CHAPTER 6
THE SUBCULTURE OF PROSTITUTION

Prostitutes are degraded and punished by society; it is their humiliation through their bodies—as much as their bodies—which is being purchased.

Phyllis Chesler, Women and Madness

From the outside, commercialized vice represented “big business” for those who reaped its profits and for the reformers who sought its demise. For the individuals who lived or worked within the district, however, the view was somewhat different. What was the subculture of prostitution like for those people who worked on the “underside” of American urban life?

The brothel was the center for much of the subculture of prostitution. The report of the Vice Commission of Minneapolis emphasized that the “business of public prostitution has become commercialized and the brothel is the recognized center of this abhorrent commerce.” In Philadelphia, reformers found that approximately half of 3,311 interviewed prostitutes either resided in or worked in brothels. Most important, the brothel came to represent the most flagrant example of tolerated prostitution. Since much of the data collected about prostitution from this era focused on this particular institution, we can at least gain some view into the daily life of certain prostitutes. Data on brothels also provide us with a richer sense of the class stratification that characterized prostitution (typical in nearly all periods of history) and allow us to recreate the kind of public prostitution whose historical demise meant the growth of new and more familiar forms of the trade.

Not all brothels were alike. Reflecting the class distinctions of the rest of society, brothels catered to the economic interests and budgets of different clientele. Every city, for example, boasted several expensive five- and ten-dollar parlor houses that attracted wealthy men, who used the facilities much as a gentlemen’s social club. There, they made political connections, met their associates, and relaxed in an atmosphere of exquisite food, wine, and women. One-dollar houses catered to the interests and budgets of middle-class men, and fifty-cent houses and cribs heavily relied on the working-class “stiff” for their clientele. As the Kansas vice report explained, “A few [brothels] were equipped with expensive furniture and furnishings including the finest of upholstered chairs, well chosen paintings and costly rugs, while a large number of others were hovels of repulsive squalor.”

The success or failure of a high-priced parlor house ultimately rested on the central figure of the establishment, the madam. Viewed from an occupational point of view, the position of a madam required extreme competence in business and political matters as well as managerial, personnel, and communication skills. Her first priority was to maintain a profitable business. This meant balancing income with expenditures for municipal fines, commissions to procurers, doctors’ bills, and, most significantly, high rents. Given the ambiguous legal status of prostitution, the madam also had to possess a high degree of political tact and diplomacy. She had to learn, for example, the fine art of adapting to local political practices in order to insure the political protection of her house. Since some of the high-priced sporting houses doubled as clubs where the local political and economic elite met to exchange necessary information and negotiate informal deals, an intelligent madam invariably became privy to the inner workings of her community. A reputation for absolute silence was essential; for example, she had to protect the identities of her customers. In the event of a customer’s sudden illness or accident while in her house, a madam would have the person removed to a more respectable location before notifying police or family. A successful madam, moreover, never greeted her clientele in public; she traded her silence for the continued political protection of her business. In some cases, some madams became silent partners in the local power structure; they knew too much for any local politician to shut their establishments down.

Running a house with four to twelve inmates required skillful management. In a sense, the madam managed a small business; she checked on the servants who prepared meals for the inmates and herself, made sure that sheets in all rooms were changed several times during an evening, maintained an adequate supply of fine wines and liquors, and oversaw repairs. In addition, the madam interviewed, hired, and fired servants, maids, musicians, and prostitutes who worked in her house. Since local patrons always demanded “new faces,” a good businesswoman periodically sought new prostitutes. Such interviews could be grueling. One prostitute found that her credentials from Kansas City were no match for the “proper” behavior and dress required in the “Ice Palace” in Chicago. There, the haughty madam reluctantly took her in because she possessed youth, good looks, and manners that “might” be transformed into an appropriately elegant employee of a sporting resort. Older or less attractive women, or women whose racial or cultural background offended the gentlemen of a particu—
lar region, frequently found employment in “first class” houses impossible to obtain.9

Since most madams formerly had worked as prostitutes, they were usually familiar with the problems young prostitutes faced in their work, and the petty quarrels and jealousies that periodically erupted between inmates of the houses.10 It was the madam’s responsibility to prevent such problems from interfering with the business of the house. Quite naturally, she became a confidante and counselor to her “girls.” Frequently called “mother” by her employees, she learned to placate their worries and help them solve their problems.11

The madam’s relationship with the inmates, however, was necessarily ambiguous and complex. As one investigator pointed out, “Madams become the advisor and friend of the girls, while at the same time she drives them to the utmost to make wealthy men feel comfortable: to earn larger profits for the houses.” She was, in fact, both friend and exploiter of her “girls.”12

Among other aspects of their work, madams also had to maintain a good reputation through constant advertisements. To maintain their clientele, madams often kept lists of customers and sent out periodic announcements of changes in address or changes in their “stock.” One madam in New York sent out a neatly folded announcement that read, “Kindly call at our old place of business as we have a Beautiful Spring Stock on view.”13

To maintain a fresh supply of prostitutes, madams offered good commissions to procurers who replenished their house. Patterned after some of the famous European and British brothels of the nineteenth century, some American parlor houses specialized in the deflowering of young virgins, flogging, and assorted sexual activities never enumerated because investigators found them too “lewd” to discuss. In the society column of the New Orleans Mascot appeared the following comment: “It is safe to say that Mrs. Thewer can brag of more innocent girls having been ruined in her house than there were in any six houses in the city.”14

Madams took special pride in creating an extravagant (frequently ostentatious) display of gilded glamor for their wealthy clients. One investigator in Portland, Maine, described the luxurious interior of a high-priced house, meant to make wealthy men feel comfortable:

I learned that there are fourteen rooms in the house, located on the second and third floors. On the second floor is a private parlor which the madame has handsomely furnished. On the same floor is another room fitted up with Dutch furnishings which she calls her Dutch room. It contained a handsome rug, large library table, an assortment of steins; and around the entire room is a plate rail on which she had numerous Dutch steins of various designs. A large sum of money has been spent fitting up this room, and the madame told me it was used for a very exclusive class of men who spend much money for wine and such as that. On the other side of the hall is a long

In some establishments, men were also offered the opportunity of viewing special “circuses” or “shows” designed to stimulate more business. Since contemporaries found these exhibitions too “vulgar” or too “lewd” to describe, one can only speculate as to their content. It is known, however, that men frequently spent as much as fifty to seventy-five dollars for such exhibitions.16

Although the few such exclusive clubs and houses tended to glamorize the profession, they did offer reasonably well-paying work for young and attractive women. For madams, the work provided an opportunity to attain a position of responsibility, to gain a fairly high standard of living, and occasionally to achieve a certain degree of desired celebrity.

Some of the madams who either managed or owned the establishments they ran did in fact become local, or even regional, celebrities. In Storyville, the name Lulu White became synonymous with high-priced parlor houses. Born on a farm in Selma, Alabama, this black woman passed herself off as a “West Indian” in Storyville society. Her famous “Mahogany Hall” became one of the most notorious and expensive sporting houses in New Orleans. Unfortunately, Lulu White permitted herself to become involved with a “fancy man” who disappeared to Hollywood with her savings of $150,000.17

Another well-known madam who achieved a certain degree of upward mobility through her profession was Josie Arlington (born Mary Deubler). She became famous for the luxurious mansion she established, a sporting house that boasted “lewd” live sexual acts, special services, and exhibitions of all kinds. Having first worked as a local prostitute, Josie Arlington supported her family on her earnings. After managing a low-priced house characterized by constant brawling, she parlayed her talents into the establishment of “The Arlington” on Basin Street, with the intention of creating the grandest bordello in the district. During the last years of her life, Josie Arlington built herself a red marble tomb with a cross on the back and a statue of a kneeling woman whose arms are filled with flowers. In front of the doors of the tomb stands a “beautifully executed statue of a young girl . . . in an attitude of knocking at the door.” Legend has it that the statue was to symbolize that Josie Arlington had never permitted a virgin to be ruined in her house.18

One of the most famous parlor houses in the United States was founded by the Everleigh sisters in Chicago. Born in Kentucky, they both married, left their husbands, and subsequently enjoyed brief stage careers. During the 1898 Trans-
Mississippi Exposition, they opened their first brothel and then moved their business to Chicago. The Everleigh Club became one of the most exclusive sporting houses in the nation. The club boasted a fifty-dollar entrance fee and required a formal calling card or letter of introduction. Serving the best champagne and liquors, the Everleigh Club became famous for glamorous bedrooms furnished with marble inlaid beds, surrounded by ceiling and wall mirrors, as well as such special attendants as barbers and masseurs.19

Despite—or perhaps due to—the illicit nature of their work, most madams seem to have viewed their achievement with pride and satisfaction. From an occupational point of view, the role of a madam offered responsibilities and business opportunities normally denied women because of their gender identity. Unlike other women, madams engaged in political wheeling and dealing, faced the daily responsibilities of personnel and “hotel” management, and gleefully shattered the boundaries of “proper” feminine sexual behavior. As the infamous San Francisco madam Sally Stanford was later to remark about her profession, “It doesn’t take much to produce a good merchant of cash-and-carry love; just courage, an infinite capacity for perpetual suspicion, stamina on a 24-hour-a-day basis, the deathless conviction that the customer is always wrong, a fair knowledge of first and second aid, do-it-yourself gynecology, judo—and a tremendous sense of humor.”20

Despite the flamboyant behavior and comments made by many madams, most expressed conventional concerns for their economic security and took their responsibilities as seriously as a businessman who runs a hotel. In describing a madam who catered to a prairie clientele in Canada, one male customer commented that

Pearl Miller was easily the most successful whore Calgary ever had. I think her secret of success was that she ran a clean and happy joint. . . . She really acted more like a hostess than a whore. You know, she’d visit with you, have a drink with you though I never saw her drunk. She kept her eye on her girls and tried to run a real nice place where you liked to return. If you didn’t think where you were, you could easily imagine you were in a boarding parlor with ordinary lodgers, with Pearl being the landlady looking after things.21

Repudiating the moralistic perspective of reformers, madams looked upon their business ventures as a means of earning a decent livelihood. The goals of material success and economic security were socially legitimate; only the means of reaching them were “illegitimate.” One madam in Chicago, for example, viewed the three flats she managed with her sister as a business venture and a secure way of earning a livelihood. Catering to an upper-class clientele, she charged five dollars for a typical visit and seven or ten dollars for extra services. When interviewed by an investigator, however, “Edna” wanted to sell her busi-ness. For years she had been supporting her ailing parents with her annual earnings of six thousand to seven thousand dollars. She now wanted to retire, maybe buy an orange grove in California, and lead a respectable, quiet life. In her published memoirs of her life as a successful madam, Pauline Tabor similarly viewed her work as a business venture, a means toward a socially acceptable and respectable end. She, too, wished to retire with sufficient cash to insure a secure old age.22

In most memoirs published by former madams, there appears an irreverent attitude toward society’s hypocritical “morality,” combined with a rather conventional and pragmatic perspective on one’s business as a means toward upward mobility; in fact, the desire for future respectability mingles with a genuine disgust for society’s sexual purists. As the irrepressible Sally Stanford noted in her autobiography, “Madaming is the sort of thing that happens to you, like getting a battlefield commission or becoming the Dean of Women at Stanford University. But I have never been the least bit touchy or sensitive about it . . . never. Many are called, I always say, but few are chosen; and for me it has been a steppingstone to bigger and more profitable things.”23

Pauline Tabor, who became a prostitute when she was left penniless with two children to support, eventually opened a notorious brothel during the depression. She, too, shared other madams’ attitudes—attitudes that cross the decades to emphasize some of the continuity in the history of prostitution. Explaining her occupation as a madam in Bowling Green, Kentucky, Tabor wrote; “To compound such felonies against society’s code of ladylike behavior, I was a mercenary. I was a sex merchant for the same basic reason that motivated other people to peddle pills, groceries, clothing, toys, cars and all manner of their wares—to make money and acquire the better things of life.”24

In theory, the exclusive brothels run by these businesswomen created and sustained a sexual fantasy for their customers. The madam and the extravagant surroundings were supposed to create the feeling of entering a specially sexual world in which the customer became a part of an erotic and sensual atmosphere. Prostitutes received training in the art of flattering their customers and convincing them of their desirability: “The girl must be kept gay and attractive, . . . She must smile and laugh and sing and dance or she becomes a ‘has been.’ “25

One Storyville prostitute recalled greeting each customer with some exclamation of affection: “ ‘My you so han’some, why you no come before,’ I say ‘you jus’ my type.’ ‘T’ings like dat day don’ mean nawthing, be de man like dees, hah?”26

A prostitute in such an exclusive sporting house was supposed to be an accomplished actress, demonstrating at every instant the customer’s irresistibility through dramatic declarations of passion and excitement. Even the language of the trade, “turning a trick,” reflected the hoax that the prostitute was perpetrating on the customer.

According to survivors of the Storyville district, however, such fantasies were
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Descriptions of middle-class establishments are rare; investigators apparently found the extremes of high-priced parlor houses and low-priced tenements or cribs more interesting to investigate. One prostitute described the informal ambience of such middle-class "joints" that catered to the average working man. "The prostitutes," she wrote,

sat around in their underwear or wrappers, drank beer, joshed a lot in country talk, felt at home with the simple horny guests that came to them with dusty shoes and derbys. There was a morality about these places that mirrored the words of the whores and their guests. They were Mama and Papa fuckers, doing it mostly the straight and traditional American way, as they had been raised. Frenching was talked and joked about, but rarely asked for

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or offered. The Italian Way, entry through the rear, was kind of a joke carried over from farm boys experimenting on themselves and each other, considered a sign of depraved city sinning. Memories of Bible lessons and sermons on Babylon and hellfire from their country churches was still there in the middle class whorehouse.

Particularly in small towns and in the Midwest, the young women who "worked" these houses represented a local, native population. Unlike the variety of racial mixtures found and requested in the largest coastal cities, the madams and most of the prostitutes in the small towns "were of native stock, corn-fed Kansas girls and hustlers who had come from broken down farms and small ranches. Some had been deserted by a railroad brakeman or boss carpenter, who moved on, leaving them with no rent money or food." If a prostitute had real ambition, she left such towns for the large cities to apply for work in the high-priced brothels.

Unlike the fanciest sporting houses, which were frequented by a wealthy and politically powerful clientele, the middle-class whorehouses catered to the needs of "all those who figured the cost of their spending. . . . The clerk, the wagon husky, the logger, the husband who wasn't getting it properly at home . . . he could come to have his ashes hauled, his wick dipped—both expressions popular in these middle-class joints." Although many of the customers may have asked for sexual practices refused to them at home, "the idea of flogging for fun, or
being stomped on by high heels, or a daisy chain in a middle class whorehouse was like spitting on the flag or drawing a mustache on Martha Washington's picture."

It was in tenement houses and cribs that investigators found the horrendous conditions that characterized low-priced prostitution. In New York, one cheap joint was described as follows:

A large wooden bench was placed against the wall of the receiving parlor. Business was very brisk at the time the investigator entered. The bench was full of customers crowded close together, while others, who could not be accommodated with seats, stood about the room. At the foot of the stairs which led to the bedroom above, a man was stationed. Every time a visitor came groping his way down the stairs, the businesslike and aggressive announcer would cry out, "Next!" At the word, the man sitting on the end of the bench nearest the stairs arose and passed up. As he did so, the men on the bench moved along and one of the men who was standing took the vacant seat.

Unlike the pretentious wealth exhibited in the best parlor houses or the sturdy, comfortable atmosphere of a medium-priced house, most low-priced tenements and cribs contained a few old leather couches in a small receiving room. The rooms were "dirty, the loose creaking floors [were] covered with matting which [was] gradually rotting away, the ceilings [were] low, the windows small, the air heavy and filled with foul odors . . . the atmosphere heavy with odors of tobacco and perfumes, mingled with fumes of medicine and cheap disinfectants.

In the cribs that dotted the southwest and western coast, the working conditions were even worse than in the eastern tenements. A "cowyard whorehouse" was a three- or four-story tenement with long halls lined with cubicles or closets. Sometimes as many as 250 women crowded into these separate small cubicles. "Crib whores," mostly Chinese and black women, also worked in small shacks where they were virtual prisoners of the man who stationed himself in the front reception room. In the back, the prostitute worked in a small room surrounded by a basin, a washstand, and a small bed with a strip of oil cloth at the end of it. For "two bits" the customer was briefly washed and permitted to take off only his shoes.

Although little research or investigation has been done on the customers who frequented brothels, one still wonders about the expectations and experiences of the men who visited the "houses of ill fame." Former madams emphasize that what they sold was not sex per se but a variety of other intangible products—such as companionship for lonely men, the illusion of being admired for one's sexual prowess, the escape from an unhappy wife to a flattering prostitute. As Sally Stanford noted in her autobiography,

I learned that men came to a place such as mine not for sex but for a whole batch of other reasons; to talk about their troubles, their wives' infidelities; to sleep off a drunk; to find out if there were any new wrinkles; to get laughs from jokes that were clinkers elsewhere; to find sweethearts and even wives; to escape from the cops; to get advice on the cure of social diseases; and some to get a good cup of coffee and a plate of ham and eggs when everything else was closed.

In some cases, a young boy's first experience occurred in a brothel. Brought by his father to Lulu White's "Mahogany Hall," one "gentleman of means" recalled his first sexual encounter. His experience, like the few others existent, reveals a sense of disappointment, deception, and disillusionment.

The instant we stepped inside that door, it became apparent that, though ornate, the taste reflected in the furnishings and decor was just miserable.

. . . Lulu White, herself, greeted us after we'd been announced by a Negro doorman . . . she was a monstrosity . . . laden with diamonds worn not selectively but just put on any place there seemed to be an inch to accommodate them. She wore a red wig that hardly pretended to be natural in color . . . Lulu was obviously Negro. Her efforts to appear cultured were quite ludicrous. Her quick smile was as fake as the color of her wig.

After being invited into the parlor, the father and his son were introduced to the dozen prostitutes lounging on sofas and chairs. Lulu picked one of the girls dressed in the most "revealing" clothes and said, "Rita, this is M'sier Rene. You take him and see that he has a real good time." The son sipped some champagne, tipped the "professor," and proceeded upstairs with his "lady companion." His expectations, influenced by his prior knowledge of such exclusive establishments, were high: "I was nervous—not because of the fact that I was about to have a sex experience, but because I expected something quite sensationally evil and was conscious of being a guest in a world-renowned den of iniquity."

His actual experience, however, revealed the disillusioning fact that he had bought the sexual services of a woman who, justifiably, cared nothing about him:

The young lady, apart from a certain studied theatricality, was just as ill-informed and gauche as she could be. She led me upstairs to a bed-room of medium size, dominated by a fourposter bed, quite dusty looking—the drapes, I mean. She got out of her clothes and invited me to do the same.

She approached and seized my genital organ in one hand, wringing it in such a way as to determine whether or not I had the gonorrhea. She did this particular operation with more knowledge and skill than she did anything else before or after. I was not taken aback, because I had already heard about this part of the procedure from many people, including my father. She washed me with some foul-smelling disinfectant and lay down on the bed, inviting me to mount her. This I proceeded to do, and the mechanical procedure that followed endured for perhaps a minute. She then washed me and herself again, politely asked me if there would be anything else, and when I thanked her and said no, she asked for ten dollars. I apologized,
never satisfied," he explained, "as a wage laborer I couldn't afford those luxury places on Basin Street. . . . The real truth is, though, that an evening in any house, no matter what the going rate was reported to be, it always cost you as much as you had in your pocket." As in the higher-priced sporting houses, a few dances mixed with a couple of drinks preceded the evening's sexual activities. "The player piano," he recalled, "only had fast tunes. . . . It seemed like everything they did was fast, especially take all your money and get you out of there so they could take on more customers." 39

After dancing with several women, each of whom whispered the special treatment he would receive, he was led upstairs to the "boudoir." Like his wealthy counterpart quoted earlier, he, too, felt cheated by the experience.

You wouldn't believe how fast those girls could get their clothes off. Usually they'd leave on their stockings and earrings, things like that. A man usually took off his trousers and shoes. New girls didn't give you a second to catch your breath before they'd be all over you trying to get you to heat up and go off as soon as possible. . . . When it came to the actual act, though, the routine was standard. . . . I think the girls could diagnose clap better than the doctors at that time. She'd have a way of squeezing it that, if there was anything in there, she'd find it. Then she'd wash it off with a clean wash cloth. She'd lay on her back and get you on top of her so fast, you wouldn't even know you'd come up there on your own power. She'd grind so that you almost felt like you had nothing to do with it. Well, after that, she had you. She could make it get off as quickly as she wanted to . . . and she didn't waste any time, I'll tell you. . . . I'd say that the whole thing, from the time you got in the room until the time you came didn't take three minutes.

Then she'd wash you off again, and herself. Then she'd get dressed, without even looking at you. . . . you could see she was already thinking about nothing but getting downstairs. But she'd be smiling, though, as if everything was just fine and she'd had a good time. . . . In fact, from the time you'd come in the front door of the house until you'd be back out on the banquette hardly even took more than fifteen minutes. 40

Like the wealthy, but disenchanted, patron of the Basin Street mansions, this man experienced continued alienation during encounters with prostitutes. "I was never satisfied," he explained,

I don't mean that I thought the girls had cheated me, but I always had the feeling afterwards that life had cheated me. I always had the feeling that there must be something—more fun, you know. . . . Of course, they'd drain me off. I'd be depleted and enervated—but I never had the feeling of satisfaction that I was always looking for. The truth is that a man wants something more from a woman than that—and it's not easy to find even outside a district. Most all the married women you run across are just a different kind of whore. But a man keeps looking for somebody he can just feel—well, like he isn't always alone. 41

Given the alienation and dissatisfaction that some men apparently experienced in all brothels, regardless of the price, one wonders why they kept returning to the district. Some men apparently found in prostitution a temporary, if unsatisfactory, escape from their loneliness. Young clerks in New York replied that they sought companionship with prostitutes to offset the "dullness of their lives." In Lancaster, Pennsylvania, the vice commission found that college boys, eager for new sexual experiences, sought prostitutes when they could not find women in their own social milieu. Predictably, married men commented that they sought sexual practices that they felt or knew would offend their wives. 42

Since reformers focused most of their attention on prostitutes, a profile of the customers is impossible to re-create. If more recent twentieth century data reflect this earlier period, it is likely that a majority of the men were married, young, or middle-aged; they sought in prostitutes sexual practices forbidden at home, the illusion of companionship, a congenial club environment, or an escape from marital, family, or work difficulties. 43 Examples cited since the thirties, which rely heavily on psychological explanations, tend to emphasize clients' needs for anonymous sexual relations—including the need to feel superior to someone, anyone. 44

It is interesting to note that the American Social Health Association, which has studied male customers since the 1930s, has determined that whereas only 10 percent of men in the thirties asked for any sexual activity other than "straight" relations, nearly nine out of ten male customers in the 1960s requested oral sex or "half and half," a combination of oral and "straight" sex. They also noted that both prostitutes and clients in the sixties expressed greater comfort and fewer "vulgar epithets" in discussing oral sexual activity. 45

Although prostitution may seem a deviant marketplace, it is important to remember that there are always reasons behind the demand and supply in any market relation. Judging from the more recent research cited above, it seems likely that men in 1910 asked for relatively common forms of sexual relations. With more women willing to engage in such sexual activity today, the sexual requests may have changed in relation to what many women outside the world of prostitution still find unpleasant or about which they still feel inhibited.

Although prostitution offered some women a means of survival or better-paying work than they could otherwise obtain, it also exposed them to physical
risk and emotional strain. These problems were most severe for streetwalkers and women working in low-class "dives" and cribs. These women faced frequent brutality and police harassment from which prostitutes in high-priced establishments were politically protected. Their inadequate and precarious means of support exposed them, more than other prostitutes, to the medical problems most common to the poor: tuberculosis, tonsilar infection, and malnutrition. Crib prostitutes also saw more than the four or five customers that high-priced prostitutes entertained in one evening. The squalor of the surroundings, combined with the quantity of the customers she served (from thirteen to thirty), made the low-class prostitute's work an intolerable, inhumane, and debilitating experience.46

Even in less extreme situations, however, prostitutes had to deal with risks to their health and job security and assaults on their self-respect. For example, whereas some customers searched for genuine companionship and felt disappointed, many prostitutes looked upon men's desire for genuine warmth and human contact as an outrageous expectation. Prostitutes knew they were supposed to be "superior wives," offering temporary nurturance and refuge while flattering men's egos. In reality, however, they deeply resented men's desire to "buy their soul as well as their body." One young prostitute found such pretense particularly difficult. She hated the fact that customers "expect the same willing, responsive service from the woman whose body they have bought as they do from the waitress who serves their dinner."47

A prostitute therefore found it necessary to defend against this intrusion on her personal self while engaged in the most personal and intimate sexual acts. For prostitutes, having sexual relations with customers for whom they felt physical disgust was a daily fact of life. From fragmentary evidence, it appears that some prostitutes used morphine to immunize themselves against these interactions and to soften the hard-edged reality of their daily work. Morphine could be obtained through certain druggists or doctors who acted as suppliers to prostitutes. Although drug addiction among prostitutes did not receive a great deal of attention, it was probably more prevalent than realized; when arrested, many imprisoned prostitutes suddenly became seized with violent withdrawal symptoms. One female worker with prostitutes noted that prostitutes in workhouses smuggled in morphine or cocaine in pies, oranges, and chewing gum.48

The percentage of prostitutes addicted to drugs is difficult to estimate. At Bedford Reformatory, 5.7 percent of 647 prostitutes were found to be using drugs. The superintendent of police of Philadelphia, however, estimated that closer to 50 percent of prostitutes working in the districts used drugs. The use of cocaine—since its discovery twenty years before as a surgical anesthetic—had spread to many criminal subcultures. One rescue worker stated that 7 out of 229 prostitutes she had encountered were "confirmed opium users." When brothels were closed, some municipal reformers noted that pimps began selling opium and cocaine to recoup their losses.49 In her description of her life as a prostitute, Maimie Pinzer recalled that she, too, had been addicted to "m—."50 In sum, though drug addiction was not as closely tied to prostitution as it is today, evidence suggests that it was a growing problem that investigators and reformers were just beginning to observe and acknowledge.

Another major occupational hazard was venereal disease. Estimates of infected prostitutes varied widely. One female reformer guessed that forty thousand prostitutes died every year as the result of venereal infection.51 In one New York study, 20.56 percent had clinical manifestations of venereal disease. After testing, however, only 10 percent were actually found to be infected.52 One writer estimated that 60 to 70 percent of all active prostitutes eventually became infected while plying their trade. Another study at Bedford Hills of 200 prostitutes revealed that only 13.5 percent of prostitutes were free from venereal disease. Yet another study concluded that 74 percent of active prostitutes in San Francisco tested by the new Wasserman laboratory procedure were found infected. Venereal infection was not limited to women who practiced the trade constantly. Maimie Pinzer, plagued with illnesses throughout her impoverished young womanhood, lost an eye to syphilitic infection.53

Pregnancy was a particular problem that prostitutes encountered in their work. Although contemporary sexual handbooks still described women's fertile period as during and after menstruation,54 prostitutes were apparently aware of the accurate female fertility cycle and used such well-known contraceptive methods as "packing with sponges" and douching. Nevertheless some prostitutes still became pregnant. If they carried their children to term, they frequently found a "baby farm" where an older woman, sometimes a former prostitute, took care of prostitutes' children. Prostitutes also had access to quack doctors, who parasitically lived off the women's medical problems. Pharmacists and doctors provided a "black pill which, if taken for three days and with hot baths, usually brought a girl around."55 Although statistics are unavailable, it is likely that the many deaths associated with prostitution might have resulted from some of the medicines and procedures used for abortion. Another gynecological problem that prostitutes may have experienced was chronic pelvic congestion, caused by excessive sexual intercourse without orgasm, an uncomfortable condition for which prostitutes now frequently seek medical help.56

Suicide was also associated with prostitution. Sensationalized newspaper accounts frequently described the despair that led prostitutes to take their own lives. The prevalence of suicide among prostitutes is difficult to determine. One study of prostitutes working in brothels found that 11 percent of the women had attempted suicide at least one time.57 Nearly all memoirs of madams and prostitutes have emphasized the periodic despondency and despair that prostitutes experience when hopes of marrying fail, when dreams of achieving some form of upward mobility disintegrate, or when women feel trapped in a hopeless situa-
Maimie Pinzer, while struggling to avoid returning to prostitution, experienced periods of deep depression as she tried to live on subsistence wages in a variety of jobs. She eloquently described the plight of such estranged, alienated, and impoverished young women when she wrote, "When the seasons change as they are doing now—I feel the smallness of my life and I get terribly discouraged for need of many things makes me wonder if after all it is worthwhile to struggle as I do."59

Another major occupational hazard for prostitutes was their own aging. A young, white, attractive woman could easily find employment in a number of reasonably well kept houses. But as a woman grew older, as the scars and bruises of a difficult occupation gradually destroyed her health and looks, she faced the grim certainty of downward mobility in her occupation. Like the athlete who depends on his or her youthful strength or looks for early career advancement, the prostitute could look ahead only to a bleak future. If she had a pimp, he might drop her. A madam might similarly let her go. Without any training or skills, she might at best marry; at worst, she might be forced into the fifty-cent houses or into streetwalking, where older and less attractive women finally plied their trade.60

Finally, prostitutes faced continual social and community ostracism in a society that viewed them as a social evil, a pariah. How did prostitutes cope with such moral ostracism from the dominant culture? Did they care? Did they feel victimized by society? Were they contemptuous of middle-class "sexual hypocrisy"? Did they internalize society's view of themselves and believe in their worthlessness? Or did they find means of achieving self-esteem despite their socially degraded status?

Available evidence points in several directions. Maimie Pinzer, for example, expressed a strong will to achieve respectability and continually worried about etiquette and other rules of behavior. Very early in life, and throughout her experiences as a prostitute, she aimed at elevating her self-esteem and achieving respectability.

I can recall distinctly that I was ever on the alert as a girl to learn the things that distinguished "nice" people from the other kind. I don't know just why I thought this desirable inasmuch as I didn't show any desire to live as "nice" people did—but I can recall hundreds of times when I would meet a man—son of "nice" people—and he, thinking to come down to the level of a girl of my sort would either express himself coarsely or in language that would not be considered good English by "nice" people—and I would take great pleasure in correcting him, thinking to show him that it wasn't necessary to come down—I would come up. In this way, I learned much—often it wasn't their speech, sometimes their mannerisms at or away from the table—but I knew all this because I wanted to know and nothing escaped me.61

Despite her aspirations for a respectable and refined life, however, Maimie, like many other prostitutes during this period, maintained a rather cynical atti-
prepared her to view prostitution as anything but another means of survival. The daughter of former black slaves who had become poor menial workers, she had never been exposed to any theoretical difference between prostitution and "decent" sexual relations. When asked when she had first started having sexual relations with men, she replied, "Shit! I don't know when I started. I been fucking from befo' I kin remembuh. Shit yes! Wit my ol' man, wit my brother, wit d' kids in da street."65

One vital means of support which helped prostitutes face any stigma or brutality they encountered in their trade was the subculture of prostitution itself. Although most aspects of the culture remain to be uncovered by further research, fragmentary evidence suggests that red-light districts, although in a state of transition, still offered women a certain amount of protection, support, and human validation. Logically, a woman new to the subculture might have felt sensitive about her stigmatized status, particularly if she had not grown up in the district or if she hailed from a family or community from which she had already received significant social ostracism. The process of adapting to the district, or "the life" as it is called, involved a series of introductions to the new argot (cribs, lighthouses, johns, tricks, etc.), the humor, and the folklore of the subculture.66

Judging from past and present evidence, it is likely that the subculture of prostitution offered valuable ways of helping women to defend against social devaluation. Typically, prostitutes maintained an attitude of defensive superiority toward "respectable" members of the rest of society: they joked about the "charity girls" who freely gave away sexual favors, and they derided the "respectable" wives of their customers. In particular, they expressed contempt for the "respectable" domestic and factory workers who worked for subsistence pay, endured poorer working conditions, and often had to submit to sexual harassment by their bosses. Most frequently, they reserved their worst epithets for the "nosy" reformers who wanted to "save" prostitutes by destroying their means of support and running them out of town.67

Within the subculture, the new prostitute learned to assume both a new identity and a defensive social attitude. The literature abounds with an interesting initiation rite in which all new prostitutes changed their name as they entered a brothel.68 Perhaps the change of name helped to insure further privacy from family. Or, perhaps women simply chose to adopt more flamboyant names appropriate to their trade, such as "Violet" or "Sugarplum." Yet the strong emphasis on the entire initiation suggests something more important: for the novice, as well as for the initiated, the change of name was a means of bonding to a subculture considered deviant and degraded by the dominant culture. When one prostitute entered a brothel, for example, she repeatedly found all the "girls bustling with suggestions for her new name."69 It was as if a new name (as in a nunnery) made a new claim on the individual's loyalties to her past through the purposeful elimination of an older identity. Interestingly, the new name never included a surname; prostitutes simply became known as "Lulu" or "Buttercup." In effect, they ceased to belong to any previous father or husband.

Maimie Pinzer, too, described her own need to create an alternative persona and name, "Mimi," on whom she blamed her "sporting life." Was this need for a new name a way of dealing with internalized guilt from social and familial stigma? Was it a way of becoming integrated into a deviant and stigmatized subculture? Explanations can be only speculative. Perhaps the rite of name initi-
ation helped transform whatever individual or collective worthlessness women experienced as a stigmatized group into a more positive sense of self-esteem. Much like the defensive superior attitude adopted by members of the subculture, it may be that the new names helped create positive new identities that provided a sense of self-worth in the face of social ostracism.

The new prostitute also became integrated into the subculture of prostitution by forming close relationships with other prostitutes and madams. The late anthropologist Michelle Rosaldo suggested that women in deviant roles such as witches or prostitutes may develop bases of female solidarity denied other women: “The very symbolic and social conceptions that appear to set women apart and to circumscribe their activities may be used by women as a basis for female solidarity and worth.” Within the brothel, in particular, such solidarity seemed to be prevalent. Despite petty jealousies and competition, the women who lived and worked in the same houses and trade seem to have experienced a continuous bonding.

On occasion, such homosocial relationships deepened into more than friendships. Nearly all accounts of prostitution, particularly those written by madams, refer to the sexual and/or loving relationships that developed between women living in the same household. It is clear that madams viewed lesbian relationships among prostitutes as a rather natural and common occurrence and worried about it only when personal jealousies or unhappiness threatened to disrupt the work routine. It may be that some prostitutes turned to other women for the kind of sensual, caring, nurturing, supportive, relaxing relationships they definitely lacked in their work—and perhaps found lacking in their heterosexual relationships as well. Given the occasional demands for women to turn “lesbian tricks,” it may be that prostitutes early learned to explore their sexuality as a result of customers’ requests. Although explanations are speculative, it should not be surprising that a certain number of women would form enduring homosexual relationships with the women with whom they lived or worked.

One important kind of support that prostitutes gave each other may have been the folklore and cultural attitudes that linked them in a collective identity. Contemporary research indicates that the stories and humor that prostitutes share with one another emphasize the frailties and inadequacies of their customers. In the early twentieth century, much of the folklore of the brothel seems similarly to have turned on stories and legends that ridiculed either customers or “virtuous society.” In this way, prostitutes’ humor may have provided an important means of preserving their sense of self-esteem. For example, one story that received widespread currency and became popular during the thirties told of a furious hurricane that ripped the city of Albany, Georgia, apart. The school, church, firehouse, and important civic buildings were all destroyed by the devastation. The red-light districts, however, survived. The prostitutes laughingly explained, “Virtue is its own reward.”

Superstitions particular to brothel life offered additional strength to a subculture that remained distant from the dominant culture. As one prostitute recalled, many of the day’s activities were guided by superstitious beliefs. “At Madame C’s,” she wrote, “it was considered bad luck for a man to come in and then leave without spending money. To remove the curse from the house it was the custom for the girl who let him out of the door to spit on his back.” In addition, such superstitions may have allowed prostitutes to act out hostile feelings toward their male customers. Other superstitions included injunctions against using one’s own name and bringing a cat inside a brothel. Placing wine on the sidewalk or readjusting a wall mirror supposedly brought more customers. If a woman was rejected by the first evening’s customer, her luck was certain to be bad for the near future. If a woman performed fellatio, bad teeth or a rotten stomach would result if she swallowed any sperm.

Prostitutes also explained to novitiates the legends that accounted for much of the argot. Red-light, for example, derived from the early railroad days in Kansas City, when a brakeman, who carried a red lantern signal lamp, would hang it outside the whorehouse while engaged inside. The dispatcher then knew where to find the brakeman, as well as any other member of the train’s crew, when the train was ready to pull out. The origin of hooker was attributed to the many women who became camp followers in General Hooker’s army during the Civil War.

Prostitutes also shared the daily worries and problems they faced as roommates living in the same house. Recalling the days of running an illegal brothel during the thirties, Pauline Tabor emphasized that “a madam and her girls are cut off from the normal society in which they once moved. . . . As a result, they tend to ‘adopt’ each other as a family. Although they indulge in gossip, petty jealousies, and quarrels, they develop a sense of loyalty and concern for one another’s problems—a tolerant acceptance of human faults which sometimes even extends to the customers they serve.” The myth of the “whore with a golden heart” probably originated not from what prostitutes did for men, but from what they did for one another. When a woman could not pay for her child’s care at a baby farm, the other women chipped in to help her out. When one prostitute became pregnant and lost her baby, the women surrounded her with all the nurturance “of her own sisters and mother.” In effect, women living together could, under certain conditions, create a surrogate family life in which both deep caring and fights sustained and bonded the entire group together.

It is also true, however, that prostitutes did develop a rather widespread reputation for generously tipping other workers such as maids or bartenders, taking in stray dogs, with whom they developed extremely close and loving ties, and acting like the mythical “whore with a golden heart.” While some scholars might argue that the prostitute was acting out of guilt for her sins, there may be other explanations closer to the daily realities of these women’s lives. Maimie Pinzer’s
letters, for example, were filled with lengthy and affectionate references to her much beloved dog, Poke—alongside pages of despair and expressions of despondency and alienation. A majority of the well-known photographs taken by E. J. Bellocq of Storyville prostitutes depict the women posed with a favorite canine pet. Given the alienated nature of prostitutes’ work, their frequent estrangement from their families, it should not be surprising that the women would express their tenderness and generosity with whom they felt most comfortable—animals, other menial workers who would not judge them, and especially one another.

Prostitutes who “worked” the most expensive houses also shared with each other the joys of buying clothing they had never been able to afford. Poring over gowns that peddlers brought, driving around the city in their most stunning attire, these women enjoyed and experienced a sense of shared wealth and status. Although some high-priced prostitutes tried to dress like other wealthy women, it has long been a tradition for prostitutes to identify their trade by wearing special attire. (Interestingly, many of the aspects of “whorish” appearance have inevitably become part of “respectable” women’s appearance: make-up, wigs, drawers, shaving of bodily hair, boots, short skirts, etc.) For prostitutes, the distinguishing marks of their trade reinforced the sense of belonging to a particular subculture.

What bonded most prostitutes together, ultimately, was their collective view toward the rest of society. The “snide, smug, respectable” people “out there” were viewed as hypocrites: not the judge and jury of people’s morals, but rather a collective “enemy” who used “bribery, dishonesty, lies, corruption in high places, and swindled taxpayers.” As one madam explained, “The grocer had fixed scales; the priest was exiled for buggery with his choir boys, the businessman who led a reform party owned half the worst houses in town, and people never felt they got a ‘just price’ for any merchandise.” In a sense, then, prostitutes, like reformers, criticized the commercialization and corruption of American society.

Despite their alienation from the dominant culture, prostitutes shared certain values with it. Dreams of upward mobility—of earning sufficient money to buy a small cottage and enjoy a happily married life, or of becoming a wealthy madam—pervaded the subculture of prostitution. Furthermore, the numerous forms of prostitution reflected class distinctions in the larger society which prostitutes often guarded jealously. As one young prostitute explained these class differences, “The social gulf between the first-class courtesan and those who have become the dregs of prostitution is as great as the gulf between the sheltered woman in her home and the streetwalker.” At the bottom of the social scale was the streetwalker or the prostitute who worked in one of the low-class cribs; at the top was the courtesan, the kept woman whose livelihood was insured by a gentleman of means. Other women, under economic duress, would find such gentlemen and make “dates” with them, as did Mairnie Pinzer. As she pointedly explained to Fanny Howe, no one would ever have known she was a prostitute; she dressed and behaved as a lady while on her dates, and she took care to avoid prostitutes on a lower social level than herself.

Many prostitutes expressed extremely conventional social preferences and values when they actually found a potential mate. As Sally Stanford noted, the
running of a brothel never challenged her basic morals or sense of propriety. Honesty was essential in all dealings, particularly when the work of a prostitute was a series of sexual lies. As she claimed, "the path to my bedroom is paved with all the legalities and the marriage license comes first with me."85

The relationships that some prostitutes in the larger cities formed with pimps mirrored in an exaggerated form some of that heterosexual conventionality. Such relationships posed a great problem, however—pimp domination over streetwalkers or prostitutes attached to saloons was a particular horror of prostitution. Albeit small by today's numbers, the growing group of pimps had already begun to develop their own particular culture: they gathered in gambling resorts during the evening while their women "worked the streets or saloon," and maintained tyrannical and brutal control over the women. "It is an unwritten law among these men," explained the Rockefeller Commission, "that the authority of the individual over the woman or women controlled by him is unquestioned by his associates to whatever extreme it may be carried." Social reformers were bewildered by the pimp/prostitute relationship.86 Prostitutes, moreover, rarely offered any reasonable explanations. "Arrei," a former prostitute, explained, "Well shit, you know how 'tis wide dese heah who's. Evvy one of dem got a man she give all her money. I ain't no differ' I give mah man mah money. One time I buy a gos back suit, an' you know what he do? He punch me in d' head an' tell me he don' need no suit he need money. Aft' dat Ijes give him mah money. Ah doan know why. Ah jest give him mah money."87 Fortunately for Arrei, her man saved her earnings and bought a barroom over which they continued to live "like ma'ied folks."

Was it simply a custom to have a pimp if unattached to a brothel? Was the relationship maintained by force alone? What function did these early pimps play in prostitutes' lives?

In some sense, the pimps offered many of the same services to prostitutes which madams had proffered in brothels. Like madams, they maintained an ambiguous relationship with the prostitute: they exploited her while offering her some of the genuine physical and emotional protection a woman needed outside of the brothel system.

Pimps "took care of their women," by demonstrating how they could earn a better living. As one pimp several decades later argued, "I take her to a dress shop, beauty parlor, and dentist, and remove her moles. I show a girl that she's been wasting her life working for peanuts and giving it away."88 At the same time that a pimp "helped" his woman, of course, he also reaped the profits of her income.

Despite the exploitative and brutal nature of the relationship, the pimp seemed to provide a primary emotional relationship for some prostitutes. Given that prostitutes had experienced an unusually high incidence of "broken" or "troubled" homes in their childhood, some women perhaps found emotional

relief in feeling needed and wanted, if only for their earnings, by one central figure in their lives. As George Kneeland remarked after analyzing the pimp/prostitute relationship in New York, "A spark of affection lives at the heart of this ghastly relation."89 Such affection, however, was usually one-sided.

Cadets and pimps generally came from the same economic backgrounds, even neighborhoods, as prostitutes. "Everywhere," wrote George Kibbe Turner, "the boy of the slums has learned that a girl is an asset which, once acquired by him, will give him more money than he can ever earn and a life of absolute ease." Turner's observations were confirmed by Clifford Roe, assistant state's attorney in Chicago, who indicted 150 boys for procuring girls for prostitution.90 As Emma Goldman noted, "It is not the cadet that makes the prostitute. It is our sham and hypocrisy that creates both the prostitute and the cadet. . . . Why is the cadet more criminal or a greater menace to society than the owners of department stores and factories, who grow fat on the sweat of their victims, only to drive them into the streets?"91 Like the prostitute, the cadet or pimp found in the trade an illegitimate means of achieving the socially acceptable goal of material wealth. Next to the slum landlord who rented real estate for prostitution, the pimp was a mere pauper. Nevertheless, his personal relationship with the prostitute mirrored the individual subjugation of women to men.

The story of a former cadet named Marc, who was born in the 1880s, is somewhat typical. Like many prostitutes, Marc was born and raised in an atmosphere in which prostitution was a daily fact of his existence: "My ol' lady—it wasn't no secret—was a whore in Dauphine Street, and tha' where I was born—in a little house on Dauphine Street in the French Quarter. It's still there. . . . I don't know who my ol'man was. Just another trick, you know. Anyway, the ol'lady died in 1903 from the clap."92 Like many poor children, Marc became dissatisfied with the meager earnings he made from selling newspapers and dreamed of making a fortune through some other means. "When I was fifteen years old," he recalled, "I started thinkin' I better think about doin' somethin' else, because I couldn't be sellin' papers all my life."

In exchange for a commission, he began "steering" customers to a particular prostitute. By the time he was seventeen, he had "eight broods turning tricks" for him. "I was making about three hundred a week clear." His major job: "I'd have to lay each one of 'em once or twice a month."

Like many pimps, Marc spent a great deal of time at certain saloons where cadets drank, gambled, and boasted of the jewels they could buy with earnings from their "broads." Unlike many pimps, however, Marc refused to gamble and invested his money in solid real estate, which permitted him to enjoy economic security in his old age. By illegitimate means, Marc found economic security and respectability. He expressed no regrets: "I got this bar. I got a fine house with a big yard . . . I don't care that I made mine pimpin'. . . . How was I gonna make it, selling papers? I was in business like anybody else, and I run it good.
Tabor did not think so.

to the dominant “respectable” culture? Different from the dominant “respectable” culture?

deviant subculture that threatened to undermine the purity of American society.

One cannot, and should not, however, equate the life of a prostitute with that of a pimp. There were—and are—essential differences that transcended the similarity of their class origins and emphasized their gender differences. Due to a double standard of sexual morality, the prostitute suffered great ostracism and brutality, while the pimp parasitically lived off her earnings. Whereas a man gained a certain degree of self-esteem and status by “making it” as a pimp in the slums, few poor families praised a young woman for achieving economic security through prostitution. Many members of the poorest classes might envy, or even admire, the cadet for his ability to circumvent the blocked mobility that faced the unskilled male worker, but few people offered sympathy to the young slum girl who sold herself rather than achieving respectability and security through marriage.

In sum, a prostitute became the victim of a pimp’s brutality and exploitation, and not his partner in economic business. Only a few prostitutes ever achieved the kind of material wealth and independence of which pimps could boast. Wherever the prostitute worked, a legion of parasites lived off her earnings. The prostitute, like women outside the subculture, suffered the stigma and degradation imposed by male sexual exploitation and patriarchal sexual values.

To “polite” society, cadets, prostitutes, and madams comprised an alien and deviant subculture that threatened to undermine the purity of American society. But was this subculture—and the political and municipal crime and corruption it generated—so different from the dominant “respectable” culture?

Looking back at her own experience in the business of prostitution, Pauline Tabor did not think so.

Many of these experts seem to view prostitutes and madams as a special kind of human animal—as a breed apart from the rest of society. This is not so. We are not different than the rest of God’s children. We are subject to the same emotions, the same ambitions, the same despair, the same pain, the same weaknesses, the same hunger. The only basic difference is that the society from which we come puts us in a different, untouchable category—an ostracized class of “fallen women” who, if we are lucky and make our fortune, magically are socially cleansed and become respectable once again.

In fact, there were many similarities between this “deviant” subculture and the dominant culture. Prostitution mirrored the rest of society in several significant ways. By the early twentieth century, the United States had become an increasingly rationalized and commercialized society. Prostitution, too, had become a well-organized and commercialized business in the largest cities. Much of American business and industry had become concentrated into fewer and fewer trusts and monopolies. Much of prostitution, as well, had become owned and operated by a handful of powerful politicians and businessmen. In all areas of American business, men “hustled” one another to achieve power and wealth. In the subculture of prostitution, prostitutes and cadets “hustled” customers for their last penny. Despite the concentration of wealth into corporate structures and the gradual loss of entrepreneurial mobility, many average American workers still hoped to achieve individual “possession and private ownership of the valuable things.” For most of the underworld, “making it” was also a lifelong obsession.

By the early twentieth century, many important human relationships in American society (labor, professional services, marriage), had become governed by a “cash nexus.” Prostitutes’ relationships to customers, madams and cadets were also largely governed by commercial concerns. Alienation and loneliness in American society were met by corporate efforts to sell happiness through the advertisement of material goods and the creation of new needs and services. Prostitution, too, falsely promised to eliminate individual alienation and loneliness for the right price.

Although prostitution seemed seedier and more sordid than other aspects of American society, it also embodied many values taken for granted in other arenas of American life: efficient, but impersonal, service; the commercialization of human relationships; the subjugation and devaluation of women by men; and the exploitation of the many for the benefit of a few.

As Americans investigated the subculture of prostitution, they discovered a microcosm of their own daily prostitution for the almighty dollar. Only some reformers or observers consciously recognized the similarities because prostitution sold sex, as opposed to less sacred products of the new industrial order. Viewed from the outside, from the reformers’ perspective, the subculture of prostitution seemed to be one of the greatest social evils in American society. For the poor, and particularly for women, however, survival or upward mobility was frequently blocked by their class and gender status. Viewed from below, then, prostitution offered an illegitimate, frequently brutal and degrading means of achieving socially acceptable goals in a society that valued material acquisition, expected upward mobility, and judged an individual’s worth on his or her ability to achieve both.