

*Interdisciplinary Studies in Sex for Sale*

# **UNDERSTANDING SEX FOR SALE**

**MEANINGS AND MORALITIES OF  
SEXUAL COMMERCE**

Edited by  
May-Len Skilbrei and Marlene Spanger



Digging under the common misperceptions that inform our unease with sex and money, Skilbrei and Spanger's collection rethinks scholarly theory and provides practical tools for policy makers, scholars and activists in addressing sex for sale.

**Barbara Brents**, *Professor of Sociology, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, USA*

This book is a must read. As a collection, it offers something unique, scholarly and very original. It shows the multiplicity of meanings, all contextually bound, ascribed to prostitution. Essential reading for scholars, campaigners, students and researchers.

**Jo Phoenix**, *Professor in Criminology, Open University, UK*



# Understanding Sex for Sale

The problem of prostitution, sex work or sex for sale can often be misunderstood, if we do not take into consideration its spatial, temporal and political context.

*Understanding Sex for Sale* aims to understand how prostitution, sex work or sex for sale are delineated, contested and understood in different spaces, places and times; with a particular focus on identifying how the relation between sex and money is interpreted and enacted. Divided into three parts, this interdisciplinary volume offers contributions that discuss ongoing theoretical issues and analytical challenges. Some chapters focus on how prostitution, sex work, or sex for sale have been regulated by the authorities and on the understandings that regulations are built upon. Other chapters investigate the experiences of sex workers and sex buyers, examining how these actors adjust to or resist the categorisation processes, control and stigma they are subjected to. Finally, a third group of chapters discuss contemporary definitional issues produced by various actors tasked with controlling prostitution or offering social services to its participants.

Advancing and placing analytical tools at the forefront of the discussion, *Understanding Sex for Sale* appeals to undergraduate and postgraduate students, as well as researchers interested in fields such as, sociology, anthropology, criminology, history, human geography and gender studies.

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**Marlene Spanger** is Associate Professor in the Department of Culture and Global Studies at Aalborg University, Denmark.

## Interdisciplinary Studies in Sex for Sale

**Interdisciplinary Studies in Sex for Sale** is a new and exciting series emphasising innovative work on the complexities of sex for sale, its practices, the policies designed to regulate it and their effects. It covers both recent and historical developments with an aim to explore multidisciplinary and international perspectives, expand theoretical approaches and analyse matters which are the subject of controversy and debate in this field.

We welcome submissions of single and co-authored books, as well as edited collections that address sex for sale, its practices and regulation, including those with a focus on: comparative analysis; multi-scalar approaches; methodological perspectives; cultural and economic contexts; and the policies concerned with the regulation of sex for sale.

This series emerges from, and intends to expand the work of the European Concerted Research COST Action IS1209 'Comparing European Prostitution Policies: Understanding Scales and Cultures of Governance (*ProsPol*)', a European network funded under Horizon 2020 ([www.prospol.eu](http://www.prospol.eu)).

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# **Understanding Sex for Sale**

Meanings and Moralities of Sexual  
Commerce

**Edited by May-Len Skilbrei and  
Marlene Spanger**

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The idea and content of this book stems from the work we have done in the Working Group: *Sex, Money and Society* in the COST Action IS1209 ‘Comparing European Prostitution Policies: Understanding Scales and Cultures of Governance (ProsPol)’ from 2014–2016. We are grateful to all members of the working group and invited speakers for their contributions in reading and for giving fruitful comments to each other’s work. In our opinion, we have been able to make this group into a space for productive exchange, paving the way for critical investigations into the meaning of sex for sale and contexts of prostitution policies, as well as for insights into how to best study the relation between sex and money. In this working group, sociologists, political scientists, criminologists, human geographers, historians and anthropologists worked together to decipher meanings applied to the relationship between money and sex. While ProsPol has ended, the scholarly conversation about sex for sale and its regulation continues.

This book and the work that proceeds it is thoroughly transnational and transdisciplinary in its orientation. We represent institutions with ambitions to expand national and disciplinary boundaries, Aalborg University in Denmark and the University of Oslo in Norway, at the Department of Culture and Global Studies and the Department of Criminology and Sociology of Law respectively.





# 1 Speaking about sex for sale historically, spatially and politically

*May-Len Skilbrei and Marlene Spanger*

## **The aim of the book**

Social anthropologist Marilyn Strathern argued that (1992: 2), ‘You can tell a culture by what it can and cannot bring together’. In this book we are interested in how definitions of and unease with prostitution, sex work or sex for sale<sup>1</sup> bring together sex and money. To us Strathern’s expression encapsulates the value of looking for the meanings and moralities that are applied to commercial sex. Debaters and others often take for granted what prostitution, sex work or sex for sale *are*, often taking as their point of departure the definition in criminal law on paper, the types of acts towards which policies are directed and definitions in encyclopedias. Furthermore, they often take for granted that prostitution is a problem and a particular type of problem, even though prostitution, sex work or sex for sale take on different forms, consist of different acts and are regulated differently in different settings and times, and are thus contingent on our historical, spatial, temporal and political positions. Money and sexuality are related in many different ways, but some ways of combining them create an uneasiness that others do not. In a previous publication (Spanger and Skilbrei 2017) we explore epistemological and ethical issues in the production of knowledge about sex for sale. In this book we elaborate on some of the questions raised in that book about the contingency of how we understand sex for sale.

What prostitution *is* is often not problematised but is rather produced by political priorities at the time and taken for granted (Phoenix 1999: 5). In this book the aim is to confuse this picture or to tease out the *ontologies* on prostitution that are in circulation. We do this by focusing on the relationship between sexuality and money from the basic assumption that unease with and attraction to prostitution are related to cultural notions about what the relations between sex and money *should* be. Ideas about prostitution and the consequences of these are central topics in the literature on prostitution, sex work or sex for sale. But the question of what prostitution *is taken to be* in a particular context is often addressed in an indirect way. Deriving from different disciplines, empirical contexts and perspectives the chapters in this book taken together scrutinise and make visible that entanglements of sex and money and definitions that appear to be *natural* or taken for granted are indeed contested and contestable. In some

way or another these chapters deal with how prostitution, sex work or sex for sale are defined, delineated, contested, understood and carry meaning. Either from the point of view of the law and policy makers, by police and social workers or by sellers or buyers that are speaking from experience about sex for sale. Some of the contributions add more explicitly to our understanding of how prostitution, sex work or sex for sale are defined, delineated, contested and carry meaning, while other contributions propose more explicitly analytical tools to understand how prostitution, sex work or sex for sale carry meaning. Thus, the chapters in this book analyse the meanings that are ascribed to prostitution in a variety of empirical settings. Looking at how prostitution is defined and problematised at different times and in different places is a way to reveal the logics and discourses that influences what is taken for granted. Moreover, paying attention to problematisations of prostitution, sex work or sex for sale the chapters also illuminate what kind of consequences such problematisations results in when it comes to the everyday life of the involved actors and to how norms on sex and sexuality are produced. Below we present what we see as main contributions to the types of discussions this book addresses.

### **Developing the scholarly field of prostitution through the nexus of sex and money**

Comprehensive ethnographic studies have taught us that prostitution looks, feels and is understood differently in different settings. The British sociologist Graham Scambler (1997) argues that prostitution is often represented via the most visible or spectacular examples, and that what is lacking is representations of the mundane life of prostitution. However, a branch of ethnographic studies (see e.g. Prieur 1987; Hart 1998; Nencel 2001; Cheng 2010; Brents *et al.* 2010; Shah 2014) demonstrate how people selling sex ascribe rather different meanings to their sale and how these activities become an integrated part of their complex mundane life. Such studies challenge predominant understandings of prostitution. For instance, the Dutch-American anthropologist Lorraine Nencel (2001) emphasises that the sex-money exchange is understood as a practice rather than forming an identity or a profession for Peruvian women who sell sex. In her fieldwork in Peru, she experienced that the women do not verbalise their sex for sale as 'prostitution' or 'sex work'. Rather, the women understand the sale of sex as an activity – a way to earn money. Through her analysis of sexual labour in the Dominican Republic, the U.S. anthropologist Denise Brennan (2004) explicates that sex work may be what creates the prospect of independence and a way out of poverty.

In planning for this book we have been particularly interested in finding contributions that present empirical contexts which are different from those often represented in research. Even within national contexts, how prostitution is experienced and even defined may vary greatly (Pheterson 1996). Different market segments do not only entail that prices and veneer differ, but also that the sex is framed differently and that what is sold caters to different desires

(Bernstein 2007). In her book *Temporarily Yours* (2007) about prostitution markets in San Francisco, Amsterdam and Stockholm, the American anthropologist Elizabeth Bernstein describes class divisions within sex work that have an impact not only on the level of safety and the clients' experiences, but also on the subjectivities of sex workers. Top-end indoor prostitution is indeed presented and experienced by clients to be very different from the life in street prostitution and in drug dependency described by Susan Dewey (2011) or Lisa Maher (2000). However, the question is whether sex work in different sectors is also experienced differently by the sellers. While some (Chapkis 1997; Sanders 2005; Koken 2010) argue that the sector and working conditions make all the difference, others claim that the harm caused by prostitution is the same, or even worse, in indoor prostitution than on the street because of expectations to deliver a more authentic performance (Høigård and Finstad 1992). Whether one is dedicated to evaluating what is worse or not, paying attention to differences is important for researchers in this field. And in this endeavour we, and several of the authors in this book, take inspiration from Bernstein's (2007) ideas about authenticity and ways of interpreting and practising the combination of sex-money in sex work as related to broader societal developments and social hierarchies.

What prostitution, sex work or sex for sale is interpreted to be is important for why and how policy makers aim to regulate it. The French historian Alain Corbin (1990) demonstrates that for France, prostitution was repressed in response to prostitution as one, but not the only, form of dangerous female sexuality. It was not the economic exchange per se that was policed as prostitution; it was rather sexuality out of wedlock that was seen as threatening to the fabric of society. The British historian Judith Walkowitz (1980, 1992) has demonstrated the emergence and application of the category of 'the prostitute' historically and how this has been used to control women and reinforce inequalities relating to gender and class (see also McLeod 1982; Smart 1984).

While there are differences in how prostitution is delineated, experienced and regulated, there are some characteristics in how a woman involved in prostitution, 'the whore', is met by society, argues U.S. born social psychologist and activist Gail Pheterson (1996) in her book *The Prostitution Prism*. Here she describes how 'the whore stigma' is one that befalls not only women who sell sex, but also women who in other ways are not included in normative femininity. Thus, the association with prostitution and the fear of being stigmatised as 'a whore' regulate behaviours and thus contribute to establishing and maintaining gendered expectations.

Gendered aspects of prostitution are particularly central to both scholarship and political debate. These are also relevant to what is deemed to be prostitution and non-prostitution at various times and in different places. Prostitution has been considered a 'Social Evil' since the 1850s, and the female sex seller was in such a framing presented both as a problem and as someone who needed to be rescued (Walkowitz 1980: 32). Sexual promiscuity, rather than the exchange of money for sex, was both the source of the problem they constituted for society

and the reason why they needed to be rescued, and this points towards how sexuality associated with the public sphere is central to what makes prostitution *per se* a problem. Sexuality is understood as belonging to the private sphere and is associated with money in the public sphere (Zatz 1997: 294). But sexuality is not necessarily wholly interpreted as private. Sexuality is present in the public sphere all the time (see e.g. Brewis and Linstead 2000). So why is the sex-money exchange in prostitution a problem? Whether acts and relations are associated with labour or love, and whether they are deemed to belong in the public or the private sphere, is contingent on the gendered interpretations of these (Borchgre-vink and Holter 1995). While it is debatable whether or not prostitution can be interpreted as an expression of the sexuality of the seller of sex, prostitution is often associated more with female sellers than with their (male) clients. Also, male prostitution disappears out of view as the female sex workers become the epitome of prostitution. Maybe male sexuality, and therefore also sexuality that explicitly links money and sex, can be accepted in the public sphere in a way female sexuality cannot?

The very existence of the institution of prostitution is also by some scholars analysed as a result and expression of gendered power relations in society. In her book *The Sexual Contract* (1988), the U.S. political scientist Carole Pateman argues that sexual difference is political difference under modern patriarchy whereby a naturalised gendered order is established. When not explicitly addressing gender, but instead debating as if social relations are gender neutral, feminists only perpetuate this naturalisation. So when investigating social phenomena, a gender analysis is necessary in order to identify how power operates and therefore how it can be resisted. This is why the focus on sexual contracts and gender neutrality is problematic, argues Pateman, as this presupposes equal parties. This is a central argument also in some feminist analyses of prostitution as a form of gendered violence, and not as an agreement between two consensual adults (e.g. Barry 1979). This thinking reflects the conflict between feminist abolitionist perspectives and the sex workers' rights movement, which advocates for the same right as that held by others to enter into contracts, seeing sexual exchange as a an exchange that can be contractual (Jenness 1993).<sup>2</sup>

There are other fault lines within this field than conflicts over the prospects of agency on the part of the female sex seller. A central argument in the critique of feminist abolitionism is that it universalises the phenomenon of prostitution and thus undermines how the phenomenon of prostitution is classed and racialised, and how various policies affect different groups of sex workers differently (see e.g. Doezenia 2000; Kempadoo 2005; Agustín 2007). Women are condemned for sexual transgressions whether they charge money for them or not, argues Pheterson (1996: 24), but what counts as transgressions varies historically and across classed, racial and ethnic boundaries.

Feminist abolitionism takes female prostitution as a starting point and does not engage with issues of gender and power related to prostitution involving male sellers. While the application of a gender and power lens is self-evident in much of the literature on women, men who sell sex are often interpreted with a

different lens, emphasising more cultural or individualistic interpretations (Siring 2008; Kaye 2010). Male clients have historically often been interpreted as acting on biological urges or on the basis of their patriarchal right. The power over women awarded to men in many periods and places constitutes an important part of what makes prostitution possible and buying sex desirable. However, the British sociologist Julia O'Connell Davidson (1998: 207) urges us to acknowledge how clients operate and interpret their own actions in the frameworks of wider discourses about sexuality and gender.

### **Studies relating prostitution to other social relations**

When we emphasise that prostitution, sex work or sex for sale are not fixed phenomena, we should also study whether it is easier to delineate this from other relations and situations at some times and in some places compared to others. The American sociologists Barbara Brents and Kathryn Hausbeck (2010) argue that processes similar to those in the sex industry are increasingly being mainstreamed, such as the commodification of relations, the sexualisation of culture, the increased importance of service work and the organisation of relations along the lines of global capitalism. Whether or not this is more common now than previously, several scholars point to the need to understand sex for sale in its broader context and suggest investigating links with, rather than assuming a contrast to, other relations and situations (see e.g. McLeod 1982; Agustín 2005). Insisting that prostitution is not fixed but rather is in continuity with other relations and situations does not entail that there is no continuity or core in what is termed prostitution. Rather, the point is to understand what is counted as prostitution in a broader context.

Some literature deals with the question of what is actually for sale in the prostitution exchange and how this relates to other relations and exchanges. The American sociologist Viviana Zelizer (2005) includes sexuality in her analysis of what happens when intimacy is connected to economic activities. In her description of the social science literature that analyses the relationship between intimacy and money, Zelizer (2005: 29–32) points out three traps contributions often fall into: being ‘economically reductionist’, ‘culturally reductionist’ or ‘politically reductionist’. Economic analyses often consider intimate relations as belonging to a sphere of economic rationality in which humans in all relations give in order to receive. Culturalist explanations represent intimacy as regulated by ideology and scripts, not taking into consideration material realities. Opposite, while a political interpretation of intimate relations makes it possible to identify how these are imbued with power and struggles, one at the same time risks losing sight of the meanings these relations have to the practitioners. Zelizer proceeds to argue that neither economic nor cultural or political explanations suffice on their own, but that investigations that combine these spheres are necessary. She (1994) also argues that the meaning of money, and assumptions about how this impacts intimacies, too often remain unproblematised. While Zelizer recognises that relations may be monetised and instrumentalised by the increasing

power of money, she emphasises the human capacity for meaning-making and the importance of context.

The above is a discussion of how prostitution *affects* people who are involved in prostitution and relationships between people. Power and harm are highly relevant in this respect. Central to both theorising and politics are discussions of whether prostitution is an expression of gendered power relations and even has an increasing effect on this. If prostitution is understood as a relation in which the person is the commodity and thus devalued as a person (see e.g. Pateman 1988), prostitution becomes an ‘unpure form of sex’ (Hubbard 2012: 36).

In contrast, understanding prostitution as a form of work builds on a very different ontology, but still maintains a focus on power, that is, economic power. The most notable contribution in this literature is the work by the American philosopher Martha Nussbaum. In her book *Sex and Social Justice* (1999) she investigates prostitution in relation to other forms of bodily service being performed for money, and she contests that prostitution is more worthy of condemnation or criminalisation than other ways of earning a living. She proposes that the evaluation of whether prostitution is problematic or not, should be based on an evaluation of the working conditions, not its moral qualities. Returning to Zelizer (2005), we can here bring in how ideas about ‘authenticity’ are important to why some forms of exchanges including intimacy are considered legitimate, while others are not. Nannies, kindergarten staff and primary school teachers take care of children for pay. Why is the care for children for money not illegitimate in much the same way as prostitution in most settings she asks? Thus, she questions what is taken for granted regarding legitimate and illegitimate intimacy.

## **The organisation of the book**

This book brings together chapters that offer very different inroads into the exploration of the meanings and moralities of sexual commerce. Its cases derive from many different vantage points such as the study of people who sell or buy sex, or authorities that regulate them. Empirically, settings include Canada, Denmark, Gambia, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Sweden, the UK and the US. While many of the chapters build on empirical research conducted in a European context, they deal with issues also relevant outside of Europe in that they include the voices of migrants and reflect European citizens’ sexual-commercial engagements in the Global South.

This edited volume combines diverse academic traditions as its authors represent disciplines and subjects such as anthropology, criminology, gender studies, geography, history, migration studies, political science, sexuality studies and sociology. Including such elements as analyses of ethnographic fieldworks, policy and legal explorations and theoretically oriented texts, the book covers the phenomenon of sex for sale, not only in present contexts; it also offers a historical analysis of how the definition of prostitution and sex work has changed over time.

The book is divided into three parts, preceded by an introductory chapter. The first part 'Historically speaking' focuses on how the definitions of prostitution, sex work or sex for sale have changed over time through regulation by the authorities. The second part 'Speaking from experience' presents how sex workers and sex buyers rework, adjust to, or resist the categorisation processes and the adjacent control and stigma they are subjected to. The third part 'Speaking about control' presents some important contemporary definitional issues reflecting the different ways in which governments, the police and service providers define what is and what is not prostitution. A particularly pertinent part of these discussions is the delineation between prostitution and human trafficking.

## **Historically speaking**

As described above, prostitution, sex work or sex for sale are not stable categories, but are rather contingent on contemporary understandings of the intersection between gender, sexuality and money. Few historical studies have engaged in the study of prostitution (Gilfoyle 1999). Yet historical studies are particularly valuable as they document that neither prostitution nor the societal response to this is fixed.

Part I of the book consists of three chapters that in different ways shed light on how prostitution and sex work have been contested fields at different times and describe the changes that have occurred as to how prostitution and sex work have been regulated and controlled by the authorities and through the priorities of civil society, especially the sex workers' rights movement. Chapters 2 and 3 investigate the construction of the prostitute from a Foucauldian perspective on governance, whereas Chapter 4 explores how prostitution has been regulated from a spatial perspective. Studies on prostitution in former times have in different ways demonstrated the close link between sexuality and how authorities have regulated and controlled 'the prostitute' (see e.g. Walkowitz 1980, 1992; Corbin 1990; Svanström 1996, 2008; Harris 2010; Blom 2012). Likewise, Chapters 2 and 3 investigate meanings ascribed to combinations of sex and money that in different ways construe the category of 'the prostitutes' and impact how people involved in prostitution are controlled. In investigating articulations of prostitution and the sources of these, the Canadian Australian historian Carol Bacchi offers valuable analytical tools (2009) to 'go beyond' or 'look through' policy proposals, instead analysing what is taken for granted. In their chapters Rydström and Spanger adopt Bacchi's analytical strategy when exploring how boundaries for female and male prostitutes, respectively, were established through logics and articulations of sexuality.

In the chapter 'What's the problem with prostitution? Shifting problematisations of men and women selling sex' Jens Rydström begins by discussing different notions of the relationship between sex work and sexuality per se from the medieval times up until the twentieth century. Four articulations in particular have dominated the problematisations by the state and the church: prostitution as

a moral problem, a public health problem, a social problem and a gendered problem in Europe. Using the example of soldier prostitution in Sweden, which flourished in larger European cities with posted military personnel until the middle of the twentieth century, Rydström shows how, throughout history, different actors like the state, the church and the sex workers' movement have problematised female and male prostitution differently.

Chapter 3 'Surveillance of dangerous liaisons through notions of sex and money' is written by Marlene Spanger. Spanger looks at how Danish authorities defined and controlled the prostitute in the 1930s to the 1950s and she argues that the policies in place at that time derived from how eugenics articulated the sexually deviant in a medical sense. Giving the example of the Danish police vice squad's observations in what were considered 'public houses' and a Danish international medical study on prostitution, she suggests that during this period, 'the female prostitute' was positioned as dangerous due to her sexual liaisons with different strange men in the public space. In addition, the authorities' regulation of 'the prostitute' served as a power mechanism not just applied to women who sold sexual services, but to the sexuality of women in general. Spanger thus demonstrates that the definition of 'the prostitute' as dangerous and prostitution as something that should be surveilled and controlled, hinges not only on a definition of promiscuity as a problem, but also on the public display of promiscuity. Space is thus important as to whether sexual commercial acts are considered problematic, or even considered to belong to the category of 'prostitution'.

Patrizia Testai's chapter, 'The production and transformation of prostitution spaces: the red-light district of Catania', links well to this point as it exemplifies how street prostitution markets are marked by gentrification processes. Her example focuses on how such processes have been fueled by different political and economic interests in the red-light district of Catania in Sicily. Testai analyses how different actors (local authorities, neighbourhoods and different Non-governmental organisations) have established, transformed and contested this prostitution space from the late 1950s up until the present day. Assisted by the concept 'the revanchist city', she highlights how the prostitution space was transformed by local politics and capital investments in poor urban areas. She further argues that a reconquest of the inner city has taken place, caused by how it has been transformed into a neo-liberal frontier for a consumer lifestyle at the expense of marginal groups such as sex workers, migrants and the poor.

### **Speaking from experience**

The next part of the book draws our attention to the men and women selling sexual services. Studies from the last part of the twentieth century and up until the present time investigate the experiences of sex workers and demonstrate rather different and disparate life trajectories of the sex workers as well as of their clients (Chapkis 1997; Skilbrei 1998; Nencel 2001; Bernstein 2007; Sanders 2008; Dewey 2011; Spanger 2013b; Shah 2014). Such studies reflect the

variegated ways in which the links between sex and money is interpreted and experienced. In line with a burgeoning body of literature within sex for sale studies (e.g. Cabezas 2004; Bernstein 2007; Faier 2007; Cheng 2010; Jacobsen and Skilbrei 2010; Spanger 2013a; Groes and Fernandez 2017) the chapters in Part II call into question the dichotomous thinking that still dominates the research field of sex for sale. Departing from the stereotypes of ‘the prostitute’ as ‘a female victim’ or the male client as ‘a predator’, the authors call attention to analytical tools that may be helpful in offering more nuanced analysis of the complex and often sensitive relations that constitute the exchange of sex and money. Investigating the link between sex and money, this section scrutinises the suitable analytical tools of cultural scripting, authenticity, affectivity, agency and intersectionality.

As the chapters in this section demonstrate, what sex for sale *is* for people directly involved and how this links to the ‘social and material conditions in which they live’ (Phoenix 1999: 3) are necessary inroads to understand prostitution. In her book *Temporarily Yours*, Bernstein speaks about the relevance of this and how we can engage in analysis of broader issues ‘by detailing the relationship between money and sex on the “micro” level of bodies and subjectivities’ (2007: 4). Inspired by this perspective, the chapters in Part II investigate the experiences of women and men selling and buying sex as well as social workers by asking how the people involved in the sex trade ascribe meaning to relationships that comprise exchange between sex and money. Presenting rather different examples of meanings ascribed to the sex trade, this part of the book seeks to demonstrate the necessity of maintaining a nuanced understanding of sex for sale. The chapters take into consideration the particular settings in which the sexual commerce occurs based on empirical findings. These may be the tourist resorts in the Global South (see Heinskou Chapter 7), the red-light district in Amsterdam (see Janssen Chapter 9) or on the streets in North America (see Brown, Dewey and Orchard Chapter 5). Moreover, Bertone and Ferrero Camoletto (Chapter 6), Brown, Dewey and Orchard (Chapter 5) foreground the gendered logic that structures the meanings ascribed to the sale of sex, whereas Chimienti and Lieber (Chapter 8) point out how gendered logic constrains and creates opportunities for the women who sell sex as they discuss how this should be conceptualised in the case of migration related prostitution.

As demonstrated in Chapter 2 and 3, ‘cultural scripting’ is one example of an analytical tool for analysing meanings ascribed to the sale of sex; this tool sensitises the researcher and reader to how the involved actors apply particular narratives in order to ascribe meaning to their selling or buying of sex. In Chapter 5, ‘Intensive mothering as cultural script: boundary setting among street-involved women’, Kyria Brown, Susan Dewey and Treena Orchard employ the analytical tool ‘cultural scripting of intensive mothering’. Throughout the chapter they use this tool to analyse the perspectives of street-involved women and the social service and healthcare providers that work with the group. First, they identify four frames among North American street-involved women with respect to their understandings of themselves as mothers: asserting maternal identity as their