an increasing number of works have drawn attention to non-sexual aspects of male prostitution as well (e.g., Luckenbill, 1985, 1986; Visano, 1987, 1990; Snell, 1995; McNamara, 1994, 1995; see also Hagan and McCarthy, 1998). Despite exceptions, however, the ongoing focus upon the sexuality of the male prostitute reveals the extent to which cultural narratives of identity revolve around sex, particularly for sexual outsiders such as hustlers.

Yet some of the representations which have been newly brought forward by social scientists, while still focused upon sex, challenge and undermine the particular understanding of “violated sexual innocence” which grounded the construction of runaway prostitutes as victims. In this regard, it is interesting to note that the theme of sexual abuse has generally been treated as far less important a topic in relation to male prostitutes than female (though see Janus, 1984). Even Debra Boyer, who endorses the idea of a strong link between early sexual abuse and later prostitution,⁴⁵ places this analysis beside an entirely different argument which suggests that prostitution is a means for youth to “practice” being gay (1989: 177). She further argues that given the negative connotations which are placed upon homosexuality, “prostitution makes sense to a young man who is trying to understand what it means to be a homosexual in American culture” (178). While some have argued that sexual abuse creates a “prostitute personality” (e.g., McMullen, 1988; cited in Davies and Feldman, 1997: 33), the suggestion that young men

are forced to leave their homes as a result of an emergent gay identity, and then enter into prostitution as a means of sexual exploration (e.g., Weisberg, 1985: 160; West, 1993: xi, 78-9), holds prominence within the literature on male street prostitutes in a manner that has no equivalent within the literature on female street prostitution.

The portrayal of male street prostitution as a quest for gay identity and community by gay youths does not construct the workers as victims, and instead tends to depict their involvement in prostitution as relatively unproblematic.⁴⁶ As Weisberg puts it:

For many youth, prostitution became a vehicle for the enjoyment of their sexuality, for sociability with other gay men, and for a declaration of their own homosexuality. In addition to the easy money, the youth enjoyed "cruising" and being "cruised" and the adventure of interacting sexually with a stranger. They enjoyed remuneration for something they would have done for nothing. (1985: 22)⁴⁷

This depiction portrays the young men not as victims of sexual exploitation, but of heterosexism, a characterization which implicitly serves to advance the struggle against anti-gay oppression. The negative potential of this portrayal, however, is that it may serve the interests of the older, housed gay community (including both many researchers and the clients) more than it serves the interests of the young workers. Whatever the merits of pointing out that many male street prostitutes have been thrown out of their homes as they struggle with their sexual identities, and that some seek gay companionship and relationship, the discussion typically ends at this juncture. The implied narrative seems to presume that if the workers are expressing agency in searching for contact with the gay community, then no dilemma exists which must be researched. In fact, none of the studies which identify gay hustling as a means of coming out go on to thoroughly detail the struggles gay-identified street workers may have in forging a positive sexual identity. Rather than opening up the topic to further analysis, the assertion that many young male prostitutes are acting on their own desires has served to close the moral question which implicitly stands behind the research agenda: are young prostitute men sexually exploited or no? While this ethical question concerning sex remains relevant, surely there are other issues facing male prostitutes, particularly those who are homeless and hungry on the street, which merit examination.

LESSONS FROM HISTORY: “MAN” AS “PROSTITUTE”

Writing concerning male prostitution is a relatively recent phenomenon. Indeed, the very concept of male prostitution proved very difficult for many outsiders to conceive. In one famous case from 1860, English police who arrested two men because they were dressed as women—Boulton and Park—were not sure what to make of the situation, despite the fact that the two carried letters which mentioned cash exchanges with various clients (Weeks, 1991: 49). Writing of E.A. Duchesne’s 1853 book, *De La Prostitution dans la Ville d’Alger depuis la Conquete*, the early sexologist Iwan Bloch noted that Duchesne’s inclusion of men as prostitutes constituted

an expansion of the idea of prostitution which is, as far as my knowledge goes, found here for the first time. Naturally, in earlier works we find allusions to men who practice pederasty for money, but the idea of “prostitution” had hitherto been strictly limited to the class of purchasable women. (1914 [1907]: 313; quoted in Weeks, 1985 [1980]: 114)

Bloch’s observation is important in that it points to the way in which prostitution has historically been conceived in relation to heterosexual relations. Indeed, writing on prostitution continues to this day to focus upon women as the prototypical case, requiring an additional adjective (as in “male prostitution”) if the subject is to differ from its conventionally heterosexual context. Much of the early emphasis upon prostitution had to do precisely with distinguishing it from socially approved forms of heterosexual relationship. “The prostitute” in this sense acted as a status marker, determining the confines of proper sexual/social etiquette for women, and simultaneously defining the lowered status ascribed to those who broke through the established confines. The tropes of “prostitution” thus carry with them conceptual baggage which relate to restricting women’s social autonomy as much as they relate to selling sex *per se* (e.g., Rosen, 1982: 42-3). Indeed, the phrase “male prostitute” did not originally refer to a man who sold sex for money, but rather to a man who either seduced married women and extorted money from them, or to a man who had sex with, or pimped for, a female prostitute (Gilfoyle, 1992: 106, 370n42; Katz, 2001: 55, 137, 367n10). The phrase itself only came to consistently refer to men who sold sex at the end of the nineteenth century (Katz, 2001: 55, 137).⁴⁸

The implications which arise from utilizing a conceptual system which is primarily rooted in struggles over women's sexual status in society in order to understand men's experiences with paid sex has been little thought through. The odd construction of "male prostitution" juxtaposes cultural images which are not readily assimilated into traditional modes of understanding: the indiscriminate, degraded slut is linked with a male body, traditionally conceived of as the *source* of a sexually objectifying gaze to which it is now subject. The question as to who is the "victim" in male prostitution, at least as it exists for adults who work off-the-street, is far from determined: perhaps the client is the "authentic" victim, his status lowered by the fact that he "has to pay for it" (Marlowe, J., 1998: 142). But while the confluence of narratives generated by male prostitution may have been surprising for Bloch, it has not diminished the possibilities for constructing meaning. In fact, far from limiting the field of significance, the joining of the terms "male" and "prostitute" has produced new representations, taking the strongly female-oriented set of meanings associated with prostitution and affixing them in unexpected ways with the imagery associated with "manhood." The result has refigured the meaning of prostitution, producing both the "hoodlum homosexual" as well as the "boy for sale," depending upon the historical context and the political intent of the author.

Importantly, these meanings do not exist merely in the rarefied world of social analysis, but have significance within the transactions of commercialized sex themselves. One contemporary male prostitute, for example, comments that a client he knew "used to get a rush from picking up hustlers on his lunch break due to the sheer element of danger: the person he picked up could conceivably beat him to a pulp" (Marlowe, J., 1998: 141). Any female prostitute could, of course, assault her client, with help of weaponry or accomplices, if necessary, but the rush that Marlowe's client experiences does not occur straightforwardly because of the reality of danger, but because of its *perception*. The sex of the bodies in effect constitute a discursive act, complete with meanings of their own which are socially ascribed. Thus, the meaning of what is purchased varies with the sex of the body. Men and women who prostitute do not share exactly the same experience in their work because the same set of socially ascribed meanings are not applied to both patterns of transaction: they do not sell the same thing. Though "sex" is sold in both cases, it is a sexual act whose meaning is distinctly gendered. Difference (and inequality) between women and men thus exists at the level of discourse, as well as within the material practices which ground the narrations. Similarly, the sex which is sold by "blacks" and "whites," or by

“men” and “boys,” carries different meaning, thereby producing different experiences and (potentially) different identities for both sellers and buyers. Perhaps more cogently said, these varying terrains of significance present different *potential* meanings, which are then rejected or appropriated in active processes of self-representation.

As this historical survey has shown, the practices associated with male prostitution, as well as the populations involved and the meanings affixed to the male prostitute body have all changed dramatically in the course of the twentieth century, shifting in relation to the growing significance of homosexuality and heterosexuality as sexual identities (as well as in relation to a changing political economy). Arguably, the one constant has been an emphasis upon determining the status of the hustler’s sexual orientation. Yet while early twentieth-century depictions focused upon situating male prostitution in relation to newly emerging ideologies of homosexuality, contemporary portrayals approach the issue within a much different social context. If the moral soundness of same-sex acts was at issue in the earlier representations, in the contemporary period, homosexuality has become a semi-acceptable explanation for prostitution, turning the paid encounter into a less reproachable act. Alternatively, the male prostitute’s status as sexually exploited victim casts him as fallen innocent, a role which situates him as a warning to those who would stray outside of the normative family. To the extent the male prostitute once stood at the gate of homosexual identity, between modern and pre-modern codes of masculine affection and identity, today the question of his sexual orientation places him at a boundary between modernist familialism (which portrays him as a victim) and postmodern pleasure (which portrays him as an active agent of his destiny). Clearly, neither formulation can adequately capture the diverse lived realities of the hustlers, rent boys, desperate runaways, and call boys who sell their sexual services to other men, yet if researchers wish to move beyond these representational tropes, they must first examine what is at stake in such discussions, and whose interests are truly being served through their use.

NOTES

1. This essay represents a significant expansion of a chapter in my otherwise ethnographically based master’s thesis at San Francisco State University, “Boy Prostitutes and Street Hustlers: Depicting Male Street Prostitution.” At SFSU, I would like to thank Jim Quesada for going above and beyond the call of duty in his advising, Gil

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2. A similar sexual ideology has been amply documented in many contemporary studies of Latin American and Chicano sexuality (Adam, 1993; Almaguer, 1993; Carrier, 1995; Murray, 1995; Lumsden, 1996; Schifter, 1998; Kulick, 1998; Prieur, 1998). Although subtle differences exist between each case, the general point is that the focus upon gendered behavior rather than upon "orientation" permits men to engage in sexual acts with other men while retaining their identity as "normal men," provided, of course, that they maintain a masculine demeanor and at least project the social fiction of having engaged only in penetrating acts. Although this alternate sexual ideology has been termed the "Mediterranean/Latin" model of homosexuality, Chauncey points out that this characterization ignores the class-specific distribution, historically and at present, of this ideology within both "Latin" and "Anglo" societies (1994: 393n19; see also Lancaster [1992: 235-78; 1997] for a discussion of the class dimensions of the ideology of homosexuality as it developed in Nicaraguan society). Additionally, Braiterman (1998) offers a critique of this literature.

3. The historical processes establishing a hetero-homo divide among women followed a significantly different path than that traced for men. For some examinations of this history, see Faderman, 1981; Chauncey, 1982-3; Freedman, 1982, 1996a, 1996b; Freedman and D'Emilio, 1988; Vicinus, 1989; van der Meer, 1991; Donoghue, 1993; Kennedy and Davis, 1993; Trumbach, 1994; Rosario, 1997; Carlston, 1997; Duggan, 2000.

4. Given this ambiguity in relation to when a gay identity for men developed, a word on the terminology used in this essay seems appropriate. For sake of convenience, I refer to "gay men" and "homosexual men" throughout the essay, despite the fact that I am arguing that such identities were not firmly established in exactly the same manner as the terms imply within contemporary usage. I also use the term "queer" in a somewhat loose sense—as a means of referencing a sexually deviant identity—although historically the term had a more specific meaning in the early twentieth century, generally referring only to masculine-acting homosexual men (Chauncey, 1994: 15-6; in certain regions, however, the term referred to effeminate-acting gay men [Minton, 2002: 276n6], or to all homosexual men more generally [319n125]). Additionally, I sometimes refer to "straight" men, despite the fact that many of these men had sex with other men; speaking more precisely, I intend "straight" to refer to "normally" identified men who were not considered "queer" in any way, despite their same-sex activities. Lastly, by "fairy," I mean a queer man whose mannerisms were identified as being feminine.

5. Widespread homosexual contact in male prisons suggests that this ideology is still operative, though now the standard of “female unavailability” has been more strictly delimited than in prior decades. One might add a degree of caution, however, in overspecifying the degree to which working-class cultures in the early twentieth century were open to same-sex relations among “normal” men while middle-class cultures remained closed. Firstly, it must be clearly understood that the mere fact that many normally-identified working-class men had sex with fairies does not indicate a lack of heterosexist prejudice; just as men often have sex with female prostitutes without respecting them, so they often had sex with male fairies. Heterosexism in the past was organized differently than contemporary heterosexism, however, in that (a) it focused more upon gender deviance than “object choice” (i.e., male or female), thereby allowing “normal” men to have sex with effeminate fairies, and (b) it was not premised upon the social exclusion of queers, but upon their social marginalization. Secondly, in terms of middle-class culture, many researchers have documented same-sex activity amongst middle-class men in the nineteenth and even twentieth century who, nevertheless, did not identify themselves as “gay.” Noticeably, however, these situations generally seem to have been generally limited to the years of adolescence (Maynard, 1997: 196n11; Krafft-Ebing, 1999 [1903]: 668n79 {citing Moll, 1933 [1897]}; Carpenter, 1908: 83-106, 112; Barman, 1984; Chandos, 1984 [ch.14]; Danzinger, 1988; Rotundo, 1989; Fitzgerald, 1994). Furthermore, same-sex sexual practices among middle-class youth were subject to social scrutiny long before any parallel concern was manifest toward working-class youth. Anxiety regarding same-sex contact in male boarding schools, for example, developed in the 1880s (Weeks, 1989: 109; cited in Foldy, 1997: 130), reaching fevered pitches that Edward Carpenter described as a “panic terror” by the early twentieth century (1908: 104); similar concern was not expressed for working-class youth for a full thirty years (just prior and subsequent to World War One), and only developed into something akin to a “panic” during the 1950s. These anti-homosexual campaigns will be discussed in more detail below.

6. It should be noted that the term “pederast” referred to anal sex, not to “boy loving” (Hirschfeld, 2000 [1913]: 43).

7. Throughout this essay, I move back and forth between descriptions of events in different locales. Passages regarding New York are juxtaposed to similar citations regarding Berlin, for example. While I generally sought to focus attention upon developments in the United States, a lack of available source material often directed my attention to Europe, particularly in examining the earlier part of the century. The limitations of my sources also directed attention solely upon major metropolitan areas, and does not much touch upon rural areas. The history I offer thus implicitly relies upon the claim that male prostitution followed a generally similar trajectory in the major cities of North America and Europe. In contradiction to this approach, John Gagnon points out that differing areas have very different dynamics, and that the failure of contemporary institutions such as the CDC to acknowledge variability within the gay population has greatly hindered its efforts to combat HIV/AIDS. In relation to regional variability among male prostitutes, he argues that:

The hustler population in Houston and Miami are quite different in many ways than Chicago or Phoenix (nor are these selected pairs of cities alike). There are not only issues of race and class, but of physical access, policing, health care, work, religion, etc. (2002, personal communication)

While it is undoubtedly true that differences exist from site to site, I believe that the data I present supports a geographically common narrative *at this level of generality*. Only further research will reveal the extent to which the history I present applies to specific localities. Likewise, it bears mentioning that the sources I utilize are largely based upon the experiences of whites, and that therefore the historical model I develop from these sources may not be applicable for various non-white groups. Historical sources regarding male prostitution among non-white groups are sparse, though some information can be found in both Mumford (1997) and Minton (2002). For the contemporary period, see also McNamara (1994) and Pettiway (1996).

8. Bloch (writing in 1907 Germany) asserts that both heterosexual and homosexual youth were involved in this type of prostitution (1914 [1907]: 519). Hirschfeld, however, claims that most professional prostitutes of this sort were gay (2000 [1913]: 820-1), as does Chauncey (1994: 191).

9. Though most clients were “normally” identified, Chauncey indicates that by the 1920s, at least certain groups of effeminate prostitutes were selling sex to both gay and straight men (1994: 191).

10. The cultural association between female prostitutes and homosexual men has a lengthy history, as reflected in the fact that so many of the terms used for gay men were derived from terms for prostitute women: mollie (Trumbach, 1992 [1991]: 93), fairy (Washburn, 1997 [1909]: 204), poof (Hyde, 1970: 139), gay (Rodgers, 1972: 93; Weeks, 1977: 42; Katz, 2001: 158), and even the prison term “punk” (Godbeer, 2002: 320). Some scholars have suggested alternate etymologies for these terms as well (for “fairy” see Katz, 2001: 291; for “poof” see Hyde, 1970: 138).

11. It should be understood that the spread of sexological concepts did not necessarily derive through simple diffusion. Chauncey argues that the growing visibility of a gay-male subculture in major urban areas lead to a shift in sexual categorizations, particularly within the middle class. He suggests that changes in the economy lead middle-class men to search for new, more bodily-oriented ways to develop a male identity, yet at the same time the growing recognition of sexual desire between men “raised the possibility of a sexual component on other men’s interaction” (115). He continues:

Once that possibility was raised, the very celebration of male bodies and manly sociability initially precipitated by the masculinity crisis required a new policing of male intimacy and exclusion of sexual desire for other men. Claiming that the fairy was different from normal men allowed normal men to claim that the fairy alone experienced sexual desire for men and thus to preclude the possibility that the normal man’s gaze at the working-class male body had a sexual component. . . . Thus the fairy served to contain the threat of gender nonconformity and to free other men from any taint of it, for he alone was a real invert. (1994: 115-6)

Middle-class men, in other words, including the sexologists who invented the categories, created the figure of “the homosexual” in order to render their increasing focus upon the male body free from the taint of “perversion.”

12. Obviously, however, transgendered prostitution did not entirely die out during this time, and continued into the contemporary era as an important, yet understudied, social practice. Although it would obviously be useful to more fully trace the history of transgendered prostitution into the present, I have not done research on the topic beyond the brief survey above. When I began my project, in fact, I did not include transgendered prostitution at all as I did not conceive of it as part of my topic: “male” prostitution. His-

torically, however, most commentators wrote long before the categories “male” and “female” were destabilized by transgender activism in the 1990s, and as these early writers clearly considered transgendered prostitutes to be “male,” I have included that information here. It should be pointed out, however, that while these outside observers may have considered transgender prostitutes to be male, it is not at all clear how transgendered workers, or their friends and partners, might have viewed the matter. Workers may have experienced themselves as fully female, as a mixture of male and female, or as members of a distinct third sex. In some cases, individuals described themselves as being “a girl imprisoned in the body of a boy” (Minton, 2002: 24) or said that they felt “like a woman in a man’s form” (Oosterhuis, 2000: 270). For additional sources, see Henry, 1948 [1941]: 414-38; Jones and Janis, 1944; Clébert, 1956; Katz, 1976, 1983; Cohen, 1980; Chauncey, 1994: 87-8; Pettiway, 1996; Feinberg, 1997; Kulick, 1998.

13. Gay men had different experiences with regard to picking up straight men during this time period. Bloch suggested that gay men generally had no difficulty finding straight partners (1914 [1907]: 507). Others spoke of having difficulties finding straight men with whom to have sex as early as the turn of the century, and regularly resorted to offering money as an incentive at this early date (see Krafft-Ebing, 1999 [1903]: 312; see also Minton, 2002: 127, 141). The playwright Tennessee Williams more successfully spoke of picking up random sailors for free in Times Square as late as the early 1940s (Williams, 1975: 53). Williams mostly ended the practice, however, after being beaten up after having sex (97-8). Other gay men spoke of similar hostility from the straight men they attempted to pick-up as early as the 1920s (see White, 1993: 94; Chauncey, 1994: 60).

14. Given the close association of HIV and AIDS with gay men in the contemporary period, it is ironic that gay men were so very infrequently linked with venereal disease during the early part of the twentieth century. As an example, military campaigns against VD during World War One frequently failed to identify specific sexual acts as having the possibility of transmitting disease, and instead, educational materials often simply warned men against sleeping with “loose women” (Chauncey, 1994: 85-6). Gay men sometimes told potential partners that having sex with them posed no risk, taking advantage of medical ignorance, or perhaps believing the propaganda themselves (86; see also Katz, 1983: 328).

15. As Mayne commented, the soldier-prostitute was a more common figure in Europe than in the United States “where only a relatively small standing-army is part of the military-system, it is an army well-paid, and distributed widely. Its regiments are so dispersed, in fact, that the soldier is hardly an appreciable element in the largest cities. Distinctively military prostitution is not discernable as in Europe” (1975 [1908]: 221). Mayne notes, however, that San Francisco was an exception to this rule, and had a tradition of soldier-prostitution dating back to the Spanish-American War (221). Soldier-prostitution has also been documented in a male brothel during pre-WWII New York City (Katz, 1983: 584-5; Murphy, 1985; Duberman, 1986: 72-3; Minton, 2002: 150, 308n86). Hirschfeld also noted that soldier-prostitution was evident at least on a small scale in a number of U.S. cities, including San Francisco, Chicago, Denver, and San Antonio (2000 [1913]: 625).

16. Longer-term relationships between soldiers and “clients” raise the question, however, as to exactly what constitutes “prostitution.” As Hirschfeld commented, “[T]he financial dependence of the beloved on the loving person often makes it look like prostitution, although no one thinks twice when in a heterosexual relationship a wealthy man spends a lot of money on a young woman he greatly loves, regardless of

whether he marries her or not" (2000 [1913]: 805). Even in shorter-term arrangements, many material exchanges took the form of "gifts," particularly with wealthier clients (Minton, 2002: 148), making it possible that the participants did not identify their activities as "prostitution" *per se*. As one of the youths involved with Oscar Wilde commented, "I don't suppose boys are different to girls in taking presents from those who are fond of them" (in Weeks, 1985: 115; see also Westwood, 1960: 153). Perhaps the casual nature of most "prostitution" lead Edward Carpenter to suggest that prostitution was not common in gay society (1908: 126-7), an opinion in sharp contrast to most other assessments. For purposes of this essay, I follow the practice of most outside observers of the time in including any sexual relations in which material reward formed an essential component of the exchange. Yet the question as to how "prostitution" was defined by participants—how the term may have been used to stigmatize or set social and emotional limits around certain interactions, while leaving others deliberately ambiguous—remains an important one which merits further historical investigation.

17. Hirschfeld writes of Berlin, Paris, and London: "[Y]ou can find walking the streets sailors who have never been on a ship, jockeys who have never mounted a horse, chauffeurs who have never driven a car, and soldiers who have never held a weapon . . . Two [in Berlin] appear as forest rangers, although the only forest they know is Tiergarten Park; several always wear butcher's outfits" (2000 [1913]: 823-4).

18. The aristocratic "rakes" who pursued these young men were considered "normal," not queer. In some ways, this pattern can be seen continuing into the early twentieth century, with a small number of normally-identified "old *roués*" continuing to pursue straight and "fairy" youth as an occasional sexual diversion (Krafft-Ebing, 1999 [1903]: 463, 491). By the beginning of the century, however, it was also common for working-class men to pursue such sex with "normal" boys, most commonly in all-male social spaces such as hobo encampments, prisons, and on long-term sea voyages. "Wolves" and "punks," as participants in these all-male spaces were commonly known, typically developed longer-term relations with one another which were nevertheless premised on material exchange of one sort or another (Anderson, 1923; Ellis, 1942 [1905]: 359-67; Chauncey, 1994: 86-95). Unlike "normal" working-class clients, neither the "old *roués*" nor gay-identified clients were confined to such limited social spaces. Furthermore, encounters with the latter two groups were more typically characterized by direct cash-for-sex transactions, rather than longer-term involvements (though see Mackay, 1985 [1926] and Minton, 2002: 127-8, 132, 148, 151, 186, 303-4n35 for counter-examples).

19. The question of respectability also came to the fore because the youths had sometimes worked while in uniform, which, as the investigators saw it, brought further disgrace to the Crown (Simpson et al., 1976: 65). Police chose not to question the youths' co-workers at the Post Office, apparently because they considered it all too likely that many others were involved and feared an even wider scandal (Hyde, 1976: 26). Despite this, police turned up evidence showing that a member of the English royal family, Prince Edward, had visited the brothel on several occasions as a client. Edward was second in line for the throne, and the evidence was quietly hushed. For detailed histories of the events, see Simpson et al., 1976; and Hyde, 1976.

20. Another set of statistics are offered in an unusual case study conducted a few decades later, in 1933. A man who corresponded with Kinsey was "intentionally planted" into a New Deal Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp in order to learn about sexual activity there. The man approached 104 of the young men working there (aged 15-26) and was refused by only 39, slightly better than a 60% success rate. The informant reported that many of the young men had regular clients in the nearby town. "One

would stand out in front of the camp quite openly every few evenings and be picked up by the same man in a good car and not return until late at night. . . . Quite a number had plenty of spending money the source of which was a mystery." It is not clear who arranged for the man to study the camp. Kinsey's co-author, Wardell Pomeroy, noted that some of their information had come from "unorthodox sources," some of it solicited, some not (Duberman, 1981: 13-4).

21. Elsewhere, Weeks similarly comments that "The most common form of the homosexual sub-culture today is peer-group contact, but the nineteenth century male homosexual underworld was dominated by prostitution" (1977: 39). There was, of course, free sex to be had, particularly when the participants shared a similar class status. Several examples of unpaid sex between working-class men are presented in Maynard, 1994. Maynard notes, in fact, that "court records indicate that working-class men in Toronto were as likely to have sex with other working-class men as with middle-class men" (220), most of this sex being unpaid. Likewise, Chauncey identifies the bathhouses as a major site for unpaid anonymous sex in the early twentieth century (1994: 219-20). Weeks's observation on the ubiquity of paid encounters, however, still retains value when considering the social world of middle-class men who dominated the consciously gay-identified fairy subculture (not surprisingly given the origin of "homosexuality" in middle-class culture). Also of relevance is the fact that social stigma kept most middle-class men from having sex with each other (Weeks, 1991: 55), a circumstance Hirschfeld directly pointed to as causing many gay men to turn toward prostitution as clients (2000 [1913]: 804-5, 816). The social construction of desire itself further inhibited sexual contact between many queer-identified men. Although some closeted gay men acted as clients with effeminate-acting male prostitutes (Chauncey, 1994: 40, 59), others found their very possibility disturbing. As one fairy proclaimed in 1913, "Among sisters, yuck; that would be incest!" (616; see also Minton, 2002: 129, 136, 141, 155). Weeks notes that cross-class patterns of relationship are a strong theme within gay literatures (which most likely represents middle-class experience) from the 1880s to at least the 1930s (1977: 41), while other historians argue that this pattern changed for the majority of gay men only in the 1950s (Hekma, 1999: 97; Trumbach, 1999: 109). Lending further support to the latter date is the fact that the term "trade" remained common until its virtual disappearance in the 1960s (Chauncey, 1985: 195).

22. Sex between adults and children in whatever form, even when horribly coercive or violent, was taken much less seriously then than today. As noted by Smart, "the dominant idea prior to the second world war [was] that children grew out of any experiences they had as children, a notion which gave support to the idea that it did not matter greatly that nasty or cruel things happened to children" (1999: 394, 404). The notions of a child as an "adult in the making" (in Smart's phrase) and of psychological trauma which did not easily heal, became hegemonic only in the post-WWII era (393-4).

23. The fear that having sex with older men would "ruin" male youth was also present in the working-class, even as early as the early 1700s (see Trumbach, 1998: 63). However, this fear was not entirely hegemonic, as noted in the above discussion of "sexual pragmatism" among the working-class.

24. Prosecutors in the Oscar Wilde case deployed a narrative of "childhood corruption" despite the fact that the youths involved were sixteen to twenty years of age. Cohen notes, however, that this portrayal was likely to have been motivated by their need to press the case against Wilde (1993: 198; see also Hyde, 1948: 66). Newspapers at the time frequently condemned the youths, as noted above.

25. He additionally estimated that 40% of sexual acts involved oral sex, 12% intermemoral sex, and 8% anal sex. Unfortunately, Hirschfeld does not indicate who typically took which role during these interactions in cases of paid sex. As I have argued, however, additional evidence suggests that these practices were in flux during the exact period in which Hirschfeld wrote.

26. "Peg houses" took their name from British India where the term referred to brothels which provided adolescent boys to male customers. Allegedly, the youths sat on pegs in order to dilate their anuses between clients (Minton, 2002: 150).

27. As noted above, gay men began hiring other adult men who prostituted on a regular basis slightly earlier in the century, but it is not clear if these workers were gay-identified or not. Hirschfeld's comments (footnote 17) indicate that the physical appearance of workers in Europe was somewhat more marked than that of those in New York City, but he does not specify if these iconically dressed workers were gay-identified. It is possible, however, that gay men in Europe began hiring other gay men sometime prior to Hirschfeld's comments of 1913, while the same development took place in (presumably less developed) New York only in the 1920s.

28. Many countries already had laws against sodomy (defined as anal sex), in some cases specifying the death penalty, but these were seldom enforced by the nineteenth century. The new laws were marked not only by an expansion of sexual activities which they prohibited, but also by the simple fact that they were more frequently enforced. In England, the Criminal Law Amendment Act's infamous Labouchère Amendment (passed in 1885) made all forms of sexual contact between men a crime, subject to two years imprisonment and hard labor. This was supplemented by the aforementioned Vagrancy Act in 1898, which added additional penalties for solicitation (both commercial and non). Similarly, Paragraph 175 of the German Imperial Code (passed in 1871) made all "lewd and unnatural" contact between men subject to five years imprisonment. In New York State, an anti-sodomy law applying to both anal and oral sex was passed in 1881, making the acts punishable by five to twenty years of imprisonment (Hirschfeld, 2000 [1913]: 965). Police in New York City, however, most commonly used disorderly conduct laws to arrest homosexuals, beginning to specify that "degenerate disorderly conduct" was at issue in the 1910s (Chauncey, 1994: 170-3, 185). The New York State legislature officially outlawed public cruising and "lewdness" in 1923, formalizing the charge of "Degenerate Disorderly Conduct" (172; see also Terry, 1999: 270). Chauncey notes that charges of "degenerate disorderly conduct" were used most extensively against "fairies," not against the "normal" men who slept with them (186; see also Hirschfeld, 2000 [1913]: 339; Terry, 1999: 269, 271). In contrast, France and several other countries influenced by the Napoleonic Code (including Holland and Belgium) did not outlaw homosexual behavior, and instead raised the age of consent for same-sex relations to 21. These latter countries, however, typically identified male prostitution as a "public outrage to decency," punishable by imprisonment or a fine (Jersild, 1956: 50-1).

29. Historian Mark Connelly comments that "Feminists were especially aware of the relationship between the age of consent laws and prostitution. Raising the statutory age of consent, they argued, would provide the basis for legal recourse for young women induced or seduced into lives of prostitution" (1980: 44). Indeed, the connection between age of consent laws and concern about heterosexual prostitution proved to be decisive in their final passage. In England, for example, the heterosexual age of consent was raised from thirteen to sixteen after W.T. Stead published his four-part series "The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon" in 1885. The series luridly depicted the

plight of young girl prostitutes, most sensationally through Stead's own procurement of a thirteen-year-old girl who he had certified for virginity (as was the alleged common practice) and then prepared for transport to a Paris brothel. As a result of Stead's articles, and of other associated organizing efforts—most notably those of feminist activist Josephine Butler—a crowd of some 250,000 rallied in Hyde Park, resulting in the quick passage of the aforementioned Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885 (which not only raised the age of heterosexual consent, but also outlawed male homosexuality; see footnote 28). Publicity surrounding the “Maiden Tribute” was essential in galvanizing support to raise the age of consent in the U.S. as well (Pivar, 1973: 144; Jackson, 2000: 14-5; on Stead, see Stafford, 1964; Walkowitz, 1980: 246-7; 1992: 81-134).

30. Advising boys to quickly leave public toilets might seem to make some sense given the above discussion of prostitution among adolescent youth and the amount of same-sex cruising which occurred within bathrooms (see Maynard, 1994). Yet given the ongoing association of gay men with child molestation in the contemporary period, and given the extent to which this essay has pointed to the widespread nature of sex between adult men and adolescent youths, it is perhaps important to point out a few facts which serve to better contextualize this information. To wit: throughout most, if not all, of the Victorian period and into the twentieth century, the young ages of some male prostitutes was closely paralleled by the young ages of female prostitutes. The age of the workers, in other words, followed trends generally common to both sexes, and was not limited to a “homosexual subculture” of any sort. During the late 1800s, for example, most girls who entered prostitution did so around sixteen or seventeen (Walkowitz, 1980: 17-8), just as with most male prostitutes. Furthermore, while Walkowitz suggests that the late-Victorian panic concerning the prostitution of young girls was overblown (17, 246-52), it is clear that *earlier in the century* it had been extremely common to find girls working who were between fourteen and fifteen years old, and that even eleven- or twelve-year-old girl prostitutes were not completely uncommon (Stansell, 1982: 180-5; Gilfoyle, 1992: 63-9, 74-5; Hopkins, 1993: 208-9; see also Pearsall, 1969: 350-63; Trudgill, 1976: 90-100). During the latter part of the nineteenth century, it seems to have been more possible for female prostitutes to self-regulate and keep out the majority of underage would-be prostitutes (Walkowitz, 1980: 27-8; see also 287n111), though clearly some underage girls (legally defined as those younger than sixteen) continued to work (Gilfoyle, 1992: 285-6). Thus, if there was any discrepancy between male and female prostitution at all, it was that male prostitution—which remained more casual and unorganized than female prostitution—included younger adolescents for a slightly longer period of time than its female counterpart. Thomas Painter, who wrote about male prostitution in the 1940s, argued that the eventual emergence of an ongoing prostitution scene to which gay clients could turn had the effect of eliminating most of the informal cruising in which younger adolescents were sought (in Minton, 2002: 156). Whatever the case, it is clear that most paid sex between adults and teenaged youth had been eliminated by the end of the 1930s (as will be seen below, however, a small number of “delinquent” youth continued the practice into the 1960s and 70s, but their participation was deemed unimportant by mainstream society). Thus, like the late-Victorian scandals surrounding female child prostitution, the admonition for boys to “never wait around in toilets” ironically came decades *after* the practices being warned against had essentially disappeared. Yet another fact to consider in debunking the idea that gay men regularly “prey upon” male youth is the fact that for most of the time period during which adolescents were regularly paid for sex, it was “normally”-identified men, not “queer” men, who acted as clients (see footnote 18).

31. More specifically, Reiss's data suggests that roughly 60% of gang members during this time had some experience with male prostitution, whereas a third of non-gang delinquents had such experience. In an earlier draft, Reiss did not claim that the majority of youth prostitutes were gang members, merely that the participants were overwhelmingly "delinquent" in some sense and that gang members were disproportionately represented within this subgroup. The reason for his later emphasis upon gang membership is unclear, but should not distract from the overall identification of "delinquent" youth being the primary group to prostitute in this manner. Thanks to an anonymous reviewer at the *Journal of Homosexuality* for calling my attention to this distinction. Reiss' data is based upon interviews done in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1958 (1963: 253).

32. In England, soldier prostitution seems to have continued into the 1960s, though it had apparently moved indoors and grown much more exclusive (facts which suggest it had grown smaller as well). Raven reports that a number of bars existed for soldier-prostitutes in 1960, and that the clientele was rather well-to-do (1960: 19-20; see also Westwood, 1960: 153-4). Karlen presents an interview from 1960 in which a former guardsman suggests that "about half" of the men in several divisions participated in prostitution, enjoying a very elite clientele ("barons and such"; 1971: 176-7). This man shows an offhandedness with statistics, however, additionally reporting that women in the WRAC (Women's Royal Army Corps) were "just about all lesbians" (178), so it may well be that his figure of 50% participation is somewhat exaggerated. Scotland Yard investigated two units, the Household Cavalry and the Brigade of Guards, in 1967, gathering evidence of prostitution against some 30-40 soldiers (Hyde: 1970: 299-302). This year marks the final report of widespread soldier-prostitution, and it may be that the practice was sharply reduced after this time. Though a small number of soldiers continue to prostitute (Zeeland, 1999), they do so without the subcultural support that was previously enjoyed.

33. Branson (1949) suggested that young boys in the street trades continued to sell sex in order to supplement their income throughout the 1940s. Her report, however, is an isolated one, and, given the shifts in the situation of child labor in the post-Depression United States, it is clear that even were she correct, there were a very reduced number of underaged youth working in these trades to begin with, particularly in comparison with the Victorian era or even the 1930s. A series of anti-child labor laws, along with other laws which made schooling compulsory, effectively curtailed most child labor in the United States by 1938 (Zelizer, 1998: 84; see also 1985).

Writing of 1965, Jim Carroll likewise advises parents not to "ever let your kidie go pee-pee in that joint [Grand Central Station] by himself," lest he be relentlessly pursued by gay men (1987 [1978]: 109-10). It is precisely locations such as Grand Central Station and the Port Authority, however, and *only* in these locations, where "delinquent" sorts such as Carroll continued to work after the 1930s. "Respectable" youths simply did not much frequent such run down areas (see also footnote 30, above).

34. Beat-era author Herbert Huncke writes extensively of his experience as a hustler in 1940s New York. He offers the following description of Times Square:

One walked by doorways and saw young men in tight pants with their whole profile on display. And there were the flagrant queens that used to fly up and down the Street, not to mention the more sinister types that could be noticed if one paid attention. (1990: 80-1)

Unfortunately, though Huncke often worked as a prostitute for “fairies,” he wrote little about this aspect of his life, and even in the above quote, it is unclear who beyond the “young men in tight pants” might be working. Huncke did a number of interviews with Alfred Kinsey, and it is likely that more information regarding his sexual experience is available at the Kinsey Archive. Readers without access to the archive will find in Huncke’s other published materials only a few scattered references to homosexual prostitution (e.g., 1990: 44, 50, 80-1, 83, 97; 1997: 102, 104, 106, 116, 123, 228, 253-4, 307), but a great deal of information regarding other illegal activities which hustlers of Huncke’s type regularly engaged in. I thank Jonathan Bartlett for calling Huncke to my attention.

35. Jersild reported that 15% of the male prostitutes he studied were either gay or bisexual (Jersild, 1956: 59). Raven suggests that this group had regular jobs—as “hairdressers, shopwalkers, low-grade couturiers, or interior decorators” (1960: 20)—and only worked as prostitutes on only a part-time basis in order to obtain “pleasurable ‘extras’” (21).

36. An anonymous reviewer at the *Journal of Homosexuality* notes that Schur did not engage in any fieldwork or interviews during his career, and suggests that Schur must have been drawing from others’ (earlier) data in making his comments. Nevertheless, the general trend away from pleasure among straight prostitutes seems clear.

37. Lobotomies were also sometimes used by psychiatrists in their attempts to “cure” homosexuality in non-prostitute men as well (Terry, 1999: 294, 470n31). Electroshock therapy and hormonal treatments were also utilized by psychiatrists in their attempts to “cure” homosexuality (Minton, 2002: 55). Psychiatrist George Henry, author of the *Sex Variants* study, meanwhile proposed a less physically brutal method of relocating homosexuals to isolated rural locations, where they would be less exposed to gay culture and therefore more amenable to “adjustment therapy” (in Minton, 2002: 116, 55).

38. I thank Michael Palm for bringing Carroll to my attention.

39. With the growing acceptance and mainstreaming of gay culture, the figure of the prostitute would quickly lose its iconic status as a symbol for gayness. During the 1980s, the “doomed heroes” of Rechy’s novels were replaced with stories of domestic life and “‘ordinary’ gay people” (Miller, 1995: 477-8). Thus, while a 1964 autobiography of a male prostitute could be represented as getting to “the truth about homosexuality” (Marlowe, K., 1964: back cover), by the 1990s even books focusing directly upon gay sexual culture, such as Browning’s *The Culture of Desire* (1993) and Sadownick’s *Sex Between Men* (1996), failed to include a single reference to prostitution. In similar fashion, contemporary autobiographies of male prostitutes (e.g., Lawrence, 1999; Whitaker, 1999) make only the narrow claim to reveal something of the lives of “hustlers” rather than of all gay men.

Gil Herdt notes that social science followed a parallel trend, with the first studies on homosexuality being conducted upon “pathological” subgroups such as male prostitutes, prison inmates, and psychiatric patients (1989: 11). Contemporary research on male homosexuality includes a number of investigations of prostitution, but the men studied are clearly not thought of as representing any sort of norm within gay culture.

40. Throughout the rest of this paper, I continue to focus on the history of male prostitutes who worked on the street. It should be pointed out, however, that throughout the seventies, eighties, and nineties, street prostitution constituted a smaller and smaller sector within the overall field of male prostitution. Gay-identified adults who worked off-street became increasingly common in the post-gay liberation period, making up an estimated 80-90% of the overall trade by the mid-1990s (Alexander, 1987: 189; Allman, 1999: 40). My focus on the continuing shifts within street-based work result simply be-

cause this was the focus of my original ethnographic research (Brook, 2001), which I sought to contextualize through a historical reading. Street-based work is important, however, because it has been a primary site of contestation within cultural debates concerning male prostitution, defining, in many ways, what male prostitution "is" for many people, despite the increasingly smaller proportion of the trade it represents.

41. While exact numbers are difficult to estimate, the sociological literature documents "dramatic," "marked," and "staggering" increases during these years. In one suburban U.S. county, the rate of runaway behavior tripled during a five-year period (Weisberg, 1985: 4, 14n25).

42. Like Raven (see footnote 35), Allen additionally notes the presence of many part-time prostitutes who were usually gay and housed. He furthermore identifies a small group of "peer-delinquents" who still lived with their families (406-7).

43. Though see also MacNamara (1965: 8) and Gandy (1971: 8) who both argue that long-term drug use was still infrequent among male street workers at the time of their research. While most contemporary research suggests that drug use among male street workers is now relatively common (e.g., Morse et al., 1999), some investigators find local groups which continue to have very low rates of use (e.g., McKeganey et al., 1990).

44. A portion of the literature concerning HIV transmission bucks this general trend, situating male prostitutes as a threat to mainstream society. A 1990 study by Waldorf and Murphy, for example, argued that "male prostitutes may serve as an epidemiological bridge to females and children" because "a high proportion of clients . . . are family men from middle-class communities" (109-10; see also Hillman et al., 1990: 248; van den Hoek et al., 1991: 306 among others). This concern for straight society, combined with a demonization of the male prostitute, is summed up by the title to a 1991 study by Morse et al., "The Male Street Prostitute: A Vector for Transmission of HIV Infection into the Heterosexual World" (535). Concern for the safety of clients, and their female partners and children, here positioned as the true "innocent victims," extended into the legislative realm as well. Criminal penalties in many states require that individuals arrested for prostitution be tested for HIV, imposing significantly harsher sentences for those who test positive if they are arrested a second time, even if the prostitution offense did not involve an activity that could possibly transmit the disease, such as performing oral sex (see, for example, section 647f of the California Penal Code). Meanwhile, prostitute clients are not tested for HIV, and are not charged with a more severe offense if they test positive. As Paul Farmer has shown in relation to Haiti (1992), the politics of blame for HIV tend to direct attention toward less powerful groups, an insight which applies with equal force to prostitutes.

45. Specifically, Boyer argues that "Sexual abuse defeats the developmental process of individuation. Prostitution is an expression of that defeat; it is both a loss of self and an attempt to reassert self-definition" (1989: 173).

46. Though see Cates (1989), who argues that even "adolescent male prostitution by choice" is "clearly detrimental" (155).

47. Weisberg identifies four different types of male prostitution. This description characterizes only one "type."

48. Katz presents evidence that some effeminate gay men gave "performances" in which they were paid to have sex with female prostitutes for the entertainment of the clients (2001: 291-2). It seems probable that the phrase "male prostitute" would have also referred to men who engaged in this type of behavior.

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