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Pimpin' Ain't Easy? The Lives of Pimps Involved in Street Prostitution in The United States of America

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Abstract

The pimp serves as an iconic ghetto hero who stands in street cultures as a figure that represents defiance, anti-establishment angst, and victorious criminality (Funches & Marriott 2002; Horton-Stallings, 2003). The American pimp has been brought into mainstream American culture through 1960's literature, 1970's Blaxploitation films, 1980's hip hop and more recently, documentaries, films, books, music and television. The word 'pimp' has found its way into mainstream usage and popular caricatures of the pimp can be found in everything from Halloween costumes to 'pimp and ho' themed college parties. Despite being highly visible within mainstream culture, this character is still enigmatic as pimps are an under-researched population. Thus this thesis aims to uncover and unveil the lives and experiences of pimps involved in illegal prostitution to produce a more panoramic understanding of prostitution and an unexplored segment of major players within it.

This thesis investigates the experiences and narratives of pimps involved in illegal, predominately street, prostitution in the USA. This research project stands to offer in-depth insight into the experiences of pimps in the United States within this unique subcultural context. In order to fill that literature gap, this research interviewed pimps and gathered data that explored how and why individuals become pimps, their personal histories, how they maintain their position as pimps, how pimps pimp, and the motivations for exit and/or retirement from The Game (the world of prostitution and pimping). More than just a managerial position, the role of the pimp also embraces a lifestyle with special rules, fashions and activities that create a unique and complex underground, criminal community. Rather than just presenting pimps as violent exploiters or ghetto heroes, this thesis examined the language of pimping, their orientation to their roles, the relationship between pimping and the surrounding communities and mainstream society, and explored this criminal career as a social role as well as career.

With their childhood experiences of life in American ghettos leading to regular exposure to pimps and favorable impressions of illicit, underground careers, respondents came to 'choose' pimping as their career trajectory in their teens. Once dedicated to becoming pimps, many pimps underwent training with older pimps and later gained acceptance within the street community to earn their positions and status as pimps. When established within The Game, they started to practice 'pimpology' (pimp ideology) and to firmly establish their skills and methods of pimping. Two substantive chapters within this thesis are dedicated to addressing pimpology: pimpology covers the core processes, social connections and methods of management that are vital for a pimps success and survival in The Game. The aim of these chapters is to explore how pimps function as individuals, with the women who work for them,

within their peer networks, and within their communities while they are actively pimping. And finally, exit from pimping will be explored. Issues such as age, exhaustion, family, health, drug addiction, trauma, imprisonment, law enforcement crackdowns and social betrayal all also act as further incentives for pimps to 'hang up their pimp hat.'

This research has uncovered new themes and trends within the narratives of this hidden, underground subcultural population and offers great insights into the 'career cycles' of pimps. This project stands to fill a major gap within prostitution research as current literature lacks the perspectives and voices of pimps themselves. Within this research, a nuanced approach offers a unique view of the pimp and their complex roles and relationships within The Game. As an understudied population, pimps have rarely been the focus of academic inquiry; thus this research stands to contribute new perspectives, insights and data on a population that has remained enigmatic and well hidden from academic exploration for decades.

Introduction

The image of the pimp has been present in the American mainstream since the 1960's and 1970's when this iconic character rose as a ghetto hero and became a symbol of counter culture and social desistance. Beyond the swaggering Black male in brightly colored, fitted suits and feathered hats that emerged in Blaxploitation films and novels (See *Pimp: The Story of My Life*, Slim, 1969; *Whoreson*, Giones, 1972) was a criminal hustler that existed for decades prior unbeknownst to mainstream American culture (Reitman, 1932) and persists today. Pimps today remain enigmatic, elusive and secretive despite their fame, notoriety and acceptance in popular culture. The public's main source of information on pimps and their lives have solely come from pimps themselves through film, novels, documentaries (or pimpumentaries) and music (for example recording artists such as Ice-T or Snoop Dogg who were pimps). Not since the 1970's (Milner & Milner, 1972) has an academic project sought to study or examine this population despite the recent increases in research on prostitution and the fervent drive for more data and attention to human trafficking (Weizter, 2000a). Recent research has sought to unveil the inter-workings of human sex trafficking domestically within the USA (see: Raphael, Hughes), and pimps are often now being prosecuted under human trafficking laws, but this new research on trafficking has largely neglected focus on the pimp and their role in prostitution thus leaving a major gap in the literature and in understandings of prostitution. It was this gap and a lack of information that motivated this research. This project, with its sole focus on pimps and their stories, currently stands alone in the American literature on this topic and stands to offer new, nuanced and unexposed themes about the lives of pimps.

In an attempt to understand pimpology (pimp ideology), The Game (the world of prostitution and pimping), and the lives of pimps, this research focused solely on pimps to answer research questions aimed at providing new perceptions into this criminal subculture. This project focused specifically on pimps involved in illegal prostitution, primarily street prostitution, as the niche of pimps to be researched. This subpopulation was selected due to pre-existing connection to it through a gatekeeper, the high visibility and public view of this group, and the unique, fascinating cultural and social reoccurring themes within this subcultural community. Language and slang contribute greatly to the uniqueness of this culture but it is often inaccessible to those outside of the community, therefore, a glossary has been provided on Appendix 1, or page 224 so that the audience can find definitions of the very colloquial words used throughout this thesis.

The data in this research was collected during interviews conducted between January 2010 and July of 2010. In all, ten interviews were conducted with nine individuals: four of the

interviews were conducted on the telephone, whilst the remaining six were conducted face to face. The respondents mostly identified as former pimps, though two still occasionally dabbled in pimping when the interviews were conducted, and the range of time since retirement from The Game ranged from two years to ten years. The age ranges of the respondents at the time of the interviews spanned early thirties to early sixties. As is highlighted in the table proved in the sample section on page 23, the majority of the respondents were male and all respondents were Black Americans.

The first core data chapter, chapter 3, examines the personal and familial histories of pimps within the inner cities of America or American ghettos. Because pimps are a product of their histories, background, context and communities, it is crucial to embark on a detailed investigation of their narratives to form coherent understandings of their involvement in pimping (Harocopos, et. al, 2000). It is within this formative context that various experiences of structural violence, cultures of violence, social and political oppressions, limited opportunity, racism, classism, sexism and childhood abuses combine and contribute to the decisions and choices of individuals who later become pimps. Chapter 4 then explores the various entries and gateways into pimping concluding with the apprenticeships and training into pimping. These two chapters are closely linked to one another as the American ghetto served socially and geographically as location for exposure to, and initiation into, The Game. It is within these chapters that the motivations and incentives for involvement in pimping become clear as the experiences, ideologies and life histories of pimps are contextualized.

The following two chapters revolve around exploration of narratives on how pimps pimp. Referred to as Pimpology, or methods of pimping, this substantive topic covers the role of money, the need for pimps, the recruitment of prostitutes, locations and movement, professional underground networks, the rules of The Game, management, personal presentation, and performativity. Pimpology covers the core processes, social connections and methods of management that are vital for a pimp's success and survival in The Game and as such, requires two chapters to adequately cover. The aim of these chapters is to explore how pimps function as individuals, with the women who work for them, within their peer networks, and within their communities while they are actively pimping. The term pimpology is borrowed from the former pimp and author Pimpin' Ken, or Ken Ivy and he explains "I use psychological warfare, or pimpology, to get what I want, which is often more treacherous than physical abuse. I use words and gestures to get others to act right and do right." (Ken & Hunter, 2008: 2) He further describes pimpology as the mentality and/or mindframe required of a pimp to succeed in The Life. The term is utilized within this project to represent the various complex and multi-faceted methods of participating within this underground criminal career.

'Pimpology: Part 1' will explore the role of money within this career with emphasis on its material and symbolic values. It highlights the fragility of the rhetoric surrounding the insistence that pimping is 'all about the Benjamins[1]' when respondents' narratives suggest far more complex motivations and incentives. Literature and previous research suggests that there is a widely held public belief that pimps are, and have been, in business because they provide protection to the prostitutes who work for them but as has been shown through this and other research (Hodgson, 1997), in the world of illegal street prostitution, pimps provide little to no protection. Therefore it is necessary to explore how and why pimps exist within prostitution if not for a 'rational' and/or functional purpose. Cross-country pimping and multi-residential trends will be explored in relation to the nomadic movement of pimps in this subculture to maximize their income and avoid law enforcement. The various methods of recruitment of prostitutes by pimps are explored in the following section along with the more commonly relied upon recruitment tactic of prostitutes recruiting new prostitutes. And finally, 'Pimpology: Part 1' will cover the well-connected and maintained social, and professional networks that pimps rely on heavily throughout their careers for various purposes. All of the above stated themes help to shed light on the modality, tactics, behaviors, motivations and geographic trends of pimps within The Game and thus lay the foundation for understanding pimpology.

'Pimpology: Part 2' continues to explore elements of The Game and pimpology by tackling topics such as The Rules of The Game, management and issues of gender in pimping. Starting with the supposed origins of The Rules, the first section of this chapter explores the (until recently, see: Gholson, 2004; Ken & Hunter, 2008) unwritten laws of pimping and assesses the multiple ways in which these rules are transferred and acquired. This section then turns its attention to examples of the rules themselves that appear to be in a constant state of change, re-interpretation and renegotiations as generations pass. Though these laws do not remain stagnant there are a few core rules that have supposedly stood the test of time. These rules become extremely relevant when examining the roles pimps play in management within pimping. Far from a role which the public would assume entails soliciting of clients and managing money (Hodgson, 1997), 'management' to pimps means something very different and requires a wide ranging repertoire of social and criminal skills. It is within management that themes of violence and manipulation begin to emerge and dominate, and a very ominous depiction of what pimps mean by 'management' begins to materialize. This exploration of management offers critical insights into the pimp-prostitute relationship and grants understandings of how these relationships are negotiated, controlled and fiercely manipulated

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[1] American slang phrase used to mean 'all about the money'. 'Benjamins' refers to the image of Benjamin Franklin's face on USD $100.00 dollar bills, so in short, means money in the context that he is using it.

by pimps. The revelations offered by respondents in management continue on to further offer insights into how they manage relationships amongst the women who work for them, and between themselves and the women who work for them. The contexts of the relationships become complete with the examination of gender and pimping. The final section of 'Pimpology: Part 2' pieces together the collective bits of the pimpology chapters like the final piece of a jigsaw puzzle. When conceptualizations of gender offered by pimps and their embodiment of gender explored along side other issues within pimpology, a more panoramic view of pimpology becomes clear. Issues of gender, its expression and manifestations, within The Game and according to respondents, place the complex relationships and lifestyles of those who live The Life into a vivid context.

The next data chapter delves into the respondents' experiences of exit from pimping and explores the processes of becoming an ex-pimp. Major themes in this chapter include drug and alcohol abuse, incarceration, family influence, and traumas; all of which are explored as significant incentives for retirement. This chapter provides data and analysis on the motivations offered by individuals for becoming former pimps which is a previously unexplored social role change. Exits from other criminal careers (Bjorgo, 2002; Campbell & Hansen, 2012) and prostitution (Sanders, 2007; Dalla, 2006; Mansson & Hedin, 1999) have been offered, but data that falsifies the 'pimp or die' motto within The Game has yet to be offered until now. Exit from pimping serves to highlight the less boasted about experiences in The Game and shines light what respondents refer to as 'the dark side of pimping'. Thus it consistent experiences of the not-so-glamorous underbelly of The Game that becoming an ex-pimp turns into a reality for these hustlers and they must re-negotiate their loyalties and allegiances.

The final data chapter of this thesis examines life after pimping. Narratives about life after retirement provided a crucial insight into the various programs, resources and life skills needed to assist pimps in role exit. This chapter also provides important data regarding the remaining connections individuals maintain to The Game, their continued identification with the role and activities tied to it, and finally how individuals negotiate the more practical factors (such as employment, income, etc…) of life in the square world.

This thesis explores the lives and inner working of pimps as granted through the careful analysis of their autobiographic narratives. In offering pimps both a voice and a platform with which to articulate their stories, experiences and tales, this research has granted pimps input into the prostitution dialogue that they have thus far remained absent from. Moreover, this research aimed to refrain from a common research reoccurring theme which vilifies and demonizes pimps (Pheterson,1993): it instead sought to strike a balance between realistic, un-sanitized portrayals of their actions and activities, and careful consideration and analysis of the social, political and legal institutional oppressions and marginalization which

inform their choices, behaviors and experiences. By negotiating the space between arguably dated debates based on binary distinction between agency versus structure (Bourgois & Schonberg, 2009), this thesis sought in incorporate both equally, as pimps act simultaneously as the underdog and the 'top-dog'; they are both oppressed and oppressors (Harocopos, et.al, 2000). The dedication to maintaining a critical feminist angle in this thesis may seem counterintuitive to the topic, but in many ways the methodological approaches offered by this stance not only informed analysis but lead to a strong desire to allow the data to speak for itself, granted respondents more power within the data co-creation, and lead to careful consideration for multiple social inequalities that were critical to address (Kleinman, 2007; Harding, 1987; Stanley & Wise, 2006). But ultimately, it is apparent within the data offered in this research and other projects (Hodgson, 1997; Williamson & Baker, 2009; Williamson & Cluse-Tolar. 2002; Kennedy, et. al, 2007) that there are many activities and behaviors which pimps engage in which are coercive, violent, abusive, exploitative and unethical specifically in regards to prostitutes. While not vilifying, this research does not justify, condone or support the above-described conditions, which are currently rife within pimp-prostitute relationships. It is my hope that the negotiation of all these issues, along with the line carefully walked between my positionality and their life narratives experiences and stories, offers readers unique and balanced insights into the lives and roles of pimps involved in illegal prostitution in The United States.

Chapter 1: Methods

My Interest in this Topic

Within some fields, especially those that are politically controversial, it is often assumed that one's choice of research topic is a reflection of researcher positionality as Jacobs (2006) notes that there is a "widely-held, though often un-stated belief that what a field researcher studies, to some degree, reflects his or her personal values, interests or preoccupations. Translation: if you're studying deviants, you must want to be one of them, or at the very least you sympathise with their activities and even approve of them." (166) Having been in the past accused of betraying my feminist allegiance due to the populations I have worked with, I feel it is appropriate to explore the motivations and perspectives that lead to the conception of, and carrying out of, this research. My experiences also became highly reflective of what Goffman (1963) identified as 'courtesy stigma', which he describes as the experience of stigma based on interacting and/or working with those who are stigmatized. Years ago I was granted the opportunity to work long term with juvenile male sex offenders following their release from incarceration. This experience exposed me to perspectives on sexual assault and violence that I had never encountered in my years of studying Women's Studies and Sociology in my undergraduate studies. Because I was working with the offenders themselves, I was offered insights, uncensored explanations and detailed contexts of the various sexual crimes committed by these offenders. Because of this work, I became interested in assessing topics of violence against women by looking through the lenses of the offenders and antagonists in order to better understand the mechanisms, motivations and ideologies behind these violent transgressions. This was often met with great hostility and exclusion from feminist groups as my work with offenders, and not victims, was seen as a sign that I was more sympathetic to the offenders than I was to victims. Their view was that offenders did not deserve rehabilitation. I believed then, as I do now, that the fewer offenders there are, the fewer victims there will be and thus meaningful, well-influenced rehabilitation is crucial to curbing to violence against women. Thus, I was fully aware that when undertaking this project focused on pimps, that I was likely to be on the receiving end of similar sentiments and protest.

Prior to engaging in this research on pimping, I undertook an MSc research project that focused on survivors of prostitution and domestic sex trafficking that exposed me to the world of prostitution in the United States. Profoundly naïve and underprepared, I embarked on data collection convinced that prostitution was legitimate work, that it could be

empowering, and that it should be legal; I completed my field work on the complete other side of the fence. In that project, the data I had collected denied me the opportunity to maintain my original position and much of what I thought I understood about sex work had drastically shifted. After some time my position adjusted to a more 'centrist' stance within the prostitution debate but ultimately I realized that there was one factor that had impacted this impression most; a major player within The Game that remained unaccounted for in the literature, the pimp. During my MSc, I was hard pressed to locate any academic literature on these individuals though my respondents easily spent over half of their interviews talking about their pimps and their relationships with them. Thus it was clear that the pimp's role in the lives of prostitutes was highly influential and pimps had an enormously destructive and negative impact on the safety, well being, and security of women in prostitution. Considering all of these factors, I decided it was necessary further explore pimps as a population to fill the literature gap, add the voices of pimps to the on-going discourse, and to seek explanations and narratives from pimps themselves to explore their experiences within the world of prostitution. Pimps certainly proved to be a fascinating and highly engaging population to work with and I believe that this thesis will speak to that fact.

Approach: Feminist Research or Feminist Researcher?

Within my long list of various social identity markers (female, white, middle class, American, etc…) the one identity that often left people astounded was 'feminist.' "So, how exactly does a feminist research pimps?" The question was posed at me on dozens of occasions throughout this project. The idea of a feminist researching what may actually be the 'anti-thesis' of feminism definitely raised some eyebrows; but the undertaking of this project with that political and social identity at the forefront was central to the conception and conducting of this research.

But a nagging conflict arose for me when conceptualizing, carrying out, and writing up this research, and that problem rested in my attempt to figure out whether my research was feminist research or if I was a feminist researcher doing research. This issue left me torn as many of my methods integrated feminist methods, my analysis integrated feminist analysis, and my presentation of the data reflected an adherence to the core values of feminist research. But in so far as my topic was not solely focused on women, I did not necessary seek the experiences and perspectives of women, and I did not utilize or induct consciousness-raising into my work, I had fallen short of the opportunity to label this work 'feminist research.' The decision on how to identify this work was important as it often informed the literature I referred to, the various research processes I undertook, and essentially the presentation of this work. I thus concluded that I was likely a feminist researcher who had adapted and utilized several feminist research approaches into her work. The strong influence and presence of

feminist methods and methodologies throughout this thesis provides unique analysis, and presentation to this topic while emphasizing issues of inequality. And maybe most importantly, this research was conducted by a feminist, and this 'identity marker,' or political allegiance, in itself posed many interesting dilemmas to the approach of this topic. This section will briefly address some of the crucial elements in this research that were borrowed from feminist approaches and explore the impact of a feminist identity on pimp research.

Firstly, this research has been strongly influenced by feminist epistemologies. "Epistemologically, feminist methodology rejects the assumption that maintaining a strict separation between researcher and research subject produces a more valid, objective account." (Cook & Fonow, 1986: 9); this in addition to the outright rejection of objectivism and 'value-free' research within feminist research (Kleinman, 2006; Harding, 2004) structured the underlying assumptions, perceptions and methods of this research. Reflexivity and my personal impact on the research were integrated throughout this project and often lead to meaningful and productive conversations with the respondents. The importance of reflexivity within feminist research reflects the understanding that " the research appears to us not as an invisible, anonymous voice of authority, but as a real, historical individuals with concrete, specific desires and interests" (Harding, 2004: 9). And ultimately suggests " that the beliefs of the researcher are part of the empirical evidence for (or against) the claims advanced in the results of research." (Harding, 2004: 9)

Feminist research dedicates strong methodological, analytical and theoretical focus on experiences and expressions of inequality of multiple forms within their research: be it based on race, sexuality, disability, and class among others (Kleinman, 2006). It was clear within this research that the respondents had and were experiencing multiple oppressions while simultaneously enforcing and perpetuating the oppression of others through their choice of career. Poverty, racism, structural economic changes, and classism (among others) had left many of the respondents resorting to claims of victimization and repression while being willing to manipulate and capitalize upon patriarchal gender inequality to their advantage. bell hooks (1994) describes this system of social reproduction of patriarchal, white capitalist interests in relation to hip hop music and I would suggest her point has extreme relevance to pimping as well : "rather than seeing it as a subversion or disruption of the norm, we would need to see it as an embodiment of the norm." (137) Thus if we examine pimping, as an embodiment of the norm, through a feminist lens, while also taking into account the social oppressions of pimps, we are granted the opportunity to analyze the interworking of not only various oppressions but the compensation of oppression through oppression. Or as hooks would describe, "Far from being an expression of their "manhood," it is an expression of their own subjugation and humiliation by more powerful, less visible forces of patriarchal gangsterism" (hooks, 1994:143)

Feminist researchers are in a unique position to draw attention to various social inequalities and oppressions while maintaining a critical lens and analysis of their subject matter. "Feminist researchers can study hidden inequalities and how the powerful act in ways that mask those inequalities. We can study how women and members of other oppressed groups reinforce the wires of the birdcage" (Kleinman, 2007: 7) therefore it was crucial in this research to explore the experiences of oppressions by the respondents while simultaneously exposing their infliction of oppression on others. The constant attention paid to the various 'wires of the birdcage' in this research granted multi-faceted presentations of the roles, status and relationships of pimps within ever changing positions of power, advantage and position.

Scully (1990), in her work with violent sex offenders, presents a strong case for the involvement of feminists in research about men, especially men who are particularly oppressive and/or violent towards women, "While not diminishing the continuing responsibility to illuminate women's subordinate condition, the debunking of patriarchy is not accomplished by focusing exclusively on the lives and experiences of women." (Scully, 1990: 3) She further describes that because it is patriarchal ideology and privilege that feminists are working to dismantle, they first must access social realities and issues that are those of 'men' and men's social locations in order to grasp the interworking of these patriarchal elements. Furthermore, because gender is clearly a crucial element in the actions of male populations who engage in violence against women, she highlights the specific gendered analysis, interpretation and presentation of research that feminists can provide that might otherwise be negated or overlooked by non-feminist researchers.

Perspectives

Prostitution and Sex Work: A Reluctant Note

As a researcher who is researching pimps I am forced to grapple with my standpoint on prostitution as this impacts my research and my work. I am struggling to realize this goal because prostitution research is currently a battlefield (Chapkis, 1997); high-stake choices are inescapable as one's philosophical/political allegiance threatens to impact researchers academically, politically and socially. The current binary ideological approach traps feminist researchers because the extreme duality of the debate makes it impossible to both advocate and critique prostitution (Kissell & Davey, 2010). The current discourse is reactionary, verbally aggressive and completely antagonistic; this places fear in individuals who wish to engage in this subject matter. This topic is extraordinarily intimidating to breach in conferences, research papers, writing and even casual conversation with other feminists and often leaves one with battle scars (Chapkis, 1997).

What originally started as minor disagreements between feminists in the Western second wave feminist Women's Liberation Movement, finally turned into all out 'sex wars' during the 1960s when pornography, prostitution and all other forms of sex work became the decisive issues forcing feminists into one ideological camp or the other (Chapkis, 1997; Kissil & Davey, 2010). Western Feminists now currently fall into one of two camps on prostitution (Anderson, 2002; Chapkis,1997): Firstly, ***prostitution is sex work*** , legitimate work, and should be decriminalized if not legal (See: St. James, 1989; Paglia, 1990; Alexander, 1987) ; also labeled sex work ***advocates***. Sex work activists and workers identify the social stigma, patriarchal double sexual standards and illegality of prostitution as the core elements responsible for the perpetuation of violence, marginalization and criminalization of those involved in sex work (Alexander, 1987). Secondly, the ***prostitution is violence against women*** camp, also referred to as prostitution ***abolitionists***, believe it should remain illegal because it supports the sexual exploitation of women, violence against women, and the objectification of women (See: Dworkin, 1989; McKinnon, 2005 & 2011; Jeffreys,1997; and Farley, 2007: 2002 :1998).

Both parties in this debate have committed 'war crimes' (Chapkis, 1997) and the discourse continues to progress the way it has seemingly done since the 1930s (for example see: Davis, 1937 and Reitman, 1937). So where does place researchers who are 'undecided' or want to position their research outside of this discourse? In my work, moving beyond the restrictive binary discourse of prostitution literature is critical to ensure I am addressing the issues relevant to the specific context of the research; pimp-controlled illegal street prostitution. Pimp-controlled prostitution varies greatly from high-end escort services or workers in legal brothels, which is why the attempt to cover all forms and experiences of prostitution as homogenous is highly erroneous (Weitzer, 2005). Distinguishing between the circumstances of involvement in prostitution such as trafficking, coercion, and/or the involvement of third parties, especially pimps, is additionally essential (Alexander, 1987). As many researchers indicate, it is important that research begins to tease out the various forms of work that are organized under the ambiguous term "prostitution" (Chapkis,1997; Bernstein, 2009) so a deeper understanding of the experiences of those involved can be acknowledged with an appreciation for the differences in those experiences. Sex work advocates suggest that the inclination to homogenize prostitutes reduces the ability to distinguish between those engaged by means of autonomous choice and those who have been coerced, tricked, forced and/or trafficked (Alexander, 1987; Weitzer, 2005; COYOTE, 1987). Focusing on the heterogeneity of prostitution grants us the potential to progress past the current debates to forge new paths of research, activism and advocacy that reach beyond current uncompromising ideological dualism.

All individuals within the sex work industry deserve a voice and/or representation on this topic, regardless of whether or not it contradicts the motivations and beliefs of the researcher (Weitzer, 2000). There is no denying the negative role that pimps play within the world of prostitution, but this can be done without generalizing pimp-controlled prostitution data with all forms of prostitution. Thus, my position that pimp-controlled prostitution is dangerous, harmful and exploitative need not be extended to my perspectives on sex work in general.

"How do you feel about pimps?"

There is no shortage of prostitution researchers who are unapologetically influenced by the radical feminist stances, which identify prostitution[2] as violence against women, and this clearly informs their interpretation and presentation of pimps (for example see: Giobbe,1993: Stark and Hodgson, 2003: Raphael & Ashley, 2008: Farley, 2004: Jeffreys, 1997) . This is not to say that the pimp does not play a harmful, exploitative or problematic role, but these researchers are seemingly not willing to investigate the pimp as an social actor, or the surrounding institutions which create the pimp, which strips this character of context, social location and motivating factors. When the pimp is placed in these research projects, without any consideration for the context or backgrounds of pimps, the pimp is potentially misinterpreted, and over criticized; the result of this being that the readers are guided to conclusions about this population without just representation from all parties involved. These representations also create a very 'black and white' picture of the various actors and relationships within the sex industries leaving the potential for variations, heterogeneity and nuances to be ignored. But an exploration of these issues without intention to demonize or vilify pimps, does not suggest support or sympathy for them. As Jacobs (2006) notes studying these populations tends to unofficially suggest "at the very least you sympathise with their activities and even approve of them." (166) This research project sought to not demonize nor condone pimps, the balance required for which often proved tricky. But ultimately, there was a dedication to exploring this topic without outright condemnation of the individuals and a sincere desire to gain insight and explanations from the population itself about their lives and roles.

This work was undertaken with the understanding that pimp-controlled prostitution can be and usually is exploitative, harmful, and violent and that rigorous legal and social efforts should be undertaken to halt it as a practice. With that said though, I do not object to sex work or other forms of prostitution. Before the interviews, this had been my impression from talking with sex workers and other researchers; in other words, I had not yet gained a

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[2] Radical feminist are not the only individuals who take an anti-prostitution stance, but the majority of prostitution literature is dominated by feminist authors, and this statement is in direct relation to the authors discussed in this portion of the paper.

first hand, experience based perception yet. This perspective was not hidden from the respondents; often when asked by respondents what I thought about pimps I would provide a response close to the above stated while adding that the goal of the work was not to vilify pimps, but to understand and explore their motives and lives. I explained that I possessed a negative personal perspective on their roles, but that I was not interested in attacking, condemning or judging pimps in this research. And regardless of my personal angle on their careers, I stressed to them as I would to the audience of this thesis, I approached the interviews and data as judgment free and as open-minded as possible. Additionally, my ideas about what pimping was like and about their roles actually struck accord with the respondents as they regularly used words lie "manipulate", "brainwash', "rewire'' "prey" in regards to women they worked with and defined the word pimp using phrases such as *" a parasite, a leech," " a motherfucker that doesn't care about anyone but themselves."* Thus it became clear that in a way they had the same impression of their careers. The difference between my perception of pimping as exploitative, abusive and harmful and theirs is that I have moral and ethical objections to it because of those qualities, they did not. In other words, they completely understood the problematic elements of their behaviors and decisions but they justified and saw them as acceptable trade offs for an income and status. Thus they agreed with my assessment of the pimp-controlled prostitution, they were just apathetic to a moral critique of it or objection to it.

But as with most populations engaged in illegal, criminal activities, pimps are conscious of the stigma their activities carry and of the some times unflattering portrayals they cast in the public's eye. After the exchange below occurred with Richard, I was even more encouraged to ensure respondents that the purpose of the research did not include demonizing them:

> *Richard: "see and you ain't even participating in it you have been talkin' about it and it kind of gives you another view of it so you will never be able to forget it and you will look at it from a whole different perspective.* **Because you probably didn't even think we was human"**
>
> *Holly: "Oh come on, I didn't think"*
>
> *Richard: "I know but you probably didn't think we did stuff like (inaudible) but it be like it just change your whole outlook on people pimpin'."*

Even with my reservations about the respondents' past career choices, there is strong justification for feminist engagement with populations and topics that represent 'opposition' to feminist credences. Scully (1990) highlights the importance of feminist scholars working with male offenders in her work when describing why it may be more advantageous to study

male offenders than female victims when exploring topics of violence against women." Women cannot reveal the motivations and justifications of the men who rape them as they don't share the reality of sexually violent men. Such insight is acquired only through invading and critically examining the social constructions of men who rape. "(4) Likewise in prostitution research, prostitutes and trafficking survivors have provided a vast amount of insight and data on pimps but they simply cannot offer the depth, introspection and first-hand explanations that pimps themselves can offer. Thus it is only through direct work with pimps themselves that questions of their motivations, incentives and behaviors can be answered.

Research Design Basics

Research Questions

Five research questions informed this project and were authored to offer insight into the lives and career cycles of pimps and their experiences within The Game. The following research questions guided this project:

1) What are the personal background histories of pimps?
2) How and why do individuals become pimps?
3) How do pimps maintain their roles?
4) How and why do pimps exit their careers in pimping?
5) What are the social contexts in which pimps are created, exist, and thrive?

These research questions were constructed to guide this project in uncovering detailed accounts and explorations of the life histories of respondents, and their experiences in pimping. Through the interview processes, data collection, and data analysis, the narratives of the respondents and their experiences within this criminal career served as the main focus of exploration while data regarding their life histories provided the critical contexts, locations and experiences for their lives within The Game.

When and Where

Fieldwork for this project extended from January of 2010 until July of 2010. The majority of data collection took place in the Midwest of the United States, though this research was not limited to respondents only in this geographic region. Due to the highly

nomadic lifestyles and work patterns of pimps, it is possible to collect data from a varied sample from all over the USA within one geographical location[3].

Due to concerns for my safety, The University of Edinburgh's School of Social and Political Sciences (SSPS) ethics committee determined that all face to face interviews conducted for this research should be in public and in a location of my choosing (not the respondents). This lead to rather amusing interview locations, especially considering the topics of discussions; it was quite a juxtaposition and quintessentially American that I met most of the respondents at Starbucks and a few at Denny's (a popular American chain, diner-style restaurant) for the interviews. It often felt surreal to sip a vanilla latte at a Starbucks in a gentrified neighborhood with a former pimp talking about 'bitches and hos' and telling tales of exceptional violence. These locations did ensure my safety but often attracted a fair amount of attention from other customers and staff. Noise and other interruptions regularly occurred while conducting interviews in these settings and people in these locations were often curious about seeing a young white woman in business dress with a tape recorder talking to a Black male or female dressed classic pimp fashion. After some time into the interviews, the background noises, stares and interruptions became normal and were essentially just phased out while the respondents shared their life narratives with me and we engaged in conversation.

Sampling and Recruitment

This research aimed to gather rich and thick data from a sample of the population that was not likely to be representative or offer any meaningful quantitative data contributions to current discourse. Probability sampling, generally held as the most 'ideal' sampling methods was unachievable within this research as I "cannot adequately identify the members of the population in order to draw a sample." (Blaikie, 2000: 203) Representative and random samples are impossible to achieve with this population because of its hidden nature due to its illegal and stigmatized status. Most researchers who work on topics involving sex work gain their samples from prisons, rehabilitation centers, or outreach work; relying then on snowball and convenience sampling. Due to the lack of means to ensuring non-bias or representative sampling with this population, this project engaged in sampling methods generally utilized when investigating hidden, illegal and under-researched populations: convenience sampling and snowball recruitment methods. Blaikie (2000) explains that this approach to such project can be justified " in terms of it being better to have some knowledge that is restricted because of the type of sample than to have no knowledge of the topic at all. " (203)

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[3] For reasons of anonymity, I chose within this thesis to largely leave out specific locations and cities.

This research focused specifically on pimps involved in illegal prostitution in the United States and the respondents, with the exception of one, primarily relied on the streets as their work and 'business exchange' location. Excluded from this research were those involved in running brothels, escort services, call services, and those who work in locations where prostitution is legal. The unique social, legal and political context of illegal street prostitution was selected as it is one of the most problematic and complex forms of prostitution with fascinating subcultural elements that other sex work contexts lack. The exclusion of pimps working in other forms and venues of prostitution limits the scope of this project and its application, but it grants more detailed and richer insights into the world of illegal street prostitution in the USA. Also, there is a uniquely heightened experience of violence, higher visibility and legal risks, and more public interaction in illegal street prostitution creating a community that must negotiate this terrain in order to be successful. Pimps in general are a hidden and difficult to locate population, and this further narrowing of the target research sample, to 'illegal' and 'street', proved to make location of respondents and recruitment more even complex.

As with any illegal, criminal population, there were major obstacles to locating and gaining willing research participants. Thus the bulk of the recruitment for this research was done with the assistance of a gatekeeper with a twenty-five year history in illegal street prostitution. The gatekeeper was still in contact with their pimp from their time in The Game and had also maintained several other contacts from the past as well. Therefore, the gatekeeper had inside access to a large network of underground, illegal players within the street prostitution and it was through this individual that I was able to gain access to the majority of those that were interviewed. The gatekeepers' networks linked mostly to Black men and women involved in pimping, and this reflects a reoccurring theme within the underground community that is discussed later in this paper. Having previously worked with the gatekeeper and through reference from another researcher, I was confident in the reliability and credibility of the gatekeeper.

The gatekeeper explained to me that they had to spend a significant amount of time convincing respondents to take part in this project and the gatekeeper had to continually vouch for my authenticity as a researcher with no connections to the police or any other organization that would take advantage of them or break confidentiality. The gatekeeper went a long way in establishing my trustworthiness to begin with, but it was vital that all respondents were approached delicately, honestly and judgment free to establish rapport as many were unsure of my intentions. Most of the respondents wasted little time when first contacted by me to engage in a session of rapid fire questions to establish what I was doing exactly, why, what my perceptions were and what was in it for them. Full disclosure, transparency, and honesty were crucial at this stage to get participants interested and willing

to partake in the research. This was particularly important as some of the respondents had less then positive interactions with law-makers, academics and researchers prior to talking to me:

> *"Two years ago, the University of (Midwest city) was doing research on the abuse of pimping, and some way or another they had got my name, and they wanted me to come and do a presentation, but the reason why I turned it down was because they wanted me to lie. They wanted me to say, along with these other so called pimp, he did his and I went and hit him when he did his presentation, and I didn't want to disrespect what he said but I did say something cause the researcher there wanted me there cause I they was paying (250) and they was like what kind of guy is this to turn down this money, I wasn't going to lie. And he got up there and lied. ...and that liar got up there and said that you have to whoop[4] good and with both hands (assumed as limited audibility) I am not saying that don't happen, but I am saying that overall that is a lie." Michael*

By the time fieldwork was completed, I had conducted 10 very long, in-depth interviews with nine individuals. The original sample size goal had been higher, but due to difficulty in locating respondents and the mounting costs of data collection, it was decided to intensely analyze and focus on the data collected from the nine respondents rather than to continue. Most of the respondents took the popular pimp motto " The Game is sold, not told" quite seriously even following exit from pimping, they therefore required almost extortionate fees for their time in order to conduct interviews; the gatekeeper also arbitrarily charged varying amounts for their services adding to the ever mounting research costs. As a self-funded researcher, this quickly became limiting and restricted the number of interviews I was able to finally conduct. Thus the sample was small and non-representative but the main objectives of this investigation were depth, exploration and detailed analysis; therefore a small, non-representative sample did fulfilled the core aims of this project and rich, deep narratives were ultimately collected.

Though ethically controversial, it was necessary in this project to 'pay' respondents in order to conduct interviews with them; respondents otherwise refused to engage in the research unless they were compensated. A prominent prostitution researcher, Dr. Cecilia Williamson, had in conversations indicated to me that it would be necessary to pay respondents from this population because it would be exceptionally difficult to find willing participants for the research without compensation. Further exacerbating this issue was that many of the respondents in this research were aware of a research project on pimps that was being piloted that was paying respondents $250.00 per interview. The ethical issues and impact of this cannot be overstated, but as a result of that pilot study, respondents demanded to be 'paid' for their time. In the end, the interviewees were given $150.00 which they often

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[4] American slang term meaning to physically assault someone

reminded me was less than what they could demand and less than what they wanted for participation.

The table below provides a brief overview of the respondents in this sample and identifies important demographic information about their identities and careers in pimping.

Table A: Overview of the Basic Demographics of Respondents

Name	Ages (approximate)	Gender	Racial Identity	Time spent in The Game	Time passed since out of The Game
James	Early – Mid 50's	Male	Black American	Approx 25-30 years	2 years
Sean	Mid 40's	Male	Black American	15 years	Approximately 5 years or more
Sue	Late 40's	Female	Black American	Approx 20 years though she is still involved occasionally	Been in and out of retirement for 3 years
Sarah	Late 30's	Female	Black American	Approximately 10 years as a prostitute, about 5 as a pimp	Still involved in pimping occasionally. No dedicated attempt yet to leave
Ken	Early 30's	Male	Black American	10 years	2-3 years
Eric	Early 60's	Male	Black American	Approximately 30-35 years	3-5 years
Marcus	50's	Male	Black American	Approximately 25 years	Approximately 5 years
Michael	50's	Male	Black American	25 years	Approximately 10 years
Richard	61	Male	Black American	25 years	5 years

Ethics and Data Collection

Ethical and safety considerations both guided and impeded the design of, and data collection used in, this project. Achieving ethical approval from The University of Edinburgh's School of Social and Political Sciences (SSPS) ethics committee to carry out this research proved strenuous and led to many changes of the research design and data collection. Original plans for ethnographic observations methods were ruled out, restrictions and terms

were placed on which respondents I could meet face to face, and safety procedures were put into place that had the potential to impact data collection. This research called for Level 3 approval from the University's SSPS ethics committee requiring extensive paperwork and a lengthy board hearing. The application for this clearance has been provided in Appendix 2; as the issues related to ethics within this project are lengthy and numerous, this section will try to maintain brevity in addressing the ethics issues and concerns that impacted the data collection for this research.

Ethnographic observation of pimps would have allowed the collection of rich and reflective data within this project, but due to concerns for my safety, the legal risk of such an undertaking and the exceptionally sensitive negotiations required to gain such access, methods such as these were ruled out by the SSPS ethics committee. I had hoped to potentially carry out research in locations that were known as local pimp hang outs or undertake the necessary steps to establish the ability to engage with and observe pimps working, but these plans were ultimately ruled out as too risky. Also, annually, pimps within a certain network in The United States, organize and carry out what is called "The Players Ball." This event is a major party, where often celebrity musicians perform and the player of the year, or pimp of the year, is crowned. To my knowledge, this is the single largest gathering of pimps and prostitutes within the USA and would have likely proved a goldmine for ethnographic research. Attendance at this event was also barred as my attendance was ruled as too dangerous. Overall, data on major aspects of pimping culture, such as interactions, language, clothing, body language and activities, which would have been viewed and documented with the use of observation techniques, were heavily restricted; thus data related to these topics were discussed with respondents rather than observed. Therefore, these topics were briefly dealt with on occasion within interviews, but detailed explanations and descriptions of these subcultural elements are lacking within this research due to the inability to observe and record them.

The ethics committee also put in place parameters based on the 'employment status' of the respondents, which also deeply impacted data collection. I was encouraged against meeting any individual who was actively pimping in a face to face context; instead, interviews with these individuals would have to take place over the telephone. Thus, I was only able to meet former, or retired, pimps in a face to face setting. I did contact some active pimps all of whom refused to be interviewed *unless* it was in the face to face context as they explained they needed to see who they were talking to get a feel of whether I could be trusted or was working for the police. They also insisted on financial compensation that was astronomical (one requested $1,000 for an interview). For these reasons, active pimps ended up not included in this research sample though both Sue and Sarah were still occasionally involved in ad hoc pimping (and prostitution). Interviews could be conducted face to face

with retired pimps with the stipulations that the interviews took place in a public location and I was accompanied by someone to and at the interview site. In the interest of safety, I had to have someone accompany me to the interview locations and as there were no requirements as to this person's role, so I brought my sister along with me. I did tell the respondents that someone would be coming with me but that they would not be within earshot of the interviews and that the person with me would not know their identity. Surprisingly, without any introduction or suggestion, all of the respondents were able to identify the person with me, my sister, and often introduced themselves after the interview and said goodbye to her. I thought this detail spoke to their ability to read social environments, interactions and people. Additionally, my sister's presence acted to ensure my safety as a few of the respondents said things to me that implied they thought she might be armed or trained in physical body guarding, neither of which she was, but because I had to have someone with me for safety, they were lead to believe that the person I brought someone capable of enforcing security.

Ethical concerns were present throughout the research design, data collection processes, analysis and even the write up. Because of this, it is difficult to compartmentalize and isolate the ethical issues within this research and therefore, they are scattered throughout this thesis and discussed when relevant. The brevity of this section does not speak to the enormity of the impact ethics had on this research, but it does cover the ethics topics that are relevant at this point for creating context to several subjects within this chapter.

My Safety and Well Being

After I left my first interview for this project, which was with Sue, at busy a Starbuck's, I quickly walked to the car with my sister while drawing on what must have been my sixth cigarette in a row; I tossed my sisters the keys knowing I was in no headspace to drive and then lunged for bushes. After a few minutes of vomiting and deep breathing, I got into the car with and sat the long ride home not speaking, only listening to Radiohead at a high volume. I was shell shocked and profoundly impacted by the narratives just disclosed to me. My highly emotive response caught me off guard as I have worked in similarly emotionally demanding roles before but it was the first interview with this population and one can never fully prepare the type of disclosures offered in interviews. Following this episode I was able to get in touch with that part of myself that allows me to emotionally detach during interviews preventing responses such as those that I had with Sue, but even with this compartmentalization and 'professional distancing of emotions' (at least in the field), the stories, the tones, the questions and sexual harassment took a mental and emotional toll on me. It is to be expected that researching emotionally charged topics will have an impact on

the researcher (Grinyer, 2005; Rager, 2005) because the self is very present in fieldwork and with that presence, comes emotional impact; "no research is free of the biases, assumptions, and personality of the researcher. We cannot separate self from those activities in which we are intimately involved." (Sword, 1999: 277)

Pimps have long and well documented histories of violence against women (Beck, 1987; Kramer, 2006; Pimp, 1999; Harcopos, et al 2000; Hodgson, 1997; Raphael &Ashley, 2008; Williamson & Cluse-Tolar 2002; Giobbe 1993; Dalla, et al, 2003; Nixon, et al, 2002), though this is often in relation to their positions as pimps and towards women that they prostitute. Even though their histories of violence are generally linked to those specific contexts that does not eliminate the risk of such behavior towards women outside of that relationship. Thus my safety within fieldwork was of concern, and special care needed to be taken to minimize risk.

During my first telephone interview, I decided to ask the respondent if they thought the ethics committee had reason to be worried about my safety when interviewing pimps to which he replied: *"No you know I can see if you was maybe interviewing somebody from the mob or something like that but no no, this is a totally different ball game, if somebody speak to you like me they already know hey, I won't hurt you and I don't want you to hurt me, if anybody agreed to talk to you like I did, you'd be alright."* The respondent went on to explain that pimps are generally not violent to those outside of The Game and that he thought I had little to worry about. Though this did assure me a bit I was still on edge and on alert during interviews for any potential issues. I was particularly shook when interviewing Sue, when she had just completed telling an exceptionally harrowing personal story and then basically opened her coat to suggest she was armed while referring to her always 'carrying.' Thus I was aware then for the rest of the interview that she likely did have a gun with her and I carried on conducting the interview as if I was unaware of that fact. This incident put me on future alert to the potential for interviewee to be armed which in turn led to a rather comical situation with another respondent, James. I had asked James a question and as he answered, he opened his sports coat and quickly reached into the inside breast pocket; at this point my facial expression must has have suggested alarm because he was clearly able to read the I was expecting a weapon:

> Holly: *"Is that where the term the game is sold not told comes from?"*
>
> James: *"Hey slow down little momma! (reaches for gum in an inner pocket) I not upin' a gun! it's gum!, that's not who I am, I wasn't even that guy in The Game!"*

So one respondent was for sure armed, as for the others, its unknown, but overall there was no aggressive or violent speech directed at me, no physical aggression or threats, and none of the interview environments were dangerous or posed a risk. Therefore, though there was reason to be vigilant and to have a safety procedure should there be an issue, relying on it was never necessary over the course of the fieldwork. As mentioned above, there were uncomfortable situations with specific commentaries or the way I was addressed at times, but that often was minimally offensive or problematic in relation to content of the interviews and the subject matters being discussed.

Ultimately, the greatest risk in this work ended up being psychological risk. Work within these emotionally laden topics has the ability to disrupt relationships and one's social life (Wolf, 1997) which makes the threat of isolation even more intensified for lone researchers. Additionally, by engaging in conversational, open interviewing, I was potentially more vulnerable to emotional impact as my words and conduct during the interview were not as structured and controlled as other approaches would require. The fieldwork certainly had an influence on my moods, stress levels, at times physical health, during and after fieldwork I continued to experience night terrors based on the disclosures, there was a noticeable increase in experiences of depressive episodes and many other direct impacts. Regardless of all those issues though, I wholly agree with Rager's (2005) statement that: "I knew the topic would engage me both personally and professionally and I thought that the benefits of the study would outweigh any reservations I had in regard to the emotional costs to me." (23) In the end I was able to remain focused and resilient through reliance on strong familial and social networks, professional support, counseling when needed and regular, consistent self care.

Methods

Ontology and Epistemology

Foley and Valenzuela (2008) state that "Qualitative research has become *the* site of philosophical and methodological revolt against positivism" (218); and it is within this rejection of positivist approaches that this research lies and within this work, there is a strong connection between the ontological and epistemological positions of this research and the use of qualitative methodology. Ontologically, this research was founded on a constructivist approach based on the assumption that the material being researched is a socially constructed phenomenon in which the actors are constantly changing and interacting with social roles (Grix, 2004). It also embraces the relevance of social actors within specific historical, social contexts. This stance highlights the need to contextualize the social construction of pimping, the 'pimp world' and the various surrounding social institutions to genuinely understand the interworking of the criminal career. In agreement with Foley and Valenzuela (2008), the

rejection of a positivist stance stems from an understanding of the social world as a social construct made meaningful by social actors, who themselves cannot be 'removed' from their social placement to produce objective research; thus, "In a class society marked by class, racial, and sexual conflict, no producers of knowledge are innocent or politically neutral." (218)

Often overwhelming and exceptionally complex issues exist within epistemological discourses that regularly leave researchers, such as myself, at a loss of position due to an unwillingness to completely align with one perspective or another. The epistemological stance from which this research was conceived was based on interpretivism; defined as the idea that "The world is socially constructed through the interactions of individuals and the separation of 'fact' and 'value' is not so clear as the positivists claim." (Grix, 2004: 83) This perspective also embraces that researchers are as embedded in the research and the analysis as the subject therefore requiring a high level reflectivity and placement of self within the research context. But as noted earlier, this approach was soon joined with elements of feminist research methodologies and approaches from various schools of thought (such as critical theory, Marxism, etc…). Thus the epistemological underpinnings of this research transitioned to feminist fractured foundationalism (FFF) (Stanley & Wise, 1993) . The FFF approach was:

> "formulated to recognise both the materiality of social life and reality and its socially interpreted and culturally constructed aspects, as well as an epistemological position which rejects the tired old realism/idealism binary as a misconceived simplification. In doing so, we have drawn on longstanding traditions in sociology (including symbolic interactionism, sociological phenomenology and cultural Marxism) that have, in our view sensibly, wanted to 'have it all' and to emphasise that it is not a matter of either/or but rather both when it comes to realism and idealism." (Stanley & Wise, 2006)

In granting the ability to merge and migrate between different frameworks and perspectives when approaching epistemologies, the FFF position allows for feminist sociologists to 'have it all' when tackling the various complexities of philosophical approaches and epistemologies (Stanley & Wise, 2006). Influenced by feminist research methodologies, grounded theory and interpretivism, in this research the respondents were treated as primary data sources and sought to allow for their articulation of their insider view as opposed to the application of an outsiders view on them (Mason, 2002; Blaikie, 2000). The epistemological underpinnings of this project both influenced the research questions and informed the methods that were utilized as a result. Though there were other factors that played into the choice to use unstructured interviewing in this project, the primary and core influences lay in the ontological and epistemological positions I hold as a researcher.

The Face-to-Face Interviews

This research sought detailed explanations and understandings of the processes of 'becoming' a pimp and the various stories and perspectives these experiences entailed: therefore, interviewing, specifically unstructured interviewing, allowed respondents to engage in their processes of 'becoming' as they understood and constructed them without pre-constructed guidance and steering from me (Rapley, 2001). In framing the interviews in an open-ended, unstructured format, the respondents' formulations and disclosures in response provided strong insight into the lens through which they view their social world, their etiology and where they come from.

One of the first important tasks I had to undertake to prepare for interviews was to learn and familiarize myself with the slang that is utilized by this subculture and its meanings so that respondents could 'talk shop' and not have to worry about censoring or adapting their speech to accommodate me. I learned the majority of the slang through the repeated reading of dozens of pimps books and autobiographies; I also watched a few 'pimpumentaries' and films about pimps to directly hear the use of the terms and speaking styles. Respondents did make regular inquiries as to whether or not they could use 'pimp speak' in the interviews and/or to what extend they should censor aggressive/offensive language.

For examples:

> *"with a date, a trick, a john, I am using all these words cause I am not sure what"... James*

> *Holly : "Was she your bottom girl then?"*

> *James: "she was one of the most...what do you know about a bottom? What is a bottom?"*

> *Holly: "As far as I know they are the ones that have been with the pimp the longest, they are the most trusted, do the training, keep the stable in line, sometimes do the money pickups"*

> *Ken: "So um, how rough or whatever, do you want me to try to keep the cussing down or whatever?"*

But even with extensive research into the language and vocal styles, there was still ample opportunity for misunderstanding which when they happened, led to amusing exchanges.

> *Michael "And he snapped; he went in there and went off on them, and she hit Bob with a skillet. And he went in his room got that thang and hit her once in the head, and turned around with tears in his eyes and hit the other girl too. When I say lonely, that was a lonely moment. We didn't have cell phones back then, we had beepers. He was so lonely that he called Chris's father,*

*who was a player, he called him at home. So Bob stayed on the
run for like two years, he was in Virginia Beach, he had another
white girl, had pimped his way down there, so a pimp down
there wanted the white girl so bad that he turned Bob in because
he couldn't bump her. They gave Bob two natural lives."*
Holly: "For assault charges?"

Michael: "No! For double murder!"

Holly: "I must have misunderstood what you said"

*Michael: "I said he hit them in the head. He hit them both in the
head"*

Holly: "I thought you meant like 'hit' "

Michael: "Nah, I forgot I've got to give you different language"

So as prepared as I was for the language of pimps, I had come to the interviews
relying on the dialect of Standard American English whereas most of the respondents were
engaging in Black American English. This difference highlighted differences in social
backgrounds, and identities between myself and the respondents, and like the examples
offered above, it occasionally lead to clear miscommunication and need for clarifications.

Sharp and Kremer (2006) suggest that in many cases of female researchers and male
respondents, women are subordinate in the power hierarchy, challenging the feminist
assumption that interviewees are by default the powerless individual in the interview setting
(Kleinman, 2006). Due to the population that was studied and their attitudes about women
and past behaviors towards women, it was realistic to anticipate attempts by the respondents
to place me in a subordinate position within the interview process. These attempts may
include the use of sexually charged comments. On a few occasions respondents when I had
spoken to them on the telephone to arrange the interviews referred to me as 'ma'am' and were
exceptionally polite; these same respondents upon seeing and meeting me, would chuckle as
they explained that I was not what they were expecting. Thus 'ma'am' quickly turned into
'sweetheart', 'darling' and 'honey'.

It was particularly important to recognize that my gender had the potential to place
me in a specific position of vulnerability in relation to this population beyond the distribution
of power in the interview. Paterson, et al, cite Arnedall (1997) to address the relationship
between vulnerability and the characteristics of the researcher: "This vulnerability is
accentuated if the researcher is perceived by the participant to represent the subordinate other.
For example, female researchers who are interviewing men who have abused their female
partners face such a risk (Arendell, 1997, cited in Paterson, et all, 1999: 262)." Gender was a
particular cause for concern for my safety with this project due to the activities of the
population. It is suggested that "race, gender, sexual orientation, and disability status are just

some of the factors that may lead a researcher to be endangered in a situation that may not pose a risk to others (Sharp & Kremer, 2006: 318)". The risk of physical harm was overall minimal, but there was also a risk for sexual harassment, verbal aggression, threats and degrading/ abusive verbal attacks.

It is difficult to 'expect' sexual advancements or harassment (Sharp & Kremer, 2006) but as Patterson, et. al (1999) express, "Individuals are often able to sense a potential or actual violation of their safety zones before they have concrete evidence to support their intuitions about danger." (266) Kovats-Bernat (2002) explains that, "Even exposure to low-intensity repression or harassment over the course of research threatens to adversely affect the ways in which we approach the field and interpret social phenomena within it;" (208) therefore, the impact of such circumstances should not be underrated. Though some might advise ignoring sexually suggestive or inappropriate comments (Patterson, et. al, 1999), I was concerned this may only act to further encourage such behavior therefore I responded swiftly to scenarios I was uncomfortable with to ensure both my level of comfort and to place boundaries so that respondents were aware of where the lines were drawn. There was a need to strike an uneasy balance between sexually harassing, troublesome commentary that was tolerated and that which was not; most of the time, the determining factor was solely my gut-reading or "twinge-ometer" (Kleinman, 1998). The necessity for me to have lines drawn and to react to comments, statements or words directed at me or about me was important in order for me to maintain a sense self-preservation within the interview contexts. I almost always overlooked patronizing verbal addresses; for example, these snippets of dialogue were taken from interviews to demonstrate the type of belittling 'pet names' and comments I frequently encountered: *"I feel I did some work sweetie, I always wanted to be sitting across the table with a beautiful lady and we are doing what we are doing."* : *"take a pretty face like yours"*: *"understand something honey"*: *"Actually sweetheart "*: *"Sweetie, come on sweetie."*

Telephone Interviews

The use of telephone interviewing for in-depth, unstructured interviewing is largely undocumented in the literature. As Holt (2010) explains, "the idea that the telephone (or indeed other technologies) may be as useful or perhaps more appropriate for the production of narrative data has been left unexplored." (114) But adaptation in the mode of interviewing is sometimes necessary in qualitative research due to multiple circumstances which can make face to face interviews difficult or risky thus rendering face to face interviews as not always possible or ideal (Sturges & Hanrahan, 2004). Telephone interviewing can be used instead of face to face using the same schedule or format to collect data; though the use of the telephone in qualitative research is uncommon due to methodological concerns of validity and rigor (Miller & Cannell, 1982; Groves, 1990). A basic review of the literature reveals that most

authors dealing with methods of telephone interviewing involve the application of telephone survey interviewing to inform quantitative data analysis rather than in-depth qualitative research. This research project utilized telephone interviewing to achieve in-depth qualitative data, and it was therefore necessary to negotiate the specific application of this method to a data collection form in which it is rarely used. For the interviews that were conducted over the telephone, totaling four interviews with three people, there were various aspects of this methods approach worth discussing.

The ethics committee had restricted my ability to meet face to face with pimps who were still active in pimping due to safety concerns; I was only able to conduct telephone interviews with live pimps. Ultimately this was restrictive, as pimps who were still actively pimping would not partake in a telephone interview; they explained they needed to be able to see me, my eyes and to read my body language. Therefore, this method was never utilized for purpose for which it was reserved, but was instead used for convenience as the location of the respondents made interviewing face to face too costly.

My personal reservations about the effectiveness of this mode of data collection were quickly silenced following several successful telephone interviews. I was able to develop rapport very quickly, conversations flowed naturally, I was eventually capable of breaching legally and personally sensitive topics, probing and further questioning worked strikingly similarly to the face to face context, and the interviews produced a great deal of in-depth, rich data. Overall, I was encouraged that this mode of conducting in-depth interviews was more than adequate to achieve the data I was seeking and address the research questions. This section will cover the use of this method in the research and integrate reflections of how this played within this project.

Firstly, telephone interviews can impact data in preventing nonverbal cues, the attention of respondents may be distracted, and some authors indicate a possible increase in social desirability bias (Sturges & Hanrahan, 2004; Miller & Cannell, 1982; Groves, 1990). Because telephone interviews prevent a visual connection between the interviewer and interviewee, non verbal cues are stifled, but as Sturges and Hanrahan (2004) found in their research, "lack of visual cues reduces the ability of the researcher to determine how involved the respondent is, but the telephone does not preclude such an assessment. Once again, the interviewer can note verbal cues such as hesitation, hurried answers and the like, and make notes to guide use of the data." (115) Thus in the context of telephone interviews, I needed to pay close to attention to verbal cues such as pauses, and sighing to inform probing and flow of the interviews. But at times, this lack of proximity was a relief as the intensity of the tone and volume of respondents tended to be 'less censored' over the phone. For instance, when talking to Sean, he decided to offer me a taste of how he talked to prostitutes would included a very loud voice, an exceptionally commanding tone, rapid speech and aggressive language:

"She wants a pimp nigger, that's gonna tell her ' go out there and get that money, ya got out there and get that money from that trick, get that nigger money, yeah, ya baby, switch that ass baby and stick that chest out and look at your big beautiful breast, go get em' girl' that's the man that she wants"

Though phone interviewers cannot monitor the attention and concentration of the respondent, they may be in a position to pay closer attention to the interviewee's responses as they themselves are not distracted by nonverbal cues or surrounding environment (Sturges & Hanrahan, 2004); this however does not mean that they can have much influence on the environment or attention of the interviewee. During many of the interviews, I was regularly put on hold, had the interview interrupted by conversations with other people and experienced noise interferences that often impeded the flow of the interviews. I was able to concentrate more intently on dialogue during the telephone interviews and was able to practice note-taking more frequently than I was able to during face to face interviews. Comparative research supports that note taking is far less intrusive in telephone interviewing than in face to face allowing the researcher to make continuous notes throughout the interview without disrupting it (Sturges & Hanrahan, 2004).

One interviewee had opted for a telephone interview in order to protect her anonymity. She chose to be interviewed over the phone as she was in the midst of heavy legal proceedings and prosecutions and was therefore nervous to further incriminate herself. I had earlier in the project assumed that telephone interviewing would be ideal for some respondents due to this disclosure of illegal activities and thus some respondents may have desired to remain anonymous when disclosing data. But ultimately this was not the case for others as many pimps, especially pimps who were still actively pimping, would not partake in a telephone interview; as they explained they needed to be able to see me, my eyes and to read my body language. Other than the one respondent, most in this population seemed to articulate a strong preference for face to face interaction.

Cost reduction is a big motivator (Miller & Cannell, 1982) for many researchers to conduct interviews via telephone and it was the main motivating factor in this research for the remaining three interviews that were conducted this way. Respondents who were interviewed over the phone that were recruited through the gatekeeper requested the same amount of money for the interview, but these interviews overall cost less due to the lack of need to pay for travel or accommodation for myself.

Earlier evaluations of telephone interviewing assert that there are substantive differences in telephone interviewing compared to face to face (Miller & Cannell, 1982; Groves, 1990), but more recent work claims that there are no significant differences in the data gathered when compared (Sturges & Hanrahan, 2004). Overall telephone interviewing can be advantageous in cases of sensitive topics, ideal for hard to reach populations, for

protecting anonymity, ensuring researcher safety and is a cost effective means of data collection. This means of data collection was highly effective in this project and even though there was concern about the data being collected in this format, it ultimately it proved useful, reliable and productive.

Analysis

All of the interviews were audio recorded with the permission of the respondents. The recording of the interviews proved exceptionally useful for the transcriptions, but at times they were unreliable due to various interferences. Because the face to face interviews were conducted in public places, there were regular interruptions from surrounding noise such as music, cars, wait staff, other restaurant patrons and respondents' friends. This lead to the necessary inclusion of many notes of 'inaudible' within the transcripts and can be seen in this thesis. Often this one only a word or two that was lost but sometimes it meant losing entire ideas and sentences. The interviews were transcribed verbatim and field notes were then integrated and added to the transcripts. The transcripts were re-read to ensure minimal grammatical issues or any other problems and then were sent to the respondents. Respondents were given copies so that they could review the content and the transcription and suggest changes or issues accordingly. No of the respondents were in contact following receiving the transcripts, thus no changes were made to the data per the request of respondents.

Coding

Prior to beginning any formal procedure of analysis, I listened to all of the interviews at least three times each to gain familiarity with the narratives and to gather an impression of the contexts. This process was extremely helpful in allowing me to recall specific topics and statements from various interviews and in doing so, allowing me to informally start making comparisons between the stories of the respondents. It also enabled me to recall specific details of the settings, environments and overall context of the interviews so that when later analyzing, I would be able to remember factors that may have influenced the flow of the interview and/or responses.

Following the listening phase, I embarked on the demanding task of transcribing these interviews. Having reviewed the interviews recently, with the assistance of thorough field notes, I was able to apply contextual elements into the interviews while transcribing. Transcribing was beneficial to the coding process in that, while typing these interviews, I was able to distinguish not only topics, themes and words that were constant throughout, but also I

was capable of recognizing patterns that were emerging in the data. It was also during this phase that I began the process of data reduction. It was my objective to locate the narrative within the interviews and to pull the chronological order of events and stories within the interviews. I indentified the beginning, middle and end of the narratives (McCormack, 2004) so that I could appropriately locate and represent a progression/process of incidences and events. This was necessary for locating general reoccurring themes amongst the narratives of the respondent, but it was challenging to engage with the interviews in a chronological order. People do not always tell narratives in the exact order in which they happen, often skipping forward or jumping back, and they are filled with confusing and contradictory statements about single events/experiences (McCormack, 2004). Additionally, with some of the events explained in the interviews, the respondents did not offer insight as to when the situations took place and where in their narrative it is located. There is debate about the use of coding in conjunction with narrative analysis, but the borrowing of specific techniques from narrative analysis did not mean it was used in its 'pure form.'

In order to embark on coding and analysis in an organized and simplified fashion, I decided to utilize CAQDAS, specifically NVIVO. It was with the use of this software that I was able to thematically code the data into dozens of categories based on the topics that were being discussed in the narratives. Following this coding process, I re-read all of the interviews and took notes of the various ways these themes were fitting into the stories of the respondents. By reviewing the interviews, I was able to get a stronger sense of the specific contexts and frames in which the respondents experienced various experiences. It soon became clear that there were relationships between the various phases and processes of pimping, and the numerous themes. For example, family relationships were often only discussed in relation to life before pimping and after pimping, or respondents tended to only stress the negative aspects of pimping when talking about why they retired. Once these reoccurring themes were observed, I decided to organize the data in a way which captured the chronological experiences of pimping and allowed me to follow the life stories of these individuals in a somewhat linear pattern processes.

Inspired by Williamson and Folaron's (2003) paper detailing the 'career cycle' or phases of involvement in prostitution, I applied a similar approach to the organization of the data following coding. Williamson and Folaron (2003) identified the following phases on engagement in prostitution: 1) Enticement into the Lifestyle, 2) Learning the Lifestyle, 3) Living the Lifestyle, 4) Caught up in the Lifestyle and 5) Leaving the Lifestyle. Following this model, I differentiated and organized data into the following phases and categories of experiences in the 'career cycle' of pimps: 1) Life before pimping, 2) entries, gateways and training, 3) Pimpology: active pimping, 4) Becoming an Ex-Pimp, and finally, 5) Life after pimping.

Analyzing The Data

Once analysis started to take place, the data was in its 'final coding stage' and arranged to represent the various phases of the respondents' careers. There were coded categories that were left analyzed as themes (for examples " family," "violence against prostitutes," "pimp goods," "police") and the intact narratives were also often referred back to in order to ensure context was maintained. The individual chapters (the five career phases) were analyzed separately from each other but simultaneously to the writing. Materials were repeatedly re-visited and analyzed multiple times to ensure that the ideas and conclusions were consistent with what the data was revealing. Most of the data analysis approaches were borrowed from multiple feminist analysis techniques (Kleinman, 2007; Hill-Collins, 1990; Harding, 1987; hooks, 1984) along with portions of active interviewing analysis (Silverman, 1997). Active interviewing analysis works to draw attention to the 'active' nature of the interviewing process and through this, highlights the co-creation of data and the necessity of contextual sensitivity when analyzing data (Silverman, 1997).

Active interviewing analysis allowed for the framework and approach to the data that I was hoping to achieve as "the objective is not to dictate interpretation, but to provide an environment conducive to the production of the range and complexity of meanings that address relevant issues, and not be confined by predetermined agendas." (Holstein & Gubrium, 1997: 123) In alternate forms of analysis, it can be said that the "Respondents' interpretive activity is subordinated to the substance of what they report: the *whats* of the experience overwhelm the *hows*." (Silverman, 1997: 127) When active interviewing analysis is utilized, the interview data can be used to "show the dynamic interrelatedness of the *whats* and the *hows*." (Holstein & Gubrium, 1997:127) And thus in this research, this approach was utilized as the objectives of this analysis closely matched with the research questions, research methodology and understanding of the data: "The analytic objective is not merely to describe the situated productions of talk, but to show how what is being said relates to the experiences and lives being studied." (Holstein & Gubrium, 1997:127)

Following the use of active interviewing analysis as the core framework, a more critical feminist angle was taken when examining the trends and themes. The data was explored for social dimensions within categories of inequality such as race, class, gender, and sexuality, and the context of data was assessed in order to grasp the surrounding social institutions that worked to create the described outcomes.

Because this research was conducted inductively, the data and the themes and trends revealed by it, were related to theory and literature only following identification of theme and initial analysis. After patterns and reoccurring themes were apparent in the narratives, relevant literature was combed for similar trends and concepts. For instance, when

"loneliness" and "coldness" became visible reoccurring themes within the exit narratives, exploration of the use of those terms were explored through literature on emotions, emotional management, gender and social performance. Also explored to investigate these themes was literature on research on involving desistance from gangs (Pyrooz & Decker, 2011), neo-Nazi groups (Bjorgo, 2002), and prostitution (Sander, 2007; Raphael, 2004a; Mansson & Hedin, 1999) . Once concepts and bodies of literature were identified that had relevance and similarities to this research, links were drawn between the data in this project to the wider, pre-existing bodies of theory and literature for support and frameworks. These bodies of literature, and the themes/concepts they offered, were then compared and linked to the data in order to construct an better understanding and image of the ideas and experiences described by respondents.

The presentation of the data aimed to strike a careful balance between allowing the data to speak for itself and interpretation and deconstruction of the data. By breaking down the data to piece together theoretical meanings and contribution, context and connections to larger issues were often drawn. It was often necessary to " 'deconstruct' participants' talk to show the reader both the hows and the whats of the narrative dramas conveyed." (Holstein & Gubrium, 1997: 127) But an over-reliance on this approach posed the threat of 'over-analyzing' and removing the data too far from original context and meaning. In order to maintain this balance, I relied on the feminist fractured foundationalism (FFF) approach towards analytical reflexivity which Stanley and Wise (2006) describe as "key to ensuring transparency and accountability. Analytical reflexivity focuses on the acts of knowing and what goes into this, looking in detail at the analytical processes involved and the evidences supporting these. Analytical reflexivity also entails writing an open research text that: adduces evidence in retrievable form that is appropriate and sufficient for the argument being made and it provides sufficient detail for readers to be able to make their own interpretations and so evaluate conclusions and claims." (Stanley & Wise, 2006)

Race and the Politics of Identity and Representation

It is with extreme caution and care that I address issues relating to race and pimping in the United States. As a white researcher trying negotiate the politics of representation, I can only hope that the critical feminist theoretical approaches of this research do justice to the attention and consideration required for fair representation and exploration for the people researched. As a white, middle class, female researcher interviewing and researching Black and working class Americans, specific sensitive attention and care was taken when approaching, engaging with, analyzing and presenting this research. Because this research was interested in obtaining individuals from illegal street prostitution, this meant that the

majority of individuals recruited would be Black Americans. I am concerned that supporting a link between pimping and African Americans further supports the marginalization, stereotyping and prejudices that are rife within the United States. Ultimately, the denial of an association and link would also do damage in further silencing the experiences and lives of these individuals thus supporting an overriding system of exclusion and disenfranchisement. I find myself in full agreement with Philippe Bourgois (2003) who reflects on these issues regarding his research with Puerto Rican drug dealers in East Harlem:

> "Countering traditional moralistic biases and middle-class hostility toward the poor come at the cost of sanitizing the suffering and destruction that exists on inner-city streets. Out of a righteous, or a "politically sensitive," fear of giving the poor a bad image, I refuse to ignore or minimize the social misery I witnessed, because that would make me complicitous with oppression." (11-12)

White Americans, and other ethnic groups are involved in sex work management and pimping, but sex work hierarchies work as mirror of mainstream American racial and employment hierarchies; thus the same groups that are disadvantaged and marginalized in dominant society also often occupy disenfranchised and limited positions within sex work. Hodgson (1997) explains this phenomena and its meaning for the visibility and representation of street pimps: "the escort services are usually a more profitable, cleaner, less visible, "behind closed doors" prostitution system and are usually administered by white males. The white males' enhanced position within the sex trade hierarchy enables them to perform their functions behind closed doors and out of sight of the police and the public. In contrast, the street sex trade appears to be managed predominately by black males. …. The high visibility of black males operating as pimps on the street portrays an image that only black males are involved in pimping. " (99) Individuals with racial identities other than Black do exist, but overall, illegal street pimping is dominated by Black males in the USA. This is both an over-representation and over- participation.

'Pimp' is a term deeply entrenched and strongly associated with Black street culture and hip hop/rap music. The pimp was introduced into mainstream America through the literary works of Iceberg Slim (1960s) and Donald Goines (1960s &1970s) but did not officially arrive on the popular scene until the pimp, as a heroic figure and subversive icon, received heavy coverage in recently mainstreamed rap and hip hop music. The emergence of hip hop and rap into popular culture in the 1980s introduced America to a character who was revered in street culture for his sexual prowess, sharp intellect, unparalleled rapping skills and mastery of subordinated women to claim his place as an intensely heterosexual, formidable and dominant male (Sharpley-Whiting 2007; hooks 2004; Greene 2008; Majors & Billson 1992). The reinforcement of the deviant, criminal, hypersexual and defiant Black male stereotype is clear with their overexposure related to pimping, but when it comes to illegal,

street level prostitution, Black males seems to represent the overwhelming majority of participants (Hodgson 1997).

Several respondents within this research engaged in discussions regarding the difficulty white pimps face trying to enter the world of pimping, or The Game. They further supported the idea that Black men are not falsely overrepresented in pimping, but are dominant within a particular vein of The Game. Thus it seems the association is supported by a social reality. Data from my own research supports that of Hodgson's (1997) demonstrating that racial hierarchies within sex work mirror those of legal employment. White pimps, having access to more money, better education and social capital, tend to dominate pimping at the top of the ladder by running in-door brothels, massage parlors and escort services. By allowing white males access to resources not readily available to non-white males, white privilege enables them to remain hidden from the public and law enforcement. Ultimately, Black males who get involved in pimping are more likely to get involved at the illegal street level pimping (Hodgson 1997).

Quinn (2000) suggests "The pimp figure has long been associated with the trickster in African- American vernacular traditions and it is above all the persuasive power, verbal skill, and emphasis on simulation which link the two" (118), further cementing a strong connection between what is means to be a pimp and what skills are necessary to be successful in pimping along with an emphasis on racial profiles. Within the United States an even more specific image is invoked and connected to the word pimp, "In the popular imagination, the pimp is typically conjured as a smartly dressed, smooth talking, and relatively youthful African American male''(Bernstein, 2007:52-53). But this connection may go beyond popular imagination and media connections. In The Pimp's Bible, Gholson (2004) explains "the pimp is a black man's creation" (40), and Master Pimp (1999) further asserts that "The pimp shunned and intimidated White society by being flamboyant and displaying his wealth." (3) Master Pimp (1999) expresses the belief that Black male participation in pimping signifies active resistance to racist structural violence and dominance.

In this research, not for lack of trying, I was unable to access white street pimps; they represent a small cohort of individuals within an already hidden and small population, thus locating white, street pimps is difficult. White pimps are present within mainstreamed pimp books and 'pimpumentaries' such as 'Pimps Up, Hos Down' (1998) and 'American Pimp'(1998), thus they are a visible minority. If we rely on autobiographical and documentary contributions of white pimps, they make clear a strong association between race and illegal street pimping in the USA. The following two quotes from the book *Memoirs of a White Pimp* (2004) demonstrate the authors' understanding of race in relation to his participation as a white male in pimping: "So these Atlantic City whores started talking about 'the new white pimp' in town. This was a creature rare to the pimp and prostitute circle."

(Kramer, 31) and, "I did what no man had ever done in Atlantic City- I had crossed the racial line which had never let a white man cross over into the game. It hadn't been easy to receive the respect I deserved from the black macs[5]. They considered all white men tricks." (Kramer, 37)

For many within and outside the Game, pimping is seen as a site of social resistance and anti-racist conquest. In this ideological approach a superficial, misinformed exploration shows the Black man successfully profiting from the weakness of white men. The belief that 'tricks' are strictly white is a resilient one that serves to validate pimps and their roles, but has repeatedly proved false in research (Bernstein 2007; Giusta, et al, 2009; Monto & Hotaling 2001; Monto 2004). Again, differentiation between the figure of the pimp and the social reality are relevant. Quinn's (2000) cultural exploration of the pimp figure leads him to conclude that "the pimp figure has, probably most fully, resisted the dynamics of mainstream incorporation, market co-optation, and white imitation." (136) Thus it could be that pimping has become a location of street resistance to white, mainstream lifestyles and racial and structural oppressions, but this perspective is romantically optimistic.

It is tempting to glamorize the role of the subversive pimp but it must be consistently considered that pimps idealize and ruthlessly pursue values of greed, profit, power, materialism, status, fame and wealth; all familiar to mainstream white American values, thus only the means are deviant as opposed to the ends. Or as Stallings (2003) rebuts the 'hero pimp imagery' in her evaluation of Giones' book *Whoreson* and its main character, *Whoreson*, a pimp:

> "For the Black male, then, the rhetoric and philosophies of a pimp become a violent way back to the masculinity that he does not possess in society. Pimps, hustlers, and drug dealers are modern-day models of U.S.-colonized black bodies. They could never be as empowering as the trickster or bad nigga, primarily because the main heroic quality of the bad nigga and trickster is their ability to get one over on the white man. The admiration of the folk character is short-lived, for the violence the bad nigga inflicts on "whitey" always seems to end up misdirected. Whoreson… chooses to exact his vengeance not on the cause of his problem, white-supremacy systems or the Black middle class, but on those nearest to his wrath—the poor Black females he grew up loving. … he does not become that bad nigger, simply another nigger. The common and daily exploitation of one's community does not make one heroic." (199)

The above exploration of Horton-Stalling (2003) sufficiently and directly addresses any assumptions about the heroic role of the pimp by highlighting how this role victimizes and undermines their own community. Thus closer examination of the social reality of the pimp

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[5] street slang term for pimp, not often utilized by respondents in this project.

emphasizes the exploitation, especially within one's own community, that often accompanies the workings of the street pimp (Cole & Guy-Sheftall 2003 ; Horton- Stalling 2003).

Conclusion

This chapter sought to highlight the various research approaches, methods and design elements that impacted and influenced this research. In exploring the background of the research and framing researcher perspectives and approaches, this chapter offers critical insights into the processes undertaken to undertake and present this research. By providing the critical feminist frameworks and perspectives of this project, transparency is offered into the influences impacting on the design, methods, analysis and presentations of the data. Issues related to sampling and recruitment were addressed in relation the data collection processes and the overall impact of these issues on the research project. From the conception of this research to its presentation, ethics remain a topic at the forefront consideration. Safety, confidentiality and legal matters all had profound impacts on this project throughout and because of this, are addressed not only in this chapter, but also throughout this thesis.

This chapter then addressed experiences of conducting in-depth, unstructured face-to face-and telephones interviews. Reflections on various interview situations provide readers with insights into the dynamics, exchanges and data production that took place within these contexts. Through integrating methods literature and experience reflections, this section details the multi-faceted issues that were negotiated and balanced within the data collection processes. Moving on from data collection, this chapter then addressed coding, analysis and data presentation. Collectively, all of these issues interacted to create the data and presentation found in the following data chapters.

Chapter 2: Defining Pimp[6]: What does 'pimp' mean?

The aim of this chapter is to explore the definitional processes undertaken to define the word 'pimp' in this research. Defining the word 'pimp' is central to this thesis as it is necessary to the foundation of this research project. Variations and inconsistencies in the definition of this word across the literature also made exploring this issue in detail crucial. Guiding considerations in the processes included the development of a definition that is researchable and strongly influenced by the social reality of pimping. Complications involved in the creation of a working definition of pimp are addressed in this paper through a brief review of the history of the word, academic contributions, and definitions offered by respondents. The following discussions highlight current reoccurring themes and necessary considerations related to the word 'pimp' for the formation of an appropriate definition.

Academic definitions can capture the social reality and experiences of roles, experiences and subcultures, but in the case of pimping, these definitions have fallen short of capturing crucial elements of the word 'pimp'. Additionally these definitions have been exogenously authored and applied, thus have failed to integrate the input and opinions of those who earn this title. Within this research, a commitment to the input of pimps was key; therefore, within this paper, continuous returning to the data and opinions of respondents is critical to produce a definition that integrates the contributions of pimps themselves and reflects their reality as well.

Researchers are placed in a position to explicitly define and present the phenomenon they wish to study, but in the social sciences this is highly complicated as social phenomena and interactions are not static. They are multi-layered connections between networks of individuals with varying behaviors, attitudes, opinions, modes of expression and experiences within the social world. Such is the case when embarking on research aimed to focus on pimps. It is necessary to define the idea, concept, action, and/or role of 'pimp' but the definitional process is complex due to variations in the experiences and social contexts.

Pimps are a diverse population and the definition should reflect this heterogeneous reality. Additionally, the definition of pimp needs to be sufficiently comprehensive enough to include the experiences of those who fit this role yet still allow researchers to explore the different ways in which various subcultural groups of pimps function and operate. The heterogeneity of pimping cannot be stressed enough, as this is not an interactive role that can

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[6] This chapter contains large excerpts from the paper:
Davis, H. (2013) "Defining 'Pimp': Working Towards a Definition in Social Research." Sociological
    Research Online, Vol 18:1. <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/18/1/11.html>

be articulated through inflexible definitions; a definition that grants the necessary inclusions and exclusions is critical.

Introducing first the history of the word pimp, this chapter will then seek to assess current usage of the word in academic literature and research, and then engage in a discussion of respondents' definitions. Also, this paper will outline the shift from the original research definition of pimp as an individual (male or female) that controls the lives and proceeds of one or more women working in prostitution (Giobbe 1993: Williamson& Cluse-Tolar, 2002)[7] to the concluding definition of an individual who financially profits from, and manages the activities and income of, one or more individuals involved in prostitution.

The Word

Locating information on the appearance and history of the word pimp is difficult as the etymology of the word is not well documented and is shrouded in lore. The origins of the word and early usage are arduous to trace as the word only starts to appear in American academic literatures in the 1930's. Sheidlower (2008) explains "It first appeared in English around 1600 and was used then as now to mean 'a person who arranges opportunities for sexual intercourse with a prostitute.'" The figurative meaning, "a person who panders to an undesirable or immoral impulse (Sheildlower, 2008, http://www.slate.com)," was found by the middle of the 17th century; the verb to pimp dates from the early 17th century (Sheildlower, 2008, http://www.slate.com). The Oxford Dictionary (2011) suggests that the origins of the word trace back to the 16th century and are of unknown origins which is also supported by the Merriam-Webster dictionary (2011). The connection between possible original usages of the word to modern usage has, as well as its origin, yet to be uncovered. Therefore, currently the possible origins of the word offer little insight into the history of the word, the original context and its current meanings. This section will first consider definitions found in dictionaries before proceeding to socially locate the term in the specific context of this research.

Dictionary Definitions

Examination of reputable dictionary definitions grants insight into the current uses of the word which have adapted from possible original meanings. These definitions also highlight the need for researchers to make their definition of pimp explicit as to avoid confusion with common understandings of the word. Pimp is now associated with various meanings and could easily led to misinterpretation of the individual or activity that is being

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[7] And more specifically for this research, an individual (male or female) that control the lives and proceeds of one or more women working in illegal, street level prostitution

discussed. Thus highlighting the need to specifically explain and define in clear terms the context, role and action that is meant to be communicated through usage of the word.

As a verb: to pimp: The Oxford Dictionary (2011) currently defines pimp in its verb tense as

- "1 [no object] (often as noun pimping) act as a pimp.
- [with object] provide (someone) as a prostitute.
- [with object] informal sell or promote (something) in an extravagant or persistent way: he pimped their debut album to staff writers at Rolling Stone
- 2 [with object] informal make (something) more showy or impressive "

In the definition above, the multiple uses of the term becomes clear; separated by informal and what one can only suppose is the formal usage. Pimping is described in relation to the underground career associated with prostitution and secondly as a term used in mainstream culture to describe the act of pimping as an action which improves material goods in a flamboyant and flashy manner.

As an adjective: the word can be used to refer to something as being cool, fashionable, glamorous and/or extravagant. As is mentioned in the Oxford Dictionary's (2011) definition of pimp as a verb, pimping is now synonymous with improving something by making it more flashy or showy thus when an object is described as 'pimp', it refers again to the object being flashy, trendy and/or 'cool'.

As a noun: The Oxford Dictionary (2011) defines pimp as "a man who controls prostitutes and arranges clients for them, taking part of their earnings in return." The Cambridge Dictionary defines a pimp as "a man who controls prostitutes, especially by finding customers for them, and takes some of the money that they earn." (2011)

As indicated above, the word pimp can be applied in multiple contexts. Pimping is the action, verb tense of pimp, and in the subculture of those involved in prostitution. The Game literally means to pimp but in cultural application 'pimping' refers to improving something, making it more trendy/cool or to transform something into extravagant (i.e. MTV' s Pimp My Ride). Pimp is a role and a title, therefore a noun, prescribed to individuals who manage people who work in prostitution. To describe something as pimp, in the adjective form, is to describe something cool and trendy.

Supporting the emergence of popular cultural use of pimp, the Oxford dictionary.com (2011) assesses the evolution of the word pimp from a formerly pejorative, negative term to a more positive and culturally embraced term. The Oxford Dictionary (2011) explains that

> "the popularity of hip-hop culture has made the pimp a figure of social aspiration for some people, with the word increasingly associated with a glamorous world of champagne, fast cars, and flashy jewelry. This image has spawned a positive sense of the verb, inspired in part by the MTV show Pimp My Ride, in which

worn-out cars are transformed and customized: we've got to get that minivan pimped out."

Recent changes in the usage of this word creates the possibly that it can trigger varying responses and interpretations from audiences. Because of this, it is crucial that researchers explicitly define and identify the populations and behavior they are researching in order to avoid misinterpretations. Beyond reoccurring themes in usage, there are also emerging pattern in the representation and social locations of pimps. The following section will explore these elements and attempt to place pimp with its cultural context in the USA.

The Social Location of 'Pimp'

The coffee-table, sepia photography pimp book, *Pimpnosis*, further suggests "The image of the pimp is so deeply ingrained in the national subconscious that is now full-blown Americana." (Funches and Marriott 2002: 5) Funches and Marriott (2002) further add that "in the cultural imagination, pimping is 100 percent American." (5) 'Pimps' exist throughout the world but there is something specific and extraordinarily unique about pimps in the United States and it is within this setting that the following discussion is placed. The subculture surrounding pimps in the United States is unlike elsewhere in the world due to the unique cultural context of a legacy of legal and social racism, structural violence, poverty, law enforcement and legal systems, patriarchal social structures, and finally, overlapping operations and cultures of other illegal underground economies. International and domestic understandings of the word is rooted in American cultural interpretations created by film, hip hop, street culture and literature all which is informed and influenced by the dynamic, boisterous subculture of pimping and other street hustlers.

Quinn (2000) suggests "The pimp figure has long been associated with the trickster in African- American vernacular traditions and it is above all the persuasive power, verbal skill, and emphasis on simulation which link the two" (118); further cementing a strong connection between what is means to be a pimp and what skills are necessary to be successful in pimping along with an emphasis on racial profiles. Within the United States an even more specific image is invoked and connected to the word pimp; "In the popular imagination, the pimp is typically conjured as a smartly dressed, smooth talking, and relatively youthful African American male.''(Bernstein 2007:52-53) But this connection may go beyond popular imagination and media connections. In The Pimp's Bible, Gholson (2004) explains "the pimp is a black man's creation" (40), and Master Pimp (1999) further asserts that "The pimp shunned and intimidated White society by being flamboyant and displaying his wealth." (3) Master Pimp (1999) expresses the belief that Black male participation in pimping signifies active resistance to racist structural violence and dominance. The result of the mainstream

coverage of pimps and their lives has lead to an uncomfortable yet strangely passive relationship between accepted public persona and the realities of pimping. While their activities are seen and understood as illegal and problematic, they capture imagination through a shroud of secrecy and a flamboyant image of the uncontested, full blown hegemonic, ultimate playboy, anti-establishment male. This new defiant culture hero emerged out of America's ghettos in the 1960s and has cemented a place for pimps within everyday American culture and terminology.

It is tempting to glamorize the role of the subversive pimp but it must be consistently considered that pimps idealize and ruthlessly pursue values of greed, profit, power, materialism, status, fame and wealth: all familiar to mainstream white American values thus only the means are deviant as opposed to the ends. Or as Stallings (2003) rebuts the 'hero pimp imagery' in her evaluation of Giones' book *Whoreson* and it's main character, *Whoreson*, a pimp:

> "For the Black male, then, the rhetoric and philosophies of a pimp become a violent way back to the masculinity that he does not possess in society. Pimps, hustlers, and drug dealers are modern-day models of U.S.-colonized black bodies. They could never be as empowering as the trickster or bad nigga, primarily because the main heroic quality of the bad nigga and trickster is their ability to get one over on the white man. The admiration of the folk character is short-lived, for the violence the bad nigga inflicts on "whitey" always seems to end up misdirected. Whoreson… chooses to exact his vengeance not on the cause of his problem, white-supremacy systems or the Black middle class, but on those nearest to his wrath—the poor Black females he grew up loving. … he does not become that bad nigger, simply another nigger. The common and daily exploitation of one's community does not make one heroic." (199)

The above exploration of Horton-Stalling (2003) sufficiently and directly addresses any assumptions about the heroic role of the pimp by highlighting how this role victimizes and undermines their own community. Thus closer examination of the social reality of the pimp emphasizes the exploitation, especially within one's own community, that often accompanies the workings of the street pimp (Cole & Guy-Sheftall 2003 ; Horton- Stalling 2003).

Contested and Contesting Definitions

From a discussion of the usage of the word and cultural context, this paper now shifts focus to the word within social research. Differing from mainstream interpretations in various ways, research definitions of 'pimp' pose multiple challenges to researchers who try to capture the role, action, and subcultures of a heterogeneous group within a single definition. Distinction should be placed between defining pimps based on who pimps are and what role they play, versus defining them based on a more culturally influenced variables (i.e. fashion,

cars, personality characteristics). Merging these two aspects of pimps could greatly complicate identification of pimps and further impede comparability between research projects (for example Milner & Milner's (1976) definition). The following will explore various research definitions and will identify problematic trends within past attempts to define this population.

One of the earliest attempts at an academic exploration of pimps was undertaken in the 1930's by Reitman (1937) who offers the following definition of 'pimp':

> "A pimp is a man (among homosexuals it may be a woman) who takes all or part of the earnings of women who sell their bodies for gain. He may have inveigled her into becoming a prostitute or acquired her after she started the business. Invariably he encourages her to continue in prostitution, and he may be either her lover or husband, but always he is her supposed protector" (264)

Reitman's (1937) definition includes explanations of pimps' roles, recruitment methods and the relationship between pimps and prostitutes. This definition focuses more on the relationship that is imperative to the existence of pimp, that between the pimp and prostitute. It focuses on what a pimp does, but is limited in scope due to the restriction on gender, inferences about sexuality, and assumptions of how pimps function, which does not include all pimps, thus excluding many.

Milner and Milner's (1972) ethnographic research provided a definition of 'pimp' which includes a brief explanation of the surrounding social context, the specific role of the pimp, and modes of self representation:

> "Pimp: A man who lives off the proceeds of female prostitution. In Ghetto English, it also connotes the ability to control women and a predilection for flashy clothes, expensive cars, etc. He does not solicit for his women, and is a ghetto culture hero. A man may be called a pimp if he has merely succeeded at some endeavor or encounter with Whitey which required the guile of a gamester" (Milner & Milner 1972: 274)

This definition is informed by years of participant observation and intense integration into the subculture (Milner & Milner 1976)[8] to the extent that it could be said that

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[8] It is crucial to note that the use of Milner and Milner as a robust and valid source of academic literature is done so with caution. Their work involves many problematic ethical issues, such as lack of consent and confidentiality. Interviewed after the research, Iceberg Slim was interviewed by Richard Milner who then allowed for that interview to be integrated into the book Black Players without the knowledge of Iceberg Slim. About this Milner states "There's no denying that we conned him into becoming one of our informants in Black Players under the guise of promoting his own books. I confess I derived a guilty pleasure in having tricked the king of tricksters" (Milner, 2009, 154) Also, the assertion in the text that Iceberg Slim was interviewed in the field, was claimed to be interviewed by someone who did not interview and was included in the research, calls into question whether or not other encounters, interviews or experiences occurred or were similarly fabricated.

both authors had 'gone native' while conducting this research[9] therefore limiting their ability to author a non-cultural, universally applicable definition of the word pimp. Additionally, the definition offered by Milner & Milner (1976) is too rooted in a specific time, place and sample of individuals involved in a particular subcultural experience of pimping. Their definition allows for the incorporation of street understandings, the specific realities of the role of the pimp and again, is largely subculturally focused. This definition excludes women from the role of the pimp and reflects a racially biased assumption about the identity of pimps. Not every pimp is African American nor is this a determinant factor in one's pimping career, but what Milner and Milner (1976) are highlighting is a trend of pimp culture in illegal street prostitution in the USA.

Condemnatory, emotive definitions tend to dominate the prostitution literature, which unapologetically demonizes and vilifies pimps (see: Farley 2007; Giobbe 1993; Raphael & Shaprio 2004; Stark & Hodgson 2003). This is not noted with the intention of critiquing politically charged research, but to suggest that a research definition itself is likely more rigorous and consistent if, in this case, it is based on role and meaning versus assumed behaviors and attitudes. Also, defining pimps based on politically charged characteristics places prostitution literature in yet another contestable place as this reoccurring theme in defining will likely only make the job of reconciling and comparing research between the sex work[10] and violence against women camps[11] even more strenuous. Further complicating negotiation between definitions is the currently raging battle between two dominate camps within prostitution research.

Generally, recent (1990s to present) prostitution research includes in the definition indefinite roles, operations and behaviors of pimps laden with judgment and vilification. It is difficult to find definitions in some research papers rather explanations are often offered instead. For example, Stark and Hodgson (2003) assert "Pimps are men who batter, rape, and sell women for sex; they control the systems of prostitution." (19) It is not that pimps do not participate in the above stated, but that the definition offered by Stark and Hodgson (2003) explains assumed roles and behaviors as opposed to an explanation of what a pimp is and this seems to be a trend which is repeating within prostitution research.

Kennedy et. al's (2007) research begins to grapple with defining the term but quickly moves on to defamatory descriptions of pimps:

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[9] "I had been spotted driving around the city at night in Cadillacs, snorting drugs with black pimps. When he pointedly inquired whether that was my idea of fieldwork, I replied it was." (Milner, 2009:150)

[10] For example see: St. James, 1987; Pagalia, 1990; Weitzer, 2009; Chapkis, 1997, 2003; Pheterson, 1993, 1989.

[11] For example see: Dworkin, 1989; Jeffreys, 1997; McKinnon, 1998, 2005; Farley, 2004, 2007 ; Barry, 1995.

> "Black's (1990) law dictionary defines a pimp as someone who obtains customers for a prostitute. The reality of most pimps, however, is that they use manipulation, threats, and violence to keep prostitutes from leaving the trade and live entirely off the women they recruit." (5)

The definition offered by Black's (1990) law dictionary is inadequate and inaccurate for application to social research. There appears to be discrepancies between the actual role of pimps and their activities, and what the law dictionary defines a pimp as. If we were to rely on definitions similar to the one offered by Black (1990), we would be excluding the vast majority of pimps because for the most part, pimps do not procure customers. Not only do most pimps have little to nothing to do with 'obtaining customers' for prostitutes, they rarely have anything to do with the individual, 'independent' work of the prostitute; they act as external managers not internal supervisors. Also, by avoiding the use of an academically sound and rigorous definition, the readers of the work by Kennedy et. al (2007) are likely left relying on cultural perceptions of what a pimp is and ultimately guessing what the authors mean when they use the word pimp.

Pheterson (1993) contributes to this discourse in presenting an outline of the archaic, repressive ideologies that she believes are the underlying reasons for opposition to prostitution. The analysis she provides grants considerable exploration of the idea of 'pimp' and the word itself. Pheterson (1993) defines a pimp as " someone who profits from the earnings of a prostitute" (44)[12] Her paper asserts that current anti-pimping laws are inherently racist and are meant to prosecute Black men for prostituting white women. Furthering this line of thought, she offers:

> "A pimp is presumed to *exploit* women, in particular *white teenage* women, to *deceive* them, *addict* then to drugs, *batter* them, *rape* them, and *abandon* them. He is conceived as 'the guilty party' whose malicious ways are responsible for victimizing young, innocent (often meant as white) women. As the seducer and corrupter of girls, he is the prototypical villain. Often he is portrayed as black, mean, manipulative, aggressive and lazy (Pheterson 1993: 48- emphasis from original text)

Most of the respondents I interviewed would not likely seek to debunk the sarcastic and exaggerated explanation Pheterson (1993) offers. Pheterson (1993) does tap into seriously

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[12] Pheterson (1993) provides a footnote for her definition above which is worth mention; the reference indicates " In Marxist terms, an unemployed wife in a capitalist society is also a pimp in that she lives off the earnings of her husband's alienated labor" (61). Review of Engel's writing in Origins would offer an alternate perspective that the shift to the nuclear family as an economic unit trapped and oppressed women through the separation of the public and private spheres. Overall, his analysis would contend that housewives under capitalist systems are far better represented in the role of prostitutes than pimps. This is a sentiment and view shared by pimp authors as well : "The average marriage is only a form of prostitution (Gholson, 59)"

problematic racial, sexist politics in the United States in relation to prostitution and pimping prosecution [i.e the White Slavery Act- Mann Act of 1910 (18 U.S.C. § § 2421– 2424)], but respondents' definitions, as discussed in the next section, and descriptions of how pimps work, do not vary drastically from the above. So although Pheterson (1993) sought to mock prior academic portrayals of pimps, her description is ironically accurate and/or at least accepted by pimps.

Williamson & Baker (2009) operationalize the term pimp as "someone who has several women working for him at the same time, controls them through physical and verbal abuse, and profits from their prostitution-based earnings" (32) based on previous research (Dalla 2006; Norton- Hawk 2004; Williamson & Cluse-Tolar 2002). This definition informed my original research definition, and the majority of my early work, but this description also needs some adaptations. Again, the inclusion of the statement 'controls them through physical and verbal abuse' (32) again places the reader in a place where the assumed actions of pimps must be condemned in order to understand pimps. This sets up a position where readers are pushed to make early judgments about the population prior to exposure to the data. The primary issue with this definition relates to gender: the assertion that pimps are male (working for him) and that prostitutes are female (several women working) limits the pimp role to men and excludes both female pimps and male prostitutes.

Certainly authors have justification in negatively approaching this population if that is the way pimps are presented to them, which is especially probable when the explanations are collected from prostitutes who have had negative experiences with pimps. It should also be noted that it seems former pimps themselves rarely offer flattering or glorifying images of who they are/were and/or what they do/did. The vast majority of research related to pimps suggested definitions based solely on the opinions of prostitutes who do and/or have worked with pimps. Other works have failed to obtain explanations of the word from the individuals who themselves fulfill the role and carry the title, thus creating a context in which researchers are more likely to rely on descriptors and behaviors rather than roles and 'position.' Hodgson's (1997) qualitative research on the pimp- prostitution relationship relies solely a Canadian legal definition of pimp/pimping. His research cites Greenspan (1994: 207) defining pimping according to Canadian Criminal Code Section 212.(1):

> *Every one who:*
> *d) procures or attempts to procure a person to become, whether in or out of Canada, a prostitute,*
> *(h) for the purpose of gain, exercises control, direction or influence over the movements of a person in such a manner as to show that he is aiding, abetting or compelling that person to engage in or carry on prostitution with any person or generally,*
> *(j) lives wholly or in part on the avails of prostitution of another person*
> <div align="right">(Hodgson 1997:8)</div>

A legal definition allows for exploration within clear parameters and criteria for the title but may be restrictive in that the definition offered could exclude broader understandings of the word, denies the population their culture representation and input, and furthermore, creates a rigid interpretation that leaves no room for adaptation or modification. Bernstein (2007) further suggests that " legally speaking, a variety of different arrangements could conceivably come under the penal code's broad definition of pimps "(Bernstein 2007: 52-53) thus inappropriately including into the category of pimp those who would not by other definitions fit the word (Pheterson 1993). Additionally, the definition offered by Hodgson (1997) may be applicable to the Canadian context, but it is foreseeable that a legal Western description may not be applicable to all nations. And again, this definition is gender selective in implying gender 'to show that *he* is aiding abetting'.

By reviewing the work of other prostitution researchers, Faugier and Sargeant (1997) capture the complexities of defining 'pimp' based on the number of prostitutes working for an individual and the emotional and/or managerial relationship between the pimp and prostitute:

> "Miller (1995) distinguishes between a 'man' and a pimp, according to the number of prostitutes they have. She then extends this to a continuum in which one extreme constitutes the pimp who manages a group of women in a relatively bureaucratic way, while the other signifies the husband or lover of the women. Barry (1995) agrees that there is a continuum between a pimp and 'a man', but highlights that the real question is the extent to which he is involved in a relationship with the prostitute and whether she is subjected to sexual exploitation *from him* and/ or *because of him*." (Faugier & Sargeant 1997:125)

Definitions of 'pimp' could vary based on the number of individuals working for someone, but as seen throughout this research, there are times when pimps only have one individual working for them and by most standards fit the definition of a pimp and still carried the title. Defining based on relationships is slippery as Pheterson (1993) highlights, because a person involved in prostitution with a romantic partner would not automatically equate to the partner being a pimp. Therefore, Barry (1995) highlights important points about the exact parameters of relationships that could be used to differentiate pimp from non-pimp. Thus a focus on the managerial and financial dependency of the relationship should be an major determinant and element in defining 'pimp.'

A review of the above definitions supports a lack of input and feedback from pimps themselves and an overall lack of clear definitions for future research. Understanding the ways in which individuals define themselves is crucial to the development of a more panoramic, while also inclusive and exclusive, definition of the word. Furthermore, gender

bias, cultural focus and unquantifiable descriptions create a circumstance where 'pimp' is not only difficult to define in specifics but also one in which comparability across projects is unmanageable. In the following section, detailed accounts of the definition of 'pimp' are offered by former/current pimps themselves.

"What does that mean to you? How do you define that? Pimp that is?" Respondent Definitions

How I managed to mangle such a simple question still baffles me but on reflection, it was the first interview and I was in quite a fragile state by the end of my interview with Sue[13]. She luckily offered a response that was shorter and 'cleaner' than previous responses during the course of the almost three hour interview:

> Sue: *Pimp? Paid in money and pussy,*
> H: *Ok*
> Sue: *paid in money and pussy, it don't get any simpler than that.*

And it did not. Other respondents offered explanations laden with far more depth and detail requiring intensive analysis. The varying interpretations of 'pimp' by the interviewees reflects the genuine diversity of experiences among those who make up this subculture. It also offers unique insight into what the respondents believed defined them during their time in the Game and what qualities made them who and/or what they were/are.

"How would you define pimp? was the only question that was asked of all respondents in this research. Responses from interviewee varied depending on experience, gender, and time spent in the Game and backgrounds of individuals. But even among the heterogeneity of responses, there was consistency in themes in their responses to this question. The following section explores the respondents' understandings and description of the word 'pimp'. These contributions are invaluable to the development of a more robust definition as they offer insight into the word as a title, role, lifestyle and persona as they have experienced first hand.

Marcus offered a brief but to the point definition: *"A leech. I was a parasite, I just took advantage of people's weaknesses."* His response to the question surprised me quite a bit as it was exceptionally derogatory and frank. Ultimately, he described his former career in the underground as predatory and co-dependent, a reoccurring theme which was repeated by most of the respondents. Furthermore, there are striking similarities between the socially parasitic behavior of pimps and biological models within the field of parasitism (Shelby, 2002); Thus Marcus's choice of a parasitic creature to describe his behavior and role as a pimp carries profound meaning when compared to the work of Shelby (2002).

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[13] The names of all respondents have been changed to protect anonymity

Aside from the awkwardness triggered by my inadvertently embarrassing Eric, his definition was largely descriptive and ascribed a personality type versus a role:

> *Holly: If I were to ask you for a definition of pimp what would you say? If you had to submit the next dictionary definition, what would it be?*
> *Eric: Cunning, cunning that is what I would say.*
> *Holly: So an adjective?*
> *Eric: Yeah cunning*
> *Holly: So as a noun, what would you define a pimp as?*
> *Eric: A noun, you're going have to be more specific now, remember I am a street person*
> *Holly: Noun is like a person, place or thing, so like if you defined a person who…, like a money manager or*
> *Eric: Well, that's what it is a money manager, you have to have the gift of gab, you are not going to do well if you don't have the gift of gab, but you have to be cunning enough to have four or five different personalities in the house and not have any conflict.*

When I asked Ken what a pimp was, he offered insight on the criminal career by normalizing the activities of the pimp and then further exploring the personality type required for this role.

> *"A pimp is a entrepreneur, I don't know, someone with a 'I don't give a damn' attitude. Motherfucker determined to win, motherfucker that don't take no for an answer. Self drive a self starter. And this here too, cause a lot of pimps is full of themselves too, I know I was, I used to think there wasn't a female on earth I couldn't get. Very very conceited, very full of themselves, don't take no for an answer, driven, like running things, control freaks"*

Ken expresses the characteristics necessary for a pimp and mainly focuses on ambition and control/domination as core themes. Control and domination regularly appear in pimps' descriptions of an imperative 'job requirement'. This is relative not only to their ability to mentally manipulate and control others, but also to control their own emotions, presentation and even sex drive. Good pimping partially depends on an individual's ability to engage in strict emotional management and to consistently maintain a position of unquestioned power over others. This seizure of control back from women (pimps tend to believe that women control men in society through sex) and total domination over them is mandatory for success in the Game and is applied regardless of the gender of the pimp.

Until this point, all respondents have defined pimping in direct relation to prostitution. Michael was the only respondent who sought to extend the definition of pimp beyond the Game. He insisted that word could be applied to individuals (especially men) who fit specific criteria regardless of non-involvement in prostitution:

> *"A pimp is someone who lives off of the sweat of a woman; the sweat and labor of woman, that is what a pimp is. If a guy stays*

in his house and his wife goes to work, that guy is pimpin'. Pimpin' ain't necessarily mean that the woman has got to be selling sex. That is what they say a pimp is, they are the procurer of the woman, that means he manages his woman that don't necessarily mean that she's got to be selling sex. You've got different types of whores, not all of them are having sex, there is a difference between a whore, a slut and a tramp. A whore is someone who asks for money for her services, a tramp is a girl that deals with different guys and a slut has sex with everyone and don't get nothin'."

The idea that 'pimp' relies on gender roles is also echoed by Gholson (2001) who states that, "Any man who accepts money from a female is a pimp, because no 'man' accepts money from females but pimps." (Gholson:33) Pimps are then exempt from mainstream gender norms as the exceptional male as opposed to the normative male. Men in general society who then accept money from women or switch the traditional breadwinner model are pimps according to some. The tone and context in which this is discussed by those who subscribe to this definition of pimp, have a negative view of men who are supported by women outside of prostitution; dependency on women makes pimps more masculine while it acts to emasculate other men.

Sarah had experience as both a prostitute and now as a pimp; thus her definition of pimp encompasses multidimensional understanding of 'pimp':

"A person that only really cares about himself, because the pimp I was with, be cared about money, jewelry, cars, they only care about themselves, they care about our health cause they have to and the way we look, we have to look good, keep their hair and nails done, and stuff like that and bills and if something comes up that need to be done, it's not that they are there to help us they are there to help themselves, it takes a long time for them to get to it, but if it affects them, they is quick to do what they need to do."

Her response is similar to the descriptions offered by the bulk of prostitution research; this likely because her definition, as the definitions offered by the latter, is informed by experiences of prostitutes' experiences of pimps. Even though Sarah is now pimping, she defines pimp from her understandings back when she was a prostitute. Furthermore, as a female pimp, it is surprising that she still seeks to define pimps as male regardless of the fact that she herself is a female who pimps: *"a person that only really cares about himself."* Also unlike other pimps who claim the title and refer to pimps in either the third person 'pimp/s' or we, Sarah strives for a disassociation in her consistent use of the word 'they' opposed to we. Clearly she still relates more the prostitute role than her new one as a pimp. Additionally, her engagement with the word pimp indicated that she does pimp but does not identify as a pimp; pimping is something she does and is not what she is. It is not an identity she embraces fully. This is a direct contradiction to the other responses who eagerly embraced calling themselves a pimp and self identified as such. Due to the social identification processes involved in

pimping subcultures, one can fulfill the role of a pimp without ever gaining the title. As found in this research, there is also the potential for individuals to be involved in pimping but refuse the title and do not seek to obtain it. Sarah is one example from this research who admitted that she 'helped girls out' for money, but adamantly refused to call herself a pimp. Likewise, Ken expressed that he pimped and was a pimp, but was not concerned with whether or not the streets or people recognized him as such. Ken tended to reject participation in the subculture of pimping he was peripherally involved in and as a result, he regularly was in violation of the 'codes' and 'rules' of The Game.

The streets are responsible for bestowing the title of 'pimp' to individuals. Pimps involved in illegal street level prostitution, as a subculture deeply entrenched in street culture, rely solely on the streets to achieve the position and name 'pimp'. Reinforcing the role of the street in naming pimps, one respondent (Eric) in this research explained, *"What it is, is that you have to have a certain status to be a pimp, you have to have a certain status to be known as a pimp, you can't just say 'hey, I'm pimpin."* Eric further indicates that "The street names the pimps, the hos, the dope dealers, you know, just like that. It is the same way with a dope dealer, the dope dealer will get a status if he is a baller, a big time dope dealer. He didn't get that status just him being him, it's got to come from the product that he has and how strong you are in the Game, see you can't be no wimp and be no pimp."

When I asked Sean 'Who is that decides when someone has become a pimp? ' he replied *"Well I guess its something inside of you that lets you know in a sense that you have arrived so to speak, and then the streets, and other pimps, start to acknowledge, you can't just up one day and say 'I'm a pimp' and then be accepted like that, I guess it's kind of like … they have to respect you and to see that I guess basically that you are pimpin' and know that you are a pimp."* So even though one can reject the title, one cannot just claim the title without actively pimping; the street and pimp community need to bestow it. Generally it can be assumed that titles and roles exist simultaneously, but this is not always the case, particularly not with this population.

Sean offered a definition that lead him to a lengthy explanation of his behavior and style of pimping compared to others. The following description offers insight into the insistence of respondents to continuously prove their skills in pimping and again, to offer an explanation of the type of personality required within The Game.

> Sean: *"Well a pimp is a person, who I used to think had to be male, but and most pimps pretty much tell you the same thing that a pimp has to be a male but you do have some lady macks or whatever, but a pimp is a person that I know it might sound ugly, but it is what it is, a pimp is a person that pretty much preys on other people's weakness or abilities to basically produce whatever it is that that particular pimp wants and/or needs for himself. And they do it to where it would highly benefit themselves I tried to make it the way where also whoever was involved, the hooker, the*

prostitute, a working lady or whatever, a lot of pimps are selfish, greedy and they don't really care about nobody but themselves .

... they would say to me you know "you don't seem like no good pimp to me" "you don't seem like some of these other people" and I tell em' " and I say what do you mean, first of all I am a pimp what do you mean I don't seem like a good pimp, I used to get offended, and I highly considered myself a good pimp and so I used to ask well what would make you say something like that, and they say " because you don't seem you're not selfish and you're not greedy and I know that you care and that you care about people you just don't have the qualities of a person that I would consider to be a pimp.

And I said yeah if you put it like that, but regardless of what you want to believe or feel, I am still a pimp, it is still what I still what I do, I am a good pimp but when you put me down so I said that makes me a good pimp you know when you break it down, when they say what they say you just "don't have the qualities of some I would consider to be a pimp" I can understand cause those kinds of characteristics of the typical pimp just ain't me " Sean

Sean's definition differs from the others in that he insists his interaction with women 'improved' them *"where it would highly benefit themselves I tried to make it the way where also whoever was involved, the hooker, the prostitute."* He approaches the description as many before, as an explanation of characteristics needed, but goes beyond that through suggesting a behavioral morality superior to that of other pimps. He elaborates on his superior pimping skills and abilities to improve women: *"you know even though I had women prostituting, I was trying to increase their living standards to increase their knowledge upgrade their overall agenda everything, I guarantee you, any woman that has been with me, at least for a few weeks, a few months, a year, a couple years, something like that, she's a whole lot smarter when she left me than she was before she came. Some pimps they wanna keep their girls dumb, me I figured the smarter my women were the better off we would all be."*

It is difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish why the definitions that most of the respondents offer are highly pejorative and self-deprecating. These definitions could represent a variety of circumstances: social desirability bias, an attempt to define themselves based on how they believe others view them, as explanations of what they think other pimps are, or it could be an uncensored response.[14]

Pimps as a population are far from naïve about public opinions on their activities. Their interviews clearly displayed a keen understanding of the judgment and stigma their career choices carry. Thus, it is possible that interviewees were simply giving answers they

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[14] 'uncensored response' is meant to represent an answer that is not part of the performative pimp role or does not assume the characteristics of pimps' raps as pimps have been regularly charged as a group unable to divulge the 'truth', the assumption in this thesis is that they can and that they are no more or less capable than any other studied population.

assumed I was after; in other words, their negative and condemning definitions may reflect a classic case of social desirability bias. But Sean's explanation of pimp above addresses the issue of how pimps define themselves and their skills in relation to others in the Game. Respondents and pimp authors alike tend to rely heavily on comparisons between their own methods and skills and those of other pimps. They strive to minimize audiences' condemnation by highlighting how much worse other pimps were and by asserting that the other pimps are the ones who make pimping look bad. Thus it would appear at times that as in Sean's case, the negative descriptions of pimps could reflect their understanding of what other pimps are; but not of what they were as pimps. It is also possible that respondents offered definitions based on their positions as *former* pimps. This would assume that the individuals had, in their exit of pimping, began to fully embrace mainstream views on the Game. But this is highly unlikely as respondents frequently refer to involvement in the Game as 'being for life' and a mental state that one never fully leaves.

To the outsider, descriptions such as *"preys on other peoples weakness", "only really cares about himself", "I was a parasite, I just took advantage of people's weaknesses", "very full of themselves, don't take no for an answer, driven, like running things, control freaks",* may be detrimental to one's self perception but these ideas do not operate the same way in pimping subculture. As mentioned previously these are expected expressions of masculinity and praised characteristics of a good pimp. A good example of this would be the consistent referral to taking advantage of others' weakness. When exploiting someone's weakness, there are two assumed actors: the one who is vulnerable, can be 'played', and is weak, whereas the other does not get manipulated, is strong (as in not weak) and is the dominant, in control one. Pimps would be the latter and therefore, their ability to dominate places them in a position of power and control which is highly esteemed social within this subculture.

Though Sean used to believe that pimps had to be male, he acknowledges the emergence and existence of female pimps. The inclusion of Sue and Sarah in this research, along with other conversations with respondents regarding lady macks, demonstrates that female pimps do exist and are active players within The Game outside of the role of prostitutes. It is important to acknowledge that the vast majority of pimps are male and the majority of prostitutes are female, but not to solely assert that pimps are male and prostitutes are female. Attention needs to be paid to the diversity in genders within the role of pimp however inconvenient it is to previous theoretical models related to prostitution. These variations in identity, gender and Game experience (pimping or prostituting) challenge many current research approaches to these populations and their inclusion is crucial to forming a panoramic reflection of sex work.

Conclusion

The descriptions of the roles, functions and definitions of pimps offered by Reitman in 1937, discussed at the start of this chapter, differ only minimally from modern engagements and understandings. This supports two likely possibilities: 1) the study of the subject has yet to evolve or change in since the 1930's or 2) the trends and patterns of pimps have remained consistent since the 1930's. If pimps are still following the unwritten 'rules of The Game' which they commonly refer to, then it is possible that despite economic, racial, social, technological and media changes, The Game has remained relatively unchanged. But overall, pimps are exceptionally under-studied, and a combination of the small number of projects and the inaccessibility of the population, means that research approaches have been restricted; therefore, historical and current data and information on this population is restricted (Weitzer, 2000). Despite this, some shifts have occurred that need to be acknowledged within definitions of pimps; mainly regarding gender, and media exposure. Thus adjustments should be made to the ways in which researchers define the term. The operationalization of the term may shift based on the research context and the researcher, but the definitions should become more consistent and concise.

Based on the literature and data discussed throughout this chapter, the following criteria were set to formulate a new definition of pimp:

- Exclusion of personality descriptions and behavioral characteristics
- Gender neutral language [15] ("most pimps pretty much tell you the same thing that a pimp has to be a male but you do have some lady macks"- Sean; "Pimping is aggressive and if that makes it male, then pimping is male"- Sue)
- Acknowledges the gain is financial and that they control income earned and general activities; employment and otherwise ("Paid in money" – Sue, "they are the procurer of the woman, that means he manages his woman"- Michael)
- Needs to acknowledge that even though pimps claim 'one ho is too close to no ho[16]' a pimp with one prostitute is still a pimp nonetheless.
- A definition which limits influence from mainstream understandings of the word to one which sets strict parameters as to what specific underground career and role is being discussed and in what context.

In the application of the above stated considerations, minor but still important changes have been made to the original research definition which read: an individual (male or female) that controls the lives and proceeds of one or more women working in prostitution (Giobbe, 1993: Williamson & Cluse-Tolar, 2002). The new definition proposed is as follows: An

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[15] This is not to undermine the overwhelming trend of pimps as male and prostitutes as female, but to acknowledge that these roles can be filled by other genders.

[16] Common phrase used by pimps to express that one woman working still makes them a pimp but is dangerous close to not having anyone working for them: they prefer more than one person working for them at any given time.

individual who financially profits from, and manages the activities and income of, one or more individuals involved in prostitution.

The inclusion of more feedback from the definitions offered by respondents would be ideal, but it would prove difficult and problematic to incorporate characteristics such as cunning, aggressive, self driven, etc… into a researchable definition. In other words, how would a researcher proceed to decide whether or not an individual is cunning or aggressive enough to be a pimp? Therefore, the new definition has taken into consideration the contributions that allow for a consistent and 'quantifiable' research definition of pimp as informed by multiple sources mainly academic definitions and respondent explorations.

The origins of the word pimp remain relatively elusive but current trends and changes in its use indicate a cultural adoption of the term with several meanings and usage. The terms movement from a pejorative association with an illegal criminal career in pandering to items/people that are trendy, cool and flamboyant, highlights the evolution words can experience within the mainstream once adopted. These trends and changes become relevant to social researchers who investigate pimp populations as the many uses of the word can easily fog public and peer understandings of the social phenomena being explored. It is therefore imperative for researchers to filter through cultural usage and assumptions to appropriately identify the action, role, and/or individuals include in their use of the term pimp.

The problematic inclusion of cultural characteristics, gender assumptions, and assumed roles/behaviors have collectively lead to definitions which simultaneously include and exclude individuals from research samples. In engaging with elements of academic research and feedback from individuals within the population, it is possible to create a more comprehensive definition. Increasing the comparability of research on this topic could go a long way to increase cohesion in the rapidly expanding research on prostitution within various disciplines. It could also lead to more specific identification of the various types of pimps allowing for more appropriate distinction between subpopulations. The current body of academic literature and research on pimps is exceptionally limited and is in critical need of more active academic investigation with special focus on the heterogeneity of the worlds of 'sex work' (Weitzer, 2000). The hidden, illegal and demanding nature of pimping populations makes access challenging, but the voices of these individuals and their experiences are crucial to understanding prostitution and illegal criminal careers more fully.

This chapter sought to grapple with the complications inherent in trying to define a diverse, heterogeneous population within social research projects and the appropriate sources to rely on in order to do so. The suggested criteria and overview of definitions throughout various literatures highlights issues that are relevant to consider when trying to conceptualize these populations. Given the already emerging problematic trends within a limited body of

research on pimps, it would be ideal for future research to attempt to correct these issues by paying close attention to the ways in which they define and identify these populations.

Chapter 3: The Jungle: Background Histories

I asked Ken to describe where he came from and was quickly offered the response "the Southside, the rough part, the rough, the rugged, a.k.a. the jungle" which proved to be a frequent response from respondents as they disclosed physical, structural and social conditions of what they identified as the ghetto. Interviewees labeled this context 'the ghetto' and as Wilson and Wacqaunt (1993:33) found through research, " the contrast between ghetto and non-ghetto poor areas is one that is socially meaningful to their residents." As the environment where many respondents were raised, the jungle becomes a crucial social and physical location to examine in order to contextualize the backgrounds and youthful experiences of these individuals. The aim of this discussion is not necessarily to link the jungle to involvement in pimping but instead to address the ways in which respondents reported their interactions and experiences within the site as important features of their narratives. Thus the placement of these narratives within the ghetto is more than an externally imposed and/or assumed concept. In this chapter, the meanings and relationships respondents detailed in relation to the jungle will be examined to provide background, exploration and understanding of personal experiences prior to and at the early phases of pimping.

As there was sizeable range in the time periods in which individuals pimped, the impact of the issues examined within these sections varies in relevance depending on the respondent; that is some pimps have been out of the Game for two years while some left in the 1980's, others were actively pimping the 1950's while others did not start until the 1990's. Historical changes and shifts likely affected the respondents differently, but ultimately, the ghetto, its history and its characteristics as a social environment, was a dynamic foundation for the lives of the individuals interviewed and its influence therefore requires careful consideration.

Development of the Inner city ghetto

Between 1890 to 1940, the birth of American ghetto occurred as mass migrations of African Americans took place from the rural South to the urban centers of the North in search of low skills, industrial work (Culter, et al, 1999; Wilson, 1996; Arnesen, 2003) and reprieve from rampant legal and social racism in the South, creating concentrated metropolitan neighborhoods that were legally and socially defined by race. The South of the US experienced massive population decreases while the North witnessed vast changes in the racial composition and concentration within urban centers based on the following historical migration trends: "Between World War 1 and the 1920s, 700,000 to 1 million moved North;

800,000 migrated during the 1920s. From 1940 to 1970, another 5 million followed." (Katz, 1993:451)

Prior to the 1960s and 1970s, America's ghetto were segregated based mainly on race, that is most residence within these sociospatial areas were African American, regardless of class and/or income, creating heterogeneous social communities (Wacquant, 2008; Arnesen, 2003; Massey & Denton, 1993). Once the Civil Right Act was enacted in the United States, middle and upper class Black Americans were able to move out of the ghetto no longer restricted (at least legally) by practices such as 'redlining' or housing sales/lending discrimination (Wilson, 1996; Nightingale, 1993). Many scholars suggest this triggered the movement of the middle and upper class African Americans out of the ghetto which led, in part, to a collapse in the community as with them went finances, roles models, social networks and community leaders; leaving lower income African Americans isolated within the ghetto (Nightingale, 1993; Wacquant, 2008; Wilson, 1996) resulting in "the separation of income classes" (Katz, 1993: 457). Additionally, during the 1970s, though conditions were improving for middle class African Americans, 'underclass'[17] African American communities were facing rapid deterioration (Wilson, 1987).

Major changes occurred in the inner-cities of the United States in the 1970s and 1980s, but due to academic tensions prior to this time based on scathing reports on 'cultures of poverty', research on the ghetto had been all but abandoned until it resumed in the 1980's. (Wilson, 1993; Wilson, 1987) During this time period, poverty, violence, crime, joblessness, out-of-wedlock births, female headed/single parent households and welfare dependency increased to devastating proportions in America's predominately Black inner- cities (Wilson, 1987; Katz, 1993; Massey &Denton, 2003). This significant gap in data and research has left room for intense debate as to what occurred during this time period to influence major changes in crime levels, family patterns and community violence (Wilson, 1987). Scholars have conflicting explanations for the rise and increasingly worsening state of ghettos but most agree that "violence and family change in the late twentieth century inner cities ultimately

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[17] Underclass refers to the economically, socially and spatially segregated and economically marginalized populations that exist within US ghettos. The concept 'underclass' encompasses the complex intersecting forces of social and economic exclusion and joblessness in America's urban ghettos which creates a marginalized, isolated and impoverished population within the inner cities. Wacquant and Wilson (1993) suggest "the ongoing spatial and restructuring of American capitalism has triggered a process of hyperghettoization" and this has predominately affected already marginalized ethnic minority populations. It is crucial to note, that many not only argue adamantly against the use of this term underclass (Wacquant, 2008; Katz, 1993) but that Wilson himself has recently rejected the use of the term and has suggested that it be removed from the current discourse on black American inner-city life. It is only utilized within these pages as it is consistently used and relied on within the majority of the research on this topic; the use of the term is not meant to imply any degradation nor imposition on the population being discussed.

reflect the recently growing impact of forces that alienate and exclude inner-city residents from meaningful participation in the American mainstream." (Nightingale,1993:52)

The dramatic transformations seen in social trends within America's inner-cities have been suggested to be a result of numerous factors such as racial discrimination and marginalization, deindustrialization, joblessness, welfare reform, access only to second rate education, prevalence of underground illegal activities such as drugs, weapons, and sex trades, increased isolation and lack of future outlook based on dismal prospects (Anderson, 1999; Wilson, 1987, Wacquant, 2008; Katz, 1993; Massey & Denton, 2003) Starting the current discourse in the late 1980s, William Julius Wilson (1987) offered a famous but now highly refuted hypothesis regarding American ghettos which ultimately provided the empirical data needed to support the fact that American ghettos had been hard hit by deindustrialization and major job loss within urban centers. This in turn has led to crippling economic marginalization and highly restricted access to employment offering a livable wage. Wilson (1987) proposed that these major changes within the U.S economy, mainly deindustrialization, intensified social problems and led to radical class changes in the ghettos resulting in the crime, violence and social trends that exist today. Wilson (1987) acknowledges that race is a factor but is not a sufficient explanation for the major changes seen in the 1970s.

The role of race and racism are the core focus of what Massey and Denton (1993) identified as the extreme "racial segregation" and concentration of black Americans in ghettos. While agreeing that factors such as deindustrialization, limited education and employment resources play a role in the continued isolation of America's ghettos, Massey and Denton (1993) assert that race has played a more crucial role in the creation, maintenance and perpetuation of inner cities than is being acknowledged in current discourse. Rather than assuming racial discrimination to be a historical footnote to the current state of the ghetto, they suggest " racial segregation is the principal organizational feature of American society that is responsible for the creation of the underclass" (Massey & Denton, 1993:9) and despite legal and social changes in the U.S during the 1960s and 1970s, segregation persists as blacks are segregated at all income levels across the states. Katz (1993) supports this claim by indicating that in more recent history, African Americans are more isolated than they ever have been historically.

Where Wilson (1987) suggested these social changes were related to exclusion, social disruption, and deindustrialization, Wacquant (2008) proposes an explanation that relies on state policy and programs as the main antagonists. Wacquant (2008) describes this major historical shift in US inner's cities from a sociospatial location where Black Americans from all classes lived together in areas connected by " a broad complement of institutions specific to the group and its reserved space" (3) to the current state of the ghetto wherein race and

class become key features combined with labor market and welfare states resulting in "corresponding deployment of an intrusive and omnipresent police and penal apparatus" (3) leading to the process of 'hyperghettoization'.

Historically in U.S. academia, and still strongly present in current conservative politics, lies the tendency to blame individuals living in poverty for their condition by relying on rationalities of self inflicted impoverishment caused by forces such as the 'welfare ethos', 'cultures of poverty', lack of motivation and overall apathy towards mainstream values and norms (Wilson, 1987; Massey & Denton, 1993). Placing blame solely on individuals within these communities denies the impact of multiple social oppressions and the overall power of structural violence to devastatingly limit individual choice and options. Most researchers when dealing with the topic of U.S ghettos become entrenched in the 'individual action' or 'agency' versus 'structural oppressions' debate and must carefully negotiate a balance between these two elements. It is imperative to acknowledge the overwhelming restrictions and repressions experienced by individuals in the ghetto which include forces such as racial isolation, marginalization and discrimination, pervasive violence, thriving illegal, underground economies, limited educational attainment, restricted access to consistent employment offering livable wages and various social trends which could potentially impede social and economic mobility, (such as teenage pregnancy, single parent households, etc…) while still recognizing the role of individual autonomy and choice. Though these perspectives tend to be placed in opposition to one another, Katz (1993) suggests that instead of seeing these two concepts as separate, due to their ability to strongly influence and shape one another, they instead "remain inseparable, bound in a dynamic mutuality constantly reshaping itself over time" (442). Thus, though the cemented connection between the macro and individual influences, patterns of rejection and acceptance of mainstream values emerge within the context of ghetto, creating a complex web of social conditions and norms which cyclically feed into one another (Anderson, 1999).

Culture of Poverty and the Ghetto

Conservative American politics and policy now have further framed communities in American ghettos as the undeserving poor who lack mainstream values, suffer from welfare ethos, and are entrenched in the so called 'culture of poverty'. Socially and politically in the United States there is an over reliance of blaming the individual for victimization, marginalization and poverty rather than consideration for the social structural forces which influence their lives (Bourgois, 2003; Wacquant, 2008). While not intended to completely strip individuals of responsibility for their actions and decisions, it is imperative to assess the environment and conditions which the pimp is created and thrives.

The strong moral and judgmental tone that comes from the categorization of underclass and the supposed rejection of mainstream values, ignores trends that suggest an increase in the acceptance of mainstream values by inner city residents (Nightingale, 1993; Wacquant, 2008); thus changes in the inner city are not likely based solely on the experience of exclusion. Arguments supporting the embrace of dominant social norms can be traced back to early urban studies such as *Tally's Corner* (Liebow, [2003(1967)] and *Streetwise* (Anderson, 1992) and as it is suggested by many scholars, social patterns of behavior in the inner city can be interpreted as holding of these values, but the lack of means to achieve them (Wacquant, 2008; Nightingale, 1993; Bourgois, 2003; Anderson, 1999). Nightingale (1993) asserts, "the history of mainstream cultural inclusion needs to play a central in any comprehensive understanding of the recent tragedy of inner-city community life" (75) and although this is a crucial element, a slippery slope is encountered when trying to comprehend the seemingly dichotomous existence of trends towards inclusion and the opposing existence of counter cultures within the inner city.

Black males, though they have hopes of achieving job security, education and social stability are undercut by consistent conditions of joblessness within the inner city ghettos of the United States (Wilson, 1997; Anderson, 2000; Bourgois, 2003; Venkatesh, 2006). Contesting notions of cultures of poverty, delinquent tendencies, or non-mainstream values, Wilson (1997) presents issues such as stereotypes, and lack of transportation as great barriers for Black males in achieving access to stable, well paid employment and authors such as Massey and Denton (1993) highlight the role racial segregation and discrimination have played in maintaining systematic oppression of black Americans. Thus, pimps, who are seemingly a product of the urban ghetto environment, are likely from youth, structurally and geographically restricted from pursuing legitimate means of 'making it' as lack of employment in their location is constant (Hodgson, 1997; Wilson, 1997: Bourgois, 2003; Wacquant, 2008: hooks, 2004; Venkatesh, 2006).

Class and Race

To discuss America's inner cities without acknowledging the embedded issues of race and class not only inappropriately suggests these elements are irrelevant but ignores the strength of these social and structural oppressions on the individuals within these communities. Class division within the ghetto, along with the distinct racial segregation creates a 'underclass' and 'racialized poverty' (Wilson, 1998; Wacquant, 2008) unique to American ghettos. These two issues intrinsically intersect within the location of the ghetto and respondents frequently acknowledged the impact of these forces on their daily lives. Respondents breached these issues often and sporadically throughout the interviews and these

topics worked to illustrate the context in which they where describing their experiences and understanding how them.

As is noted in the methodology chapter, respondents painstaking dodged any direct dialogue or engagement with the issue of race. The only exception was James (at one point Michael) who was more than reflective and insightful about racial issues in the United States and the direct impact he felt these forces had on his life, but he was alone in this sense. The topic of race is addressed throughout this chapter due to its importance and relevance to the highly "racialized poverty" (Wacquant, 2008) and "racial segregation" (Massey & Denton, 1993) that exists within America's ghettos. It is, in this context, unrealistic to assume the respondents lacked any observations between their racial identities and their life experiences. Far from lacking in-depth social insight and acute understandings of social interactions on most other issues, it would be erroneous to assume that the respondents carried no insight on this topic, rather, it would be more accurate to suspect they did not want to address these issues during an interview with a white female. In this chapter the restricted engagement with the topic of race is not due to the assumption or expectation that race carries little to no relevance to the ghetto, but rather has been greatly influenced by the fact that little data was offered regarding this topic.

Within American ghettos, familial, educational, financial and social resources that encourage educational attainment and achievement are highly restricted (Roscigno, et al, 2006). Families within these communities have higher rates of poverty, more siblings per household, lower parental educational attainment and overall schools have significantly more poor and non-white students than suburban schools. There is a strong connection between race, poverty and urban education which results in a majority minority racial composition of inner-city school students and because minorities in the U.S are more likely to be poor, there are significantly greater numbers of students that come from impoverished households (Kantor & Brenzel, 1993).

Roscigno, et al, (2006) found that "despite repeated characterization of inner city teenagers as developing an antipathy toward education (Anderson 1990; Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; McLeod 1995), we find no clear evidence of subcultural patterns or of lower achievement or higher dropout rates after we control for educational resources" (2139), therefore these populations achieve at the same levels of suburban schools when resources and investments in education are equal. But ultimately, these resources are not equal and therefore, individuals growing up in the ghetto are still significantly lagging behind in educational attainment and achievement. Many of the respondents did not complete school when they were in their teens and this greatly restricted their ability to acquire employment in the legal economy as the requirements for education and skills required for employment have risen throughout the U.S. and wages have fallen. (Massey & Denton, 1993; Katz, 1993)

The "closed opportunity structure" (Wacquant, 2008) experienced within American ghettos, caused by radical restructuring of the US economy, racism, classism, racial segregation, 2nd rate education, state negligence and joblessness among others, creates a circumstance in which involvement in the underground, illegal economy becomes highly alluring. Exposure to the underground economy is the first crucial step in involvement; in other words, individuals have to know it exists in order to realize the potential for participation. Within American inner-cities, certain illegal activities, particularly drug dealing, are highly visible to members of the community and those who partake are often carrying both financial and social affluence (Anderson, 1999; Bourgois, 2003).

Most of the respondents started pimping in their teens, (two at aged fourteen) a time when teenagers are mostly dependent on their parent's income for support and the acquiring of material goods. In American culture, where consumerism and material possession is obsessively pursued and marketing has refined its ability to target Black inner-city youth, the social pressure to look, dress and present yourself a specific way, places enormous pressure on adolescents to conform to the current fashions of their cohorts (Nightingale, 1993; Kilbourne, 2000). If, and when, their parents lack the means to meet this demand, it is likely teenagers will seek other means to gain the funds necessary to provide for themselves what their parents cannot. Nightingale's (1993) research highlights trends of young African American teenagers experiencing immense pressure and bullying into conformity with expensive consumerism often leading not only to trouble within the household and at school, but also influencing children's involvement in criminal activity to gain the means to access high valued possessions. Like the parents in Nightingale's (1993) work, many of the respondents' parents lacked the means to provide expensive, constantly changing goods for their children due to the poverty they lived in. A trend echoed in the narratives of interviewees when recalling the heroic, iconic presentation of pimps in their neighborhoods which revealed the strong impression left on them by witnessing wealthy, powerful and leisurely individuals in their context of their own poverty.

Discussions about 'the jungle' set the context necessary to explore the experiences of individuals prior to involvement in pimping. These environments set the stage for the specific interactions, experiences and perceptions that may be formative in the development of pimping careers. From here we move onto an in-depth exploration of the respondents' experiences prior to involvement in The Game. Through exploring the major themes expressed by interviewees, reoccurring themes in the background experiences of respondents highlight the breadth of environmental and social variables that may lead to involvement in pimping.

Life in The Jungle: Narratives of Background histories within the Ghetto

The first inquiry this project sought to explore involved in-depth explorations of the personal background histories of individuals prior to entry into the career of pimping. It was loosely anticipated that consistent and clear reoccurring themes would emerge which would highlight clear associations between childhood experiences and entry, but as will be shown within this chapter, in most cases this proved to lack support by the data. The wide breadth of experiences held by the respondents supports the perspective that a background typology does not necessarily exist for this population. Commonalities and shared experiences do exist, but the narratives of respondents strongly support the heterogeneous nature of this group of individuals.

Childhood Households

This chapter will now engage with the various experiences and environments identified by respondents as having great significance to their story. Childhood households, various experiences of abuse, parental employment, and education are discussed to explore the lives of respondents prior to their careers in pimping.

> *"You have to understand that in my area, my community, these things are not foreign to us, it's a means of survival, just like drug dealing, prostitution, armed robbery, we moved into an area that there are pimps in now, I lived in a nice area, a mixed area, I had white kids as friends, the whole American dream, but slowly the neighborhood started to decay, the underbelly started to be visible."*

Two opposite reoccurring themes emerged in the nature of respondents' childhood homes: 1) stable, functional and supportive household environments and 2) households with the presence of substance abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and domestic violence[18]. Stable household environments were not connected by respondents through narratives to involvement in pimping as they were by pimps who described dysfunctional, abusive homes. As is seen below, Michael describes his childhood household without any connection to pimping:

> *Michael: "It was okay, I was the oldest. I got two sisters and two brothers, growing up I can't say we wasn't close knit, but we was pretty close. We looked out for each other and my mother taught me I had to*

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[18] Respondents with functional childhood households were less likely to provide significant detail about their homes when compared to those who experienced repeated traumas. Therefore, the unbalanced quantity of data provided to support discussions on these two different contexts is not meant to indicate frequency.

watch out for my siblings. She worked, she cooked, she took care of us, I mean our household was okay."

Holly: "Was there any alcohol or substance abuse...?"

Michael: "No no no no, the only one who smoked was my stepfather and he smoked cigars. My mother didn't drink, smoke or curse. No violence."

Holly: "So it was a stable household?"

"Like I said the only time I ever seen any type of violence was when he hit her with the phone but that didn't happen no more around me. I am not the type of person that is going to blame my life style on my family. I didn't get no hands on teaching or love from my stepfather, but I didn't have no problems with him either because he was a provider, he made sure that there was food in the house. He made sure we had a home, we moved out of the projects when I was nine, bought a house so he wasn't a bad guy. Except he didn't know how to raise a stepson. He did stuff with my brothers that he didn't do with me, he taught them how to fix stuff, how to paint, my uncle taught me. But it wasn't a problem for me."

In households where parents were divorced, fathers often exited the respondents' lives either temporarily or permanently leaving single, female headed households. Step fathers were present in some households whom respondents frequently reported having tense and distance relationships with.

"It was both of my parents and then they got divorced when I was about twelve and then my old man went to do his own thing but he did come around till I was about 16 or something like that, he moved out when I was about 12" Sean

"Up till about 12 I grew up with both parents. Then my father went away around 12, and that's the last time I seen him." Ken

Michel's father left home when he was young and he grew up with a stepfather. His biological father was reintroduced into his life when he started acting out as a teenager; unknown to Michael at the time his father was a pimp and this reentry into his life is what triggered his own subsequent involvement in The Game:

"I started actin' out in school. I started arguing and fightin' with the teachers, I tipped a teacher's car over and all that, they were going to send me to bad boy school. She called my father and told my father that he needed to come and see me cause I was actin' out and this was the final straw."

Childhood sexual abuse was present in some households that led to changes in living situations and respondents' traumatization and alienation within the household. Sue described the substance abuse that was present in her home which triggered her to also disclose her experiences of sexual abuse by two different family members:

Sue: "My mom was a drinker, oh god she was a drinker, I had an uncle that used to stand up in my doorway, I left home when I was fourteen, went to go stay with my grandparents, it was like right across the street cause like I said they were well off, I had an uncle who used to stand up in my doorway and jack off. He had the biggest goddamn dick I've ever seen. And I was like what the fuck is that, he was like 60/70 years old with this huge thing in his hand"

Holly: "What age was that from?"

Sue: "I think at the time I was 13, I would tell my momma, "uncle is standing up in my doorway every night playing with his thingy" " no, girl go to bed" "girl go to bed" girl go to bed? I said man, ain't no one going to believe this, there were some other people, no one would believe me. (details omitted) He'd say "I'm gonna put this in you one night" I had never seen a man ejaculate and this stuff was coming out of his penis and I was like " what the fuck is this" I had an Auntie, let's go play hide and go seek, you go hide in the closet, between the age of 9- 13 and she would just want to play with me, you know, and she wanted to touch on my breasts and vagina, and I'm like "oh so that is what we are supposed to do" and I would do it, cause shit didn't nobody tell me we weren't supposed to touch each other, this is what we did and it got to be a regular thing, it was cool, I had a cousin, fucking Black Panther, (details omitted) we used to commit all sorts of freaky acts, I didn't know, but it felt good, and because it felt good I was like well I guess it's ok, because I was never taught it was wrong, if it feels good that means it's good. And a church person, we went to church, but I was never taught about the feel good part. And if your family member touching you it's supposed to be okay, it's not okay. Its not okay for your uncles, to lay in bed with your uncle and have sex, me and two of my cousins, we not supposed to do it cause we cousins, but we did it"

James experienced also sexual abuse as a child that continued into his teens:

James: So early on in my life young ladies would always be interested and you probably can't see it, I was younger, I am not going to say I was the most handsomest guy, but I have my certain charm and I tapped into it. Older women were always interested in me. I also survived childhood molestation my very first sexual experience was with an older women, that older woman happened to be my aunt

Holly: "How old were you when that started happening?"

James: "9, talking about an undeveloped mind that has no concept of what is happening here, but as it continued it became interesting"

Holly: "How long did that go on for?"

James: "Probably till I was about 15"

Sarah's father would regular get her intoxicated and proceed to sexually molest her. She recalled her vivid recollection of a specific turning point in these abuses and associated this strongly with her life choices as a teen:

"For one time once, he used to give me liquor and he'd pay me to drink liquor, and he would want to see how messed up I would get and I remember he would be like messin' with me. I used to not remember a lot of it cause I would be drunk or sleeping or outta of it, until one day, he told me he had a surprise for me. Everybody thought he was so good to me, no one knew about him getting me drunk everybody thought I was a daddy's girl and no one even thought and I didn't even find out he was messin' with me until one day he told me to close my eyes, and I did, and he touched my lip with what I thought was his finger but wasn't and he told me that we were going to do something and it was going to be our secret or whatever. And he

took me to some building, I had drank a little bit that day, but not a whole lot like I usually did, so he had me there and was doin' whatever he wanted and then later he told his friend to come to the building, and he came and we had sex and I got really screwed up then, I have always been really shy so I didn't tell nobody about what happened and still even to this day nobody knows and everybody thinks he is just the greatest."

Sarah's entry to pimping was through her experiences in prostitution. Her later entry into prostitution was partly cemented by her father pimping her out as a teen:

"I don't know maybe 13, yeah, I used to always like jewelry and like he never liked me going outside, like he and my mother were really over protective and I used to always go ahead and hang outside, and when I was with him I started noticing he had a lot of jewelry on and stuff and I was being pimped and for a long time I didn't even know that he was the one that was doing it."

In Sean's household prior to his parent's divorce, he regularly witness domestic violence, substance abuse and experienced emotional and physical abuse.

Holly: "So there was drug use in house was their alcohol abuse in the house?"
Sean: "Yeah that too, it was him, it wasn't my mamma, she didn't do none of that, it was just him"
Holly: "What about domestic violence in the house?"
Sean: "Oh yeah oh yeah oh yeah"
Holly: "Was that frequent?"
Sean: "He's be beatin' on my momma a lot and stuff"
Holly: "And you witnessed that as a child growing up then right?"
Sean: "Yeah, yup"
Holly: "So overall it was probably a psychologically abusive environment as well as physically right?"
Sean: "Yeah but I didn't like when he was beatin' on my momma and stuff"
Holly: "Was he ever abuse to you in any other way?"
Sean: "Naw, just I think he used come down on me harder than he had to but other than that I mean he used verbal abuse, physical abuse like or times when he would buy his nieces and nephews stuff but won't buy me things or stuff like that"

Sean later asserted that these experiences along with various negative interactions with women encouraged him to embrace an attitude and lifestyle that would allow him maximum control with limited potential for exploitation and/or victimization. Thus he directly linked his childhood experiences of witnessing abuse and his experiences of 'being taken advantage of' by girls in his teens, as the root causes for him being predisposition to a career where he maintained control, power and dominance over people to avoid victimization. James similarly experienced a wide range of abuse and trauma within his childhood household that he also clearly relates to later behaviors and perceptions. He first described the presence of alcohol abuse and then described domestic violence and abuse shortly thereafter:

"We all like to believe that a little wine after work is social, about addiction, lets just say that drinking was an acceptable behavior in my household, a couple of six packs, you know, my mom never was a drinker, my father was a functional drinker, never understood the nature of the disease, in answer to your question was there addiction in the house not extremely, but it did exist…some nights he would wake us up hitting her and he would be sayin' " tell em', tell em'" and we never knew what he was talking

about. Never to the point where her eyes were swollen but there were slaps, kicks, hits and it is what it is of course my brother being a little older was more courageous, actually I was so afraid of my dad I would pee on myself, and I was surrounded by this violence and I was the littlest kid in the house, I probably started it, habitual liar, one day I was about twelve and I couldn't take it, cause now you're not just beating up my mom you have become, well he was, totally disrespectful to me, you're not going to hit her anymore. And if you if you do, you sure damn ain't going to do it in front of me, unless you ready to beat us both up, my pops don't hit my momma no more. I was twelve and he turned and looked at me and said " goddammit, stay out of my business" "I said pops when it comes to you and her, it is my business, now take your foot off her" and he did. He wanted to go get his gun and he did it before, put the gun to my head"

"And so that was my first experience, it also gave me a bad message as well, it gave me a real mixed message about love why cause my dad beat up my mom because he beat my brother, you know where the real confusion came in Holly? My mother didn't leave him. So what did that tell us kids, this is love, this is love, you stick by your man no matter what, so when I grew up and got a girlfriend and I punched her in the eye for real, and her parents talking about "you can't see my daughter anymore, I'm not going to have this, I'm gonna send your little Black ass to jail" for real. What's the problem what did I do I am sorry in a total state of confusion, but she was just a punk, she was not like my mom, a lot of thought has gone into this, and I start to connect a lot of dots when I start thinking, still putting this puzzle together"

Traumatic childhood experiences likely have a correlation to later life activities for some of the respondents, but because of the great variation in household stability and environment, it should not be assumed that childhood abuse is a sufficient explanation for involvement in pimping. Respondents who reported stable and functional childhood households eventually made their way into the career of pimping despite being raised in an environment that supported a mainstream track. Thus the lack of consistency in disclosure on this topic highlights the immense difference in the backgrounds of individuals who enter pimping.

Exposure to various abuses and traumas led individuals to remove themselves from their households at young ages to avoid further victimization. In leaving home as minors, respondents turned to deviant, illegal activities to realize financial gains. Those respondents who came from stable households were introduced to the Game through similar activities, but their entry often occurred at an older age and relied on different influences than those from dysfunctional households.

Parental Employment

When asked questions regarding their lives before pimping, respondents guided themselves through explorations of their childhood that often included focus on their parents' employment. Though the majority of respondents seemed to respect their parents' involvement in legitimate work and the lives their parent/s were able to provide, they overwhelmingly suggested their observation of the struggles and barely sufficient earnings of

their parents proved to be examples of what they did not want for themselves. Observing the dissatisfaction their parents experienced within legitimate work seems to have acted as a highly discouraging element for these individuals' involvement in the legal job market.

Wedged in-between descriptions of his neighborhood and experiences childhood abuses, James started to talk about his parents work; more than just an issue of the frequency with which this topic was brought up by respondents, James, like many other respondents, placed this topic regularly within a cluster of topics such as environments of violence and poverty, and childhood sexual and psychological abuse, basically identifying it within the category of struggles and traumas of their childhood. The hardships endured by their parents impacted the respondents and effected the way they understood the 'benefits' of legal work. James explained that he had become motivated as a result of his father's strain to provide and earn a livable wage:

> *"I watched my dad as an uneducated man take care of this family, never been hungry, I wore the best clothes, at 11 years old my clothes were tailor made, because they wanted to give their children the American dream. And understand coming from the South, from the oppression ,so their thing was 'mine's is just as good as any other children', and I watched that man work himself almost to death, and I vowed that I would never work that hard to obtain the American dream."*

Even the individuals whose families were above poverty levels, saw 'square' work as a undesirable as they aimed to make considerably more money, much faster than most legal jobs would grant. Michael explains:

> *"I would just like to further elaborate on that I want people to understand that the lifestyle of pimping is called the game, that's what it called, the game, and the purpose of the game was for people who wanted a shortcut to success. They said instead of workin' a 9-5 job they was goin' to get into the game, get some money, become financially stable, but in the process of that course, they got stuck or they got diverted."*

Eric explained that his parents had hopes he would utilize education as means to a future career, but they abandoned this ideal as he became concretely involved in The Game.

> *"Cause you know that is why you do what you do cause you watched your parents work and all that and I don't know about your house, I came from a good middle class family, you know, they owned a house, owned a couple of cars but it looked like they were working too hard. And you know they saved for me to go to college but by that time, I was in the streets then. That's when they bought their first new car when I told them I ain't goin' to go college, I am goin' back to doin' what I have been doin'. I didn't wanna live like that."*

Thus Eric had the option to pursue higher education, and when I questioned his passing of this opportunity he responded quickly asserting *"it's like the lure of the street, there is something about being in the street, not working for your money. My parents, they*

worked their ass off and they could just pay their bills." He was uninterested in education, apathetic to the lifestyle his parents lead ("I didn't want to live like that") and preferred the 'easy', fast money the streets granted him access to. For Eric, rejection of square work and the image of what his future would be if he followed what his parents intended acted as contributing variables pushing him towards involvement in the underground economy. In his case his gateway to pimping was the neighborhood pool hall which his attendance at was also impacted by his parent's work. He offered the explanation that in his youth, the streets carried much more influence and sway over him than his family did, that and lack of parental supervision granted him a combination of factors that acted as catalysts to his pimping career:

> *"I come out of a straight laced family. But like I said the streets half way raised me and my parents so busy working that my parents were on the first floor, I would sneak out the bedroom window. Then once they had night jobs, I really can be out at night, I don't even got to sneak out the window no more."*

Parental careers were also linked to pimping more directly in the interviews. Respondents regularly suggested that most pimps are the product of pimp fathers and prostitute mothers in a very 'matter of fact' tone. Several respondents offered this as an explanation for how pimps get involved and this seemed to be a universally accepted truth. For example, I asked Ken where he thought pimps came from and he responded:

> *"Well pimps come from, well pimps are born, it's already in em' and then I think most of them came from broken, single parent homes too. But not all of them, some of them their daddies were pimps and their momma worked for their daddy. I don't know what kind of home you call that but a lot of them came from that, a lot of they parents were pimps and hos already."*

Only one of the respondents in this research had a parent involved in The Game and that was Michael. Michael's father was a pimp, his mother was not involved in prostitution and his father was present in Michael life until he was three and did not reenter again until he was sixteen years old. Michael explained that this reason alone sufficient to explain his involvement in pimping:

> *"Well I mean I was a pimp for twenty five years so for me where it started was from the beginning. Like you say one of the first questions was something to the note of what makes a person decide to be a pimp, some people have different reasons or excuses but I don't have no excuse! My reason was I attracted and actually it was in my blood, I didn't know it was in my blood and what I mean by that was come to find out that my father was a pimp. But he chose the women he was going to have children by don't be in the life. So my mother wasn't in the life and I have a sister by my father who her mother wasn't in the life. So that's how he did his life and I didn't know that till I was like 16 cause he didn't raise me, I didn't meet him till, well he raised me till I was three but then I didn't see him again till I was sixteen. Going to school, in my mind, I didn't want to work. And I was attracted to what I say and that was what attracted me to the life"*
> *Michael*

This research did not support the "bloodline" trend, which is also proclaimed in many pimp books (Ken & Hunter, 2007; Gholson, 2004; Funches & Marriott, 2002), although this could be due to the limited, non- representative sample used in this project. Ultimately, in this research, individuals were not raised in household environments where they were 'trained' in pimping by parents and their careers, rather, all but one of the respondents' parents worked in the legitimate legal job market therefore, opposition to parents employment can be argued as playing a role in the entry to pimping whereas imitation most likely cannot.

Formal Education

As interviewees negotiated their childhood narratives, their ambivalence toward education during their youth was highlighted. An overwhelming lack of interest, general indifference and ennui in relation to school further supported respondents' decision to seek alternative career options requiring 'street education.' Limited resources and second-rate facilities in their schools were noted in the narratives which seemed to further discourage respondents from engagement with legitimate, mainstream career paths. James stressed these limitations within the schools in his community while growing up and concludes by explaining the discouragement this provokes towards education but also ultimately encourages involvement in alternative paths:

> *"You have to remember we have limited resources in the first place, our schools are not equipped with the same education that other schools have, if you have 5,000 children in one school and four computers, and half the time 3 of them don't work, it's easy, they are going to go to the only resources that can put food on the table. If my children are hungry today, I can't think about becoming Kuma latte and I have to take care of my children by any means necessary."*

This quote highlights a sentiment which was reflected in many of the narratives: the benefits of receiving an education which are realized later in life versus immediately, was discouraging to respondents as they sought a more immediate means of success. Surrounded by poverty, restricted by resources, and dismal future prospects, respondents had become apathetic to the educational systems they were involved in and instead turned to other means of 'education'. Eric explained he dropped out of high school despite the protests of his parents and their hopes he would attend college. I inquired about his decision to leave:

> *Holly: Did you find school boring, or…?*
> *Eric: It was just irrelevant, I had made up my mind that I wasn't going to be no doctor, no lawyer, no anything, so what am I doin' here? My school was in the streets.*

As Eric had begun to get his education on the streets, the application of knowledge and degrees earned through school became extraneous to the career path he saw himself taking. An alternative form of knowledge and training was required for involvement in street

life which fostered the development of forms of social capital which may not be applicable in mainstream, legal employment but are everything in underground businesses. James supported this trend in stating: " *my education became a unconventional one and I was able to become finances without it[19] so this was sending a very bad message to an undeveloped mind.*" Within the activities respondents were getting involved in and seeing huge financial gains from, education was not a necessity nor important to their success. Therefore, multiple respondents reported an increased disinterest in school as the appeal of the streets and various illegal activities continued to gain appeal:

> *"they stressed education by this time I had experienced a few things, see there is gateways to the game, mine is I happen to come in through gambling and I became what we will call a professional street gambler," James*

> *"So that, things just progressed on, and I had gotten kicked out of high school and then I went into full stage pimpin'. " Marcus*

A few respondents claimed that school for them had become boring and unchallenging, thus they quickly lost interest and eventually left.

> *"School work came pretty easy to me, I used to always day dream in class. I always did my work but they did catch me day dreaming a lot." Ken*

> *"he[20] used to always pull me to the side and tell me to stay in school but I was always intrigued asking him questions about how to get this and how to get that and I always told him that I would stay in school but all along I felt like I was being schooled." Marcus*

James described in detail his recollection of events that occurred around the time when he left high school and the impact this decision had on his life:

> *"unfortunately I did not graduate from High School I attended (omitted) at the time I was a freshman or sophomore in high school I had become very interested in the lifestyle, pimping started" James*

> *"I could have, I had to tell my parents and my mom, that was one of the saddest things of the demise of (name omitted) and from that spawned (pimp name omitted) is when my mom would come to school and the teacher would tell her about my behaviors and whatever and I would watch her eyes turn bloodshot red and she would just sit there in pain, cause this here is her baby. I was like "what's she trippin for?" I didn't know. I knew I was doing something wrong but I had no idea it would have such a catastrophic effect on my life, and it did, I guess that good intentions pave the way to hell don't they."*

Non-completion of high school was a reoccurring theme in the interviews as the majority of respondents did not graduate from high school and instead chose to shift focus to involvement in other activities for financial gains. Regardless of whether or not respondents completed high school, traditional education was rejected as a means to achieve success. Respondents who did graduate stressed that they solely did so to please their parents rather than out of personal motivation. As previously noted, mainstream education has little

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[19] Referring to his participation in street gambling
[20] The pimp whose car Marcus used to wash for money

relevance to skill and training in underground, illegal career paths thus there were minimal incentives for respondents to invest time in school. Having already entered illegal activities in their early teens, the decision to leave school was made in connection to these activities. That is, in establishing alternative means to financial success and introduction to 'street life' individuals rejected normative institutions of education. [21]

Conclusion

The jungle sets the stage for the background experiences of the respondents who later became involved in illegal street prostitution among other criminal careers. Set against the background of the American ghetto, it seems apparent that the childhood experiences of the respondents vary in terms of abuses, childhood household composition, childhood household income, educational obtainment and parental careers; thus preventing the emergence of typology or identifiable core variables/traits/experiences that lead to pimping at this stage. At times, some respondents shared similar histories and related those as direct links to their future involvement in pimping while others asserted their involvement was based on other motives and incentives. There may be reoccurring themes within non-completion of school and perceived childhood experiences of economic hardship for this population, as this research suggests, which likely could influence engagement with underground economies. Current, unpublished pilot research suggests that it is histories of childhood abuse, neglect and other traumas that lead pimps to pimping and further asserts that pimps share a similar background typology to that of prostitutes (Raphael & Myers- Powell, 2009) . This research did not support this finding as the variation in the individuals' backgrounds proved too heterogeneous to make a link between childhood victimization and adult entry into pimping. It is plausible that experiences within childhood lay the groundwork for involvement in pimping but for most of the respondents, it is not until later in life, in their adolescence and early adulthood, that the option, idea or opportunity to pimp becomes apparent to them. The ghetto, as the sociospatial environ of their childhood and teens, plays a far more direct role in exposure and introduction to The Game that did serve as critical to involvement in pimping. The next chapter, also set within the American ghetto context, explores the trends and experiences that led respondents to exposure, choices and training in pimping; all leading up to their 'formal' entry into the illegal career.

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[21] Education as a social location also did serve as a means of introduction to some of the respondents; James for example met the first woman who would prostitute for him at his high school.

Chapter 4: Becoming A Pimp: Gateways, Choices and Training

"See there is gateways to the game, mine is I happen to come in through gambling and I became what we will call a professional street gambler" James

Gateways refers to the exposures, activities, locations, and choices that acted as pathways to pimping for respondents. This chapter will explore these gateways as identified by respondents and examine the ways in which these various exposures, experiences and impressions led to direct involvement in pimping. A theoretical approach which remains relevant dates back to the 1950s (Merton, 1957; Cloward, 1959) when various forms of deviance were first explained as cultural adaptations and illegal routes taken when young men have no legitimate means of reaching widely accepted and culturally valued ends. As identified in this research and by Hodgson (1997), a strong drive towards success regardless of obstacles further encourages a 'get rich or die trying' mentality: "Pimps do desire the many cultural goals of monetary success and social status, but they are marginalized socially, educationally and economically. Pimps, therefore, do not have the opportunity of utilizing the legitimate institutional means to realize these cultural goals. As innovators, the pimps employ street survival tactics to obtains status and monetary advantage" (Hodgson, 1997: 125) As most individuals in this research noted, they understood their options for pursuing a successful career within their immediate social world, in their words The Jungle, as a choice between drug dealing and pimping; and they ultimately chose pimping. This chapter will also explore the processes of training and apprenticeships in pimping.

The data regarding entries to pimping in this research is consistent with the finding of Milner and Milner's (1973) research which reported three factors that they believe influence entrance into the life: " early exposure to sex, early initiation into hustling as a way of life, and the apparent irrelevance of the educational system to the lives of Black youngsters (124)" leading to the assertion that the main drive to pimp "seems to be a powerful drive in these youngsters for a feeling of accomplishment (128)."This in conjunction with ghetto angst, frustration, boredom, family or neighbors involved in pimping, and reading pimp books provides the necessary foundation for the development of a pimp (Milner & Milner, 1072; Hodgson,1997).

Exposure

James suggested the concept of 'gateways' in his interview. He used this term in reference to the conditions, choices and 'entries' presented to individuals that lead to their entry into The Game. With only one exception, all the respondents were exposed to pimping through activities and locations that directly exposed them to pimps and The Game. The "closed opportunity structure" (Wacquant, 2008) experienced within American ghettos by

those who reside there, which is caused by radical restructuring of the US economy, racism, classism, racial segregation, second- rate education, state negligence and joblessness among others, create circumstances in which involvement in the underground, illegal economy becomes highly alluring (Anderson, 1999; Hodgson, 1997). Exposure to the underground economy and withdrawal from the formal economy are the first crucial steps in involvement; in other words, individuals have to know it exists in order to realize the potential for participation.   Within American inner-cities, certain illegal activities, particularly drug dealing, are highly visible to members of the community and those who partake are often carrying both financial and social affluence (Bourgois, 2003). Drastic changes in American economies and social welfare have disproportionately marginalized inner city Black communities and thus underground economies have emerged to replace the inaccessible, unobtainable legitimate mainstream ones. Rampant crime and visible underground activity in the childhood contexts of respondents often led to exposure to hustlers, gang bangers, organized crime members, drug dealers and other criminals that in the future would frame pimping as the 'safest' and more glamorous of their illicit options.

The primary critical elements for pimps' entry into The Lifestyle consist of the visibility of pimps in one's community and informal presentation of pimping culture. For some of the respondents, their earliest exposure was within their neighborhoods and that was their introductory exposure to The Game. When questioned about the neighborhood he grew up in Marcus starting to talk about seeing pimps from a very young age, *"when I got here, I was five years old, and I would always see the glamour and the lifestyle of older guys"* and after I asked him about the presence of pimps where he lived he stated:

> *"There are pimps all over the Westside baby. We could work on this side of town until a certain time and then later we would move down to the other side of town where the big money is. Where I grew up at was pimpville. Pimps were all up and down the street."*

Sean did not grow up in Pimpville per se, but had exposure to the population regularly while growing up:

> *"Well I guess you know brought up in the hood, you know I was really young, when I came in contact with the word, yeah yeah when I was young I would see a few pimps here and there but I didn't grow up around a bunch of pimps, but I'd see a pimp here and there you know, but I had a guy stayed diagonally (info omitted for anonymity) he was more of a drug dealer than he was a pimp but uh you know he pimped a few hos too."*

As mentioned previously, the appearance and glamour of pimps was highly influential on the respondents. The lifestyle image that pimps portrayed to the respondents was one that carried an extremely strong appeal.

> *"so one day this guy pulls up, in this long, pretty, Cadillac and you have to understand that we are talking about back in the day this guy had the gangster white walls on it, sunroof top type of thing, and he got out and had a custom made suit, everything fit perfectly, everything was in order, and he had two or three ladies in his car and man, they were Je ne sais quoi" James*

Strutting in bright clothing, driving expensive cars, draped in jewelry and surrounded by women, the image of the pimp and the pimp lifestyle is described by respondents as a sharp contrast to their impoverished backgrounds and bleak future earnings prospects. The glamorous pimps recalled in respondents' youth suggests a powerful impression possibly leading to a predisposition to The Game and openness to its influence. For Ken, who was first introduced to the idea of pimping by meeting a pimp at the age of seventeen, this initial contact was what got him interested in The Game.

> *"It wasn't really common, you saw it somewhat, but I specifically saw it with him. He was always surrounded by the girls and fancy cars and clothes, and he used to always pull me to the side and tell me to stay in school but I was always intrigued asking him questions about how to get this and how to get that and I always told him that I would stay in school but all along I felt like I was being schooled."*

Marcus similarly describes his first exposure to a pimp:

> *" Okay well, at about 17 I started working down in (name omitted) and that area had all of the flashy guys and I remember one day I meet this guy, and he had like three or four women behind him and I was shocked and I was like " man what do you do?" and he turned around to the girls and said "he wants to know what I do" and they told me "he's a pimp" and I was like wow, these are like the prettiest girls you can get, and they seemed to be happy"*

These early exposures set influential and positive impressions on the respondents who were coming from impoverished backgrounds and limited future opportunities. Thus this initial exposure provided crucial to most respondents in influencing their decisions to become pimps as otherwise they may have never had the idea introduced to them. In consistency with what Milner and Milner (1972) report, the more prevalent the figure of the 'pimp' is in a neighborhood and more regular their contact, the more likely an individual is to becoming interested in the lifestyle.

Locations and Other Hustling

Often exposure to pimps come from specific locations and hang outs that pimps frequent. Most often, respondents found themselves working odd jobs in the underground economy to achieve an income and it is in these illegal establishments that they gain exposure to, and interact with pimps. Marcus's description of how he was introduced to hustling is placed within a narrative that contextualizes the experiences of many of the respondents. Beginning with poverty, a dysfunctional family and regular exposure to criminals in the ghetto, paired with rejection of education all led Marcus to underground hustling and eventually pimping.

> *"I think it came more out of being from a poor family and a broken home, and what I had seen around me. In the neighborhood I grew up in, the guys who had the money were pimps, drug dealers, hookers, gamblers, con men, stick up men, and it kind of baffled me, kind of like yourself, that um, I said man, I remember once when I was about, and then I wasn't really interested in school. I went to school and I saw, it just didn't really hold my interest. And what am I supposed to do, go to school, get a job, get married? And I am like "what man, that's it?" and I wasn't really drawn too much to that because I was more fascinated, cause I stayed more on the streets, not that my parents, but like my father, he left when I was young, and so by me being the oldest child, my mom kind of came to me and said "listen, I need your help" so by 11 years old I was trained and dealing (tickets[22]) that was when the subway had first come in, and then I was meeting all kinds of people on it."*

Michael had been warned by his family to stay clear of known criminal locations but regularly attended them anyway which lead to regular contact and interactions with pimps and other hustlers:

> *"My momma told me don't go hang in the pool room, I went to the pool room. All she wanted was for me to graduate from High School and I found myself doing that for her not for me. She wanted my sisters to go to college and they went, she wasn't beatin' on me to go to college she just wanted me to finish High School. So I did that but I was like what is wrong with hanging out at the pool room?"*

Pool rooms[23] in impoverished ghettos often attract a wide range of underground actors who are heavily involved on the underground, illegal economy (Stark, 1987; Polsky, 1967). It is at pool halls where many of these individuals get together to hang out and to play pool, to gamble, and engage in other quasi-legal forms of entertainment. Ultimately, Michael

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[22] Tickets for bets and other forms of gambling. Betting and any gambling outside of casinos are illegal in The United States.
[23] As described my respondents, these establishments/locations are within the neighborhood and is where individuals went to play pool, gamble and sometimes partake in illegal sales/trades.

was introduced to pimps through the pool room as was Eric. Eric described his early experiences of these notorious locations:

> *"I was kind of into gambling and I kind of liked it, I would sneak out of the house at night and go to the pool hall, that's where all the action is, where a lot of the pimps are right? And it's kind of hard not to love that lifestyle because they always had money and pretty cars and pretty women right, so who doesn't want some of that? And then my uncle got the gambling house and so now I am in direct contact with it and I love it. You know I don't know the inner-workings of it, but just on that outside of what I can see, everybody got a lot of money, and have women running in and out all night giving more money. Pimps act like they ain't got a care in the world, and they ain't got no problems and all the women call them daddy, you don't never hear no back talk, and here I am with this girlfriend that's about to drive me crazy right? So shit 'I like this here'"*

It was through this pool hall and regular gambling that Eric was introduced to pimps and found himself drawn to the lifestyle and fascinated by how it worked:

> *"my uncle had an afterhours joint[24] for the gamblers, I was around gamblers right, I was the clean up man so when I would get out of school, I would go over there and clean up, so I got introduced to it at a young age and it always fascinated me. That a person would go out and risk their life, get the money and then give it you because they thought that you had the ability to manage the money better cause really, that's what it be"*

James was also introduced to pimps and pimping through a pool room and he described his involvement there and exposure stating:

> *"So anyway I became a pool shark at 16, that is where I made the bulk of my money for a few years, actually I am still pretty good at the game, its just that as I get older I don't see as well. In my neighborhood you have to understand that the pool rooms were like the meeting place, every criminal type would eventually come through the pool room"*

Gambling, which often takes place within establishments such as pool rooms, seemed to be a common entry point into pimping. Five of the interviewees were introduced this way to underground hustling and eventually to pimps. Thus, for many of the respondents, gambling proved to be their gateway. The concept of a gateway is borrowed James who explains that, *"they stressed education by this time I had experienced a few things, see there is gateways to the game, mine is I happen to come in through gambling and I became what we will call a professional street gambler"*. The connections and networks that exist between and amongst underground hustling communities directly influenced the career trajectory of the respondents.

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[24] An illegal location where individuals go following the close of bars and clubs to continue drinking and socializing.

Social and environmental immersion in street culture influenced Sean's perception that if he was committed to the values and norms of the "code of the street"(Anderson, 1999) then he should make the street work for him:

> *"If you from the streets you've got to work in the streets, but it comes a certain time in life when you've gotta make the streets work for you , when you working in the streets you pay your dues, but once you've paid your dues you get to a certain level a lot of the things you doing at first you don't have to do no more and that's when you start making the streets work for you."*

What was reflected in many of respondents' narratives of their youth was an identification with 'the code of the street' and active decision to become immersed within this culture (Anderson, 1999). Youths who are committed to the code of the street essentially reverse the alienation and contempt they received from mainstream culture back towards mainstream culture further strengthening identification with the code of the street (Anderson, 1999). Thus once respondents had been initiated into this counter culture and became active within the streets, they used their newly acquired knowledge, skills and networks to establish themselves within underground economies. Sean adamantly asserted that "true pimps are born not made", but with exception of one bloodline pimp whose father was also a pimp, the remaining respondents required exposure, various opportunities and childhood restrictions prior to entry into pimping, They were not born pimps, rather, data supports that exposure to the Game is imperative along with an entry point generally through other illegal activities and specific locations.

Choices: ***"Most true pimps- the game chose you, you don't really choose the game" Sean***

Though Sean claims that The Game finds pimps, it is always the case that individuals make the decision to enter the career of pimping and they have several motivating factors for this decision. A main theme emerged in the narratives of respondents when talking about their entry to pimping and the involved the concept of choices; or lack thereof. Previous exposure, to and involvement in underground, illegal activities along with the experience of street life often led respondents criminal records, often felonies. Respondents often pointed to their juvenile arrest records as limiting the opportunities and restricting their future prospects. Thus many of the respondents decided to remain involved in illegal, underground economies but needed to decide among many which to engage in. But the respondents often highlighted feeling as if they had only two choices to select from based on what they were interested in; they could either become drug dealers or pimps. This section will discuss all of these motivating factors and offer insights into why individuals entered The Game by exploring the respondents' understanding of their choices.

Prior exposure to illegal, underground economies often led to criminal records and run-ins with the legal system for respondents. These criminal records and legal troubles restricted their access to opportunities for work and education leading to many of them feeling as if they had no choice but to remain active in the underground economy for future careers. Eric described feeling trapped in this situation:

> *"once you get a record, your odds were cut in half and it was almost impossible to grow up in the ghetto and have no communication with the police because everything that you did was illegal. So all of the activities that I had seen that were gettin' money were illegal, you know it's like if you don't know much you can't do much, and so this was the only option I thought that I had."*

As a result of this legal history, Eric felt constraints as a teenager regarding his future leading him to involvement in the underground economies which set him on the path to becoming a pimp. He felt that his limited opportunities led him two chose between two criminal careers; pimping or drug dealing.

> *"you don't think you got a lot of opportunities, you don't think you have a lot of choice in life and it was either you know, so you become a pimp and pimping was like the less risky one you know, and when you come up in the ghetto , where I come up, it was like the criminals and the pimps were having all the fun, the ones with the ones with everything you know, all the pretty cars, all the pretty girls"*

Multiple respondents indicated that when growing up they not only felt restricted and discouraged from accessing legitimate work, but within the illegal economy they were constrained as well. As is supported by the quote below, several individuals essentially offered a perceived option between drug dealing on the one hand, and pimping on the other; between these two they needed to decide which would be the most advantageous and rewarding for them to get involved in.

> *"Well because guys my age was gettin' caught up and sent to juvenile for tryin' to sell drugs you know I wasn't tryin' to go get no time. I used to hear the war stories when they get out so I wanted something different. Back then the pimps, you wasn't hearing about them going to jail, and those guys would open up businesses and just have money so and it seemed everybody who was into drugs was just gettin' outta jail. So it was you could go to jail or live the fast life, so I chose that." Ken*

With pimping as 'the less risky one', many respondents felt pimping was a better choice then dealing as they described it meant less violence, was less legally risky and entailed less jail time potential for them. Recent changes in the prosecution of pimps in the United States has had a major impact on The Game in recent years, but historically, pimping was relatively 'legally safe' as it was rare for pimps to be prosecuted for pimping. Recent

legal changes have occurred in the USA which direct strong focus on pimps under human trafficking laws that entail federal prosecutions and lengthy prison sentences. Some of the respondents entered The Game during the advent of the USA's infamous 'war on drugs' meaning dealing, using and possessing illegal drugs was a risky business; this made any connection to illicit substances a high risk underground career while pimping was relatively unprosecuted. The majority of the respondents in this research were retired by the time these news laws went into effect, and as discussed in depth in the exit chapter, pimps were most frequently arrested, prosecuted and put in prison due to drug charges as opposed to their connection to pimping. The respondents ultimately were able to assess the legal climate of their youths to decide what underground careers were 'safest' and offered the path of least legal resistance.

In addition, the respondents often sought to minimize the damage done through their activities in pimping and regularly compared it to other 'worse' and more 'morally objectionable' illegal activities: some other activities used for comparison included armed robbery, gang membership or being a con man. James set up this comparison in the following quotes while describing his attraction to pimping due to the immediacy of income potential:

> *"So that is why I was so attracted to the instant success, and there is only a few ways to obtain that, not only in my neighborhood, but in a lot of em', but all of them in criminal activity. I didn't want to be a robber cause in my own mind, I didn't want to actually physically hurt anyone, oh course eventually it happened, even with the females, of course it did."*

Michael also perceived pimping as the most 'moral' and least problematic of the illegal careers he could choose and that was essentially why he entered pimping and how he continued to justify his involvement throughout the interview; that is, by framing it in such a way as to explain 'there are worse things.'

> *" Now everybody is more focused on getting what they can get, it's not going on like it used. I'm not gonna put no black eye on pimpin', pimpin' is glorious, the pain of it is horrifying, is it a lifestyle that I suggest for somebody to go live, no.* **I recommend pimpin' over forgery, highly over being a drug dealer, highly being a stick up man, highly over playin' on a senior citizen for her life savings, you following me?"**

In addition to comparing pimping to other criminal careers, respondents also often sought to highlight what they saw as their legal market options as demeaning, boring and pointless. They acknowledged that there were options for them to get 'square jobs' but that they had no interest as they 1) did not want to work exceptionally hard, 2) wanted to become wealthy, and 3) desired to be in employment that commanded respect and offered status. And when most of them realized it was only low status, minimum wage positions available to them with their limited

education, criminal records and minimal job training, they chose to enter job markets where the training and credentials varied drastically from those in the legitimate market.

"I was 21 and I was gonna do what I was gonna do. And everybody else had been in and out of jail a million times. What was I going to do, go get me a job at McDonald's? Or go get this easy money right here? That I already know how to do, I ain't never did, but I pretty much think I know how to do so that's what I chose." Ken

"I am lookin' at it from the light where I never felt like a job was able to make me rich, I felt like a job was only able to just make you live above all other things and you could go on vacation maybe twice a year, but you work all year long and after you have paid the bills you might not have but $100 right? So that wasn't something that, because, the few people that I knew that went to college, or they got drafted so if you didn't get drafted or go to college, you went to the streets." Eric

Like Ken and Eric, many of the respondents rejected the idea of working in legal market for minimum wage jobs at place like McDonalds that would afford them little respect and power within street culture. But when respondents spoke of their early exposure to pimping, they had a solid impression of it being a career of leisure which would afford them power, respect and status. The social benefits of pimping (respect, power, and status) was/is high within American ghetto street culture. Ken explained bluntly why pimps are often at the top of the criminal rankings in The Jungle:

"The guys, how they do them girls, I guess they think that is how they is goin' to get did, they think pimps are crazy but they treat you different, they don't mess with you, you've got a pass. Gang bangers, nobody in the hood fucks with you they let you go about your business. "We don't want no trouble." "

As outlined and described in this section, it is generally a combination of financial, legal and social issues that eventually lead respondents onto the path to becoming pimps. By navigating the choices they felt they were restricted to in their youths, respondents offered insights into the various motivating factors that lead them to this lifestyle and criminal career. This research supports the findings of previous research that emphasizes the influential impact of the following elements to an individuals choice to become a pimp: exposure to The Game and individuals active in it, adherence to counter cultural values of the streets, and a strong sense of social, economic and educational restrictions and marginalization (Milner & Milner, 1972; Hodgson, 1997). Once respondents decided that they were going to actively pimp and began to 'experiment' and engage in managing prostitutes, many of them found they lacked the knowledge, skills and know-how to be able to successfully act as pimps. At this early stage in their careers, respondents found that the mentorship and assistance of older,

more experienced pimps is what helped them to cement their pimping skills and their place within The Game. As detailed in the next section, apprenticeships in this illegal career were a crucial experience for many of the respondents and was often actively sought following the decision to pimp.

Training

Through involvement in various underground, illegal 'jobs', respondents came into contact with the individual/s who would prove to act as their trainers and mentors as they prepared to enter the Lifestyle. Individuals' entrance into The Game was not quick nor without struggle as it takes time to develop respect, recognition, method and a group of prostitutes to manage; all elements required for successful career in pimping, all of which the older pimps, or OGs[25], assists in. Becker (1963) explains the tendency for deviant groups, in this case pimps, to not only pass on advice and information to one another, but he suggests that " every deviant group has a great stock of lore on such subjects and the new recruit learns it quickly" (39) and it here that the role of the older pimps come into an important role for up and coming pimps. The older pimp plays a crucial role in the development of young pimps' careers and the relationship between these individuals is expressed as one of admiration, respect and loyalty. The 'methods' required for pimping are described by respondents as skills which necessitate advice, and guidance to master. The guidance and influence of older, established pimps typically supported young apprentice pimps in their attempt to break into The Game. By and large these older pimps would advise the young pimp on his technique, would put him in connection with his first prostitutes and act as a father figure. It is often seen as a badge of honor to pass on The Game by older pimps but some older pimps do charge a fee for their mentoring services as " The Game is sold not told."

In the interviews, respondents regularly referenced seeking out their mentors and older pimps in times of need in order to gain advice or insight. After respondents were firmly established within the criminal career and had gained considerable experience, many took on apprentices of their own and were eager to partake in this apprenticeship relationship in the role of the mentor. Thus many of the respondents had experience in both roles within the apprenticeship relationship; in other words, it was common among the respondents to have been both trained and to have experience training others. This is often see as a source of pride and respect as James explained how he felt about a pimp he had help to train and bring up in The Game:

> "So talking about passing the torch that is an honored privilege, its like
> this is my prodigy this is my turn out, so if he becomes successful, that's

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[25] OG is a slang term for older gangster; term offered used to refer to older pimp. In this is thesis, it is used to mean older pimp.

another feather in my hat, because of the knowledge that I gave him propelled him to another level in his game. Actually, some I had even paid for my services, consulted"

References to these OGs were scattered throughout the interviews but were usually linked directly to many of the locations mentioned earlier in this chapter. These local hang out and dives allowed respondents to form relationships with those who frequented the illegal establishments; a relationship that over time would develop into an apprenticeship but only after trust and familiarity had been established and the OG was willing to mentor. Michael reflected in his experience of being trained in pimping and laments what he sees as encroaching changes within The Game that now threaten the old system of 'apprenticeships':

"What happened with me, yeah, I guess I did get trained a pimp named (name omitted) took a liking to me and he told me, he said "man, you've got a gift, girls, they like you, all you have to know is how to take care of your business and how to treat them right." He taught me, you know I already knew how to talk to my girls but then he taught me what to look out for, how to watch other pimps and go from there, and everything else come from trial and error. I even turned out a few guys myself, a lot of the guys may have girls but they don't know how to actually pimp. So older pimps they do put you under their wing, and walk you through some things, cause trial and error it hurts sometimes but it helps, cause sometimes, I don't care how many time someone tells you until experience it you still may not feel it. I can say that I came up under the last of the dinosaurs. The guys now a days don't take time out to be like mentors, you know back when I started pimpin', the older pimps, or the pimps that was in The Game before you, they used to appreciate a fresh pimp. They keep the game going and now it's like you have to be in with your own special crew, not saying guys don't take out the time to kick it with the younger guys but as far as taking somebody under their wing and really taken that time to coach them, they have kind of fallen to the wayside a bit."

Though most of the respondents were trained in the apprenticeship situations detailed and described above, there were some exceptions that also including training but in a different way. Sue received her training from other pimps in a less intensive and less direct way. What had started as her renting rooms to prostitutes in her apartment complex and managing their money led to interaction with pimps which led to what she described as The Game finding her.

"sometimes you don't get legit in the lifestyle of pimpin' but it comes to you without you knowing, what happened when it came to me I can get into that now I can say that being pleasant and seeing people saying "would you help me? I need someone to look out for me I am going to do this I am going to do that" I started off being like well why do you want to do that? But it's the only way I can make ends meet, and I'm like well, I can get you a place to stay and in doing that, because I was one of the fortunate people in that area, very good background, parents had a building, six units, I started renting out rooms, I had a whole floor. And in renting rooms young ladies started bringing their male

friends, and it started turning into I can give you this if you let me do that. I was like you know what we can make it better than that, all the money you make you bring to me and I'm going to give you what you need" Sue

After this 'unconventional' introduction and start to pimping, Sue regularly and actively sought the advice and guidance of older pimps to improve her game and her management skills. Sue described learning some of the core rules of pimping 'the hard way' but through networking and regular social interaction was able to build up the necessary credentials and skills to survive in The Game. Eric also had an unusual entry into pimp and his experience of training was directly linked to a particular time in history and social context that created a unique aspect to his introduction to, and learning of The Game. Eric was drafted into US military service during the Vietnam War and it was there, in opium dens/ brothels where he received the bulk of his knowledge on how to handle both drugs and prostitution. It was the madams, pimps and brothel owners that acted as trainers for him overseas and when he retuned to the USA from Vietnam, he brought these experiences and this knowledge back with him, adapting it to an American context.

Conclusion

Mounting frustration with their current environment of poverty and violence, lack of interest in school, the coming and going of peers in and out of incarceration, the restraints of racism, and disdain toward legitimate work placed respondents in a position to warmly embrace the prospective of a life in pimping. By the time they had reached their teens respondents had already been introduced to the concept of pimping and had frequently encountered pimps. Through various underground establishments and other social locations, respondents had become involved in multiple other forms of hustling within the underground economy of the jungle and often had found themselves familiar with the US justice system as a result. The criminal records acquired by the respondents acted as blockades to the access of education and employment within mainstream economies and society severely limiting their future prospects in 'square life.'

Many were drawn to the 'get rich quick' lure of pimping as they saw in their romanticized perception of what The Game was all about: expensive cars, fancy clothes, and jewelry. Furthermore, they were also drawn to the status, power and respect that was/is afforded to pimps that they felt unlikely to gain in the legitimate work markets. A combination of these experiences eventually led most of the respondent to decide to become involved in pimping as these issues and circumstances convinced respondents that a life in The Game was the most advantageous and ideal path that they could chose.

The relationships formed in underground locations between older, established pimps and the individuals newer to pimping made lasting impressions on respondents. Respondents spoke very highly of those who trained them and formed solid relationships with them; they described a profound respect and admiration for these OGs with whom they developed relationships that lasted the length of their careers. Acting as mentors, OGs served as pillars of stability and advice for respondents when they found themselves facing hardships or experiencing new tribulations within The Game. Older pimps acted as important and highly influential mentors for those just starting off in The Game and these relationships speak to a reoccurring theme within this subcultural group towards apprenticeships and training within this criminal career. Though accounts were given that described alternative training routes, it is apparent that whether initially, throughout, or later in their careers, most pimps had regular and consistent contact with older, more experienced pimps who provide them with guidance, advice and insights into their pimping. This point further highlights the importance of networks within this underground 'community' and emphasizes the presence of 'code' of conduct or rules within The Game.

By exploring issues related to the respondents' experiences of exposure, choices, entries and training, the processes that individuals undergo in order to find themselves pimping, becomes more lucid. The themes explored in this chapter structured the narratives of respondents when they described their process of becoming pimps and were experienced as critical elements of the career cycle of pimps. Through various experiences and combinations of these themes, respondents were able to offer insights into the motivating factors and incentives that led to their involvement in this criminal career. The findings in this research that highlight factors such as limited choices, past criminal records, limited education, exposure, and assessment of risks contribute to the literature by suggesting that there multiple and complex factors that lead individuals into this lifestyle that cannot be simplified solely by explanations of entry based on monetary incentives.

Chapter 5: Pimpology Part 1

The following two chapters on Pimpology will cover the core processes, social connections and methods of management that are vital for a pimps' success and survival in The Game. The aim of these chapters is to explore how pimps function as individuals, with the women that work for them, within their peer networks and within their communities while they are actively pimping. The term pimpology is borrowed from the former pimp and author Pimpin' Ken and in his book, *Pimpology: The 48 Laws of The Game*, Ken suggests that it refers directly to a pimp's methods and skills; he explains "I use psychological warfare, or pimpology, to get what I want, which is often more treacherous than physical abuse. I use words and gestures to get others to act right and do right. (2007: 2)" He further describes pimpology as the mentality and/or mindframe required of a pimp to succeed in The Life. The term is utilized within this project to represent the various complex and multi-faceted methods of participating within this underground criminal career. An individuals methods of interactions, behaviors, presentations, skills and conduct while pimping are all encapsulated within the term pimpology. With this word representing the broad spectrum of experiences within The Game, the following chapters on Pimpology will seek to explain how pimps pimp.

Pimpology Part 1 will explore issues related to the role of money within this career with emphasis on its material and symbolic values. It highlights the fragility of the rhetoric surrounding the insistence that pimping is 'all about the Benjamins[26]' when respondents' narratives suggest far more complex motivations and incentives. Literature and previous research suggests that there is a widely held public belief that pimps are, and have been, in business because they provide protection to the prostitutes who work for them. As has been shown through this and other research (Hodgson, 1997), in the world of illegal street prostitution, pimps provide little to no protection. Thus it becomes necessary to explore how and why pimps exists within prostitution if not for a 'rational' and/or functional purpose. Cross country pimping and multi-residential trends will be explored in relation to the nomadic movement of pimps in this subculture to maximize their income and avoid law enforcement. The various methods of recruitment of prostitutes by pimps are then explored along with the more commonly relied upon recruitment tactic of prostitutes recruiting for pimps. And finally, Pimpology Part 1 will cover the well connected and maintained social and professional networks that pimps rely on heavily throughout their careers for various purposes. All of the above stated themes help to shed light on the modality, tactics, behaviors, motivations and geographic trends of pimps within The Game and thus lay the foundation for understanding pimpology.

"Purse First"

Pimps assert that there is one core rule that must be remembered when discussing pimps and anything involving pimps: that is that *money rules all*. Money always comes first, or as pimps say 'purse first, ass last.' According to pimps, whenever there is a question of a pimp's motivation, most often the answer is money. Pimps claim that money drives The Game, the dedication to it and the persistence through adversity and hard times within it. Thus it is suggested a pimp's number one goal and motivator is to get as much money as quickly and easily as possible. Respondents suggest that it is their obsession with money that drives pimps to be focused, ruthless, unwavering and persistent in their pursuits and handling of the individuals who work for them. Elements such as status, respect and reputation are also important as noted later in this chapter, but respondents claim that money triumphs all values in The Game. Money is not only functional for this community but it is also symbolic of success, power and respect.

In this discourse, money represents power, respect, access to luxurious goods and lifestyles, thus it directly reflects status and is the absolute measure of success. Cash supports a pimp's presentation and lifestyle, and is therefore, deemed the most important element within The Game. Most of the pimps followed a live fast and hard lifestyle that lead to the use of their income on immediate lifestyle maintenance. Some pimps, who suggest they were 'smart', saved money and put money into various investments to set themselves up after retirement. With the exception of the few who saved and invested, most former pimps exited The Game financially broke with limited material good remaining. A pimp's income, is variable, illegal, unpredictable, and often they spent money as soon as they make it. As pimping and sex work are part of the illegal underground economy, the money earned is tax free and completely 'under the table.' Because of this, individuals whose income is from illicit activities need to seek material goods and resources from others also involved in underground economies in order to stay off the grid. Thus when engaging in market activities such as buying cars, renting/buying houses, seeking loans and making expensive purchases, respondents reported most frequently relying on underground economies.

Money in The Game is 'cold, hard' cash that is earned on a variable day to day basis. This particular understanding of what money is and its meaning, relates directly to the subcultural trends within pimping that encourage luxurious living, the obtainment of material goods, substance indulgence and other flamboyant expressions of cash wealth. The need for constant cash intake to maintain The Lifestyle is what fuels the urgency and constant pressure on those within The Game to continuously push for more daily income. Respondents normalized this perception and treatment of money by trying to draw parallels between their relationship to profit seeking and those within mainstream, legal job economies. To them,

their financial ventures were no different than those of Wall Street as they had the same bottom line. Therefore, their narratives overwhelming relied on notions of The American Dream or mainstream American obsessions with money to justify and explain their preoccupation with income.

Eric described the pimps' relationship to money indicating that, *"See there is a soft side to a pimp when it is all said and done, we've got a soft side for money, it sounds strange, and that's how I was for a long time, the more money I got, the better I felt."* When I asked James if he had a preference for how many people worked for him, he responded quite simply: *"I didn't have a preference, sweetie, come on sweetie no, money, you don't even have to be in the life to know that it is all about money."*

Money is also the mark of success in pimping: *"Success is a pimp that wakes up and if he don't get money for two days, he still gonna eat, get gas in the car and bills still be paid. That's what I consider a successful pimp" Michael.* A pimp who is down to one, or even no prostitutes, has to still be able to display wealth, maintain luxurious lifestyle and portray an image of living the high life. This is not only important for attracting new women to work for them but also to maintain respect and status among the networks of pimps. Additionally, decreases in numbers of prostitutes working for an individual pimp means instability in income and income loss, thus pimps seek to recover from the loss of prostitutes as soon as possible, so as to not interfere with their budgets and lifestyles.

Pimps also undermined their own assertion of 'cash as king' in their claims to treat money as irrelevant and trivial. Respondents would often make statements that undermined their 'worship of cash' by indicating how they treated cash as disposable, and as a resource they could waste and squander at will. Their ability to waste and treat cash as inconsequential served to represent their power, and status within in The Game. Respondents told stories and used quotes to describe this selectively ambivalent attitude toward cash, but none phrased it as poignantly as Pimpin' Ken in his writing when he explained,

> "If any of you suckers want to know what a pimp can do with that
> money that a bitch can't, he can go to the motherfucking hardware
> store, get some duct tape, tape that money to the wall and piss on it!
> That's what a pimp can do that a bitch can't!" (Ken & Hunter,
> 2007:6)

The above quote serves to highlight the contradictory attitude and treatment of money that pimps exhibit towards money and income. Thus, while claiming their entire worlds revolve around the almighty dollar, they also seek to prove their power and status by minimizing its importance to them; even if it means symbolically and/or literally, pissing on it.

Money will play a central theme and role in this chapter and this thesis for the reasons explained above as respondents assert that it negotiates and writes the rules of The Game, attracts people to it, keeps people in it and essentially keeps it alive. But although the obsession with cash permeates The Game, factors such as respect, pride, status, reputation and control did frequently dominate the narratives of respondents. It is therefore questionable the extent to which money acts as the sole and sufficient explanation for engagement in pimping and various behaviors exhibited within it. Money within The Game, as functional and symbolic, also carries a specific contextual meaning for pimps but as the data suggest, money can and does represent something very different to what pimps suggest it does. Frequently 'money' seems to be utilized as an excuse or justification for behavior as opposed to acting as the motivating factor. Reliance on the idea that money rules all in The Game draws attention from some of the other various elements which also play a significant role within this subculture. Therefore, though pimps claim cash to be the first and foremost crucial element within pimping, the emergence of other factors and motivations are highlighted throughout the following sections that rival the placement of cash as first and foremost. Money is an important factor within The Game, but often throughout the following explorations of various elements in pimping, other incentives and factors play equally as important roles in the identity, behaviors and actions of pimps.

Why Have a Pimp?

At the core of most pimp controlled prostitution literature and research is the question: Why do individuals have and stay with pimps? Most pimp-prostitute research focuses on how pimps recruit and hold individuals in prostitution (for example: Hodgson, 1997; Pines, 1982; Williamson & Cluse-Tolar, 2002) without first addressing how pimps establish a need for their services. These explanations are complex as explored in the recruitment section of this chapter, but pimps first and foremost offer a simplistic explanation for their services: they create the need for their services. Pimps perpetuate the need for their service by directly targeting individuals already involved in prostitution, those who have recently entered independently or those who are most likely/vulnerable to entry into prostitution (mostly female teenage, runaways from broken homes: Silbert & Pines, 1982; Williamson & Cluse-Tolar, 2002; Nixon, et al 2002; Kempf-Leonard, 2007).

Certainly women can and do function as independent prostitutes, referred to in The Games as renegades or outlaws, within prostitution, but these women are generally older, well versed and experienced in The Game, and often did have pimps at one point (Nixon, et.al, 2002; Williamson & Cluse-Tolar, 2002; Bernstein, 2007). Bernstein's (2007) research implies that as women's knowledge and time in prostitution increases, their dependence on,

and use of pimps decreases. Thus generally, "Those who were younger and less experienced were more likely to rely on pimps to handle the mundane organizational details involved in street prostitution: figuring out how to contact, select, satisfy clients; learning how to dress; and determining on what streets to stand to generate the most income (Bernstein, 2007:54)." These older, more experienced prostitutes that function without pimps are a major issue for pimps. Becoming an independent, renegade prostitute is part of an on-going process that comes with experience and time in The Game for some prostitutes who remain involved in illegal street prostitution.

Renegades are the nemesis of most pimps as they demonstrate the ability to prostitute without a pimp and therefore they are a major threat to pimps. To deal with this, pimps turn the attention of those that work for themselves and themselves to renegades to ensure they maintain control and power within the market. Richard explains that pimps have an established code of conduct between themselves and the women that work for them so that they are able to identify renegades. Because of this system that are able to target these individuals. Richard describes how this works:

> "So once you kind of get into the groove of it, then they had certain sides of town where they would let you work at without problems and so you have got to connect because in most areas they won't let you work without a man, so it's kind of like it's complicated but it's not complicated."

Because *"most areas won't let you work without a man",* renegades are blocked from working on the high traffic and most frequented ho strolls to get customers thus limiting their incomes and clientele. Eric echoes the theme is indicating that:

> "they try the streets, it don't work but they come back cause they don't have no perceptions, they can't make the kind of money they could make if they had a pimp. Cause a lot of the strolls in town, if you ain't got no pimp, you can't work. ...That is because if we let freelancers come on the strolls, they are going to interfere with our money. The point is with the renegades, if you want to work up here, you gonna have to pay, if you work up here, you gotta pay, if you don't, you can't work up here."

As described in the recruitment section, women who have pimps will first actively try to recruit the individual into the stable and it is when that does not work that different tactics are employed. Enforcement of 'renegade free zones' by pimps and those that work for them is menacing, violent and often brutal. Those working without pimps on the strolls are harassed regularly verbally and physically until they either leave the site or get a pimp. A pimp's stable is instructed to attack and run off any women working in the area without a pimp and pimps regularly rob and physically assault renegades. This method instills fear for safety in renegades, impedes their ability to work, and restricts where they can get clients. This

circumstance sets up the biggest myth that assists pimps in recruiting women into their stables, the myth that pimps provide protection. Once a woman is with a pimp, a pimp provides protection from *other pimps*. Pimps do *not* protect against the police, the public and/or clients; they solely can provide security against assaults and harassment by *other pimps* (Hodgson, 1997).

Ultimately pimps contribute to the violence experienced by prostitutes when they work independently in order to 'convince' them to get a pimp. So "Pimps use of threats, assaults and other methods of persuasion obligate prostitutes to acquire and need the services of pimps (Hodgson, 1997: 89)" thus they produce a need for their own services. If pimps did not do this, they believe it would set an example to prostitutes that they can work independently in prostitution and not work for a pimp. And because working independently means not surrendering ones income to a pimp, pimps lose out on income. Thus it is in their best interest to ensure that outlaw prostitutes are kept off the tracks where the women that work for them are. This approach only covers independent prostitutes working on the streets that are already involved in prostitution, so this leaves many individuals' involvement with pimps unaccounted for. The following section will explore in detail the various approaches and techniques utilized by pimps in order to recruit individuals to work for them.

Recruitment

A pimp's survival in The Game directly depends on having individuals who are actively prostituting and supplying them with regular income. Maintaining a constant group of women to work for them is a core goal of pimps but they actively and consistently seek to grow in their numbers in order to increase their status and incomes. Women who exit prostitution or move to other pimps must be replaced and new prostitutes are always sought to keep up variety for customers and to maintain cash flow. But recruitment is no easy task for a pimp. A pimp must convince either a non-prostituting woman to sell herself through sex and relinquish all money to him, or convince a woman involved in The Game to choose him over their current pimp.

Recruitment is where the mental game of pimping truly begins. The relationship forged during recruitment must be strong enough to keep the prostitute not only committed to the pimp, but also loyal to and active in prostitution as a lifestyle. New loyalties between the new prostitute and to both The Game and the pimp, must be secured through re-socialization into the world of sex work (Hodgson, 1997). Pimps deliberately target a specific population for recruitment knowing who is most susceptible to involvement in illegal sex work and is less likely to resist engagement in illegal street prostitution (Hodgson, 1997). A fair amount of research now offers insight into the recruitment methods of pimps and offers general relevant information about prostitute demographics (For example see : Nixon, et al 2002;

Raphael & Ashley, 2008: Silbert & Pines, 1982: Kempf-Leonard, 2007: Williamson & Cluse-Tolar, 2002). This becomes relevant when discussing pimps and recruitment because in order to fully appreciate the process of recruitment it is necessary to assess the literature on those recruited prior to evaluation of data from pimps to paint a more panoramic picture of this process.

'Recruitment' will explore the processes of recruiting individuals into prostitution by pimps. It will seek to describe the various ways that pimps and prostitutes get individuals involved in prostitution or convince them to work under a specific pimp. There are two key populations that pimps and prostitutes pull recruits from and that is: firstly new turn outs, and secondly, women who are already engaged in The Game. There are key differences in how these two groups are recruited and the tactics used to get them to prostitute under a pimp.

Typical Demographics of Women Entering Prostitution: Entrance Factors

This section will firstly address the various background experiences of women who become active in prostitution. It is valuable to visit the literature on this topic to shed light on the various vulnerabilities and situations pimps manipulate to achieve their goals. Without context and data, what pimps accomplish seems implausible thus underlining the importance of covering the situations of women who are most likely get involved with pimps.

Most women indicate that they entered prostitution out of economic necessity (Silbert & Pines, 1982; Williamson & Cluse-Tolar, 2002; Dalla,2002) and when first entering "prostitution is not viewed as a negative, but is instead perceived as a survival strategy to help alleviate financial burden." (Williamson & Folaron, 2003: 275) Pheterson (1993) asserts that "For many prostitutes who endured early abuse, it appears that prostitution is a combination of economic survival and psychological reaction or reparation (54);" implying that there may be several factors that inform entry into the lifestyle. Single mothers, women with little educational or job training, drug addiction and/ or mental health problems may have trouble accessing legitimate means of employment, thus, prostitution seems a viable option for generating an income (Williamson & Folaron, 2004; Raphael & Ashley, 2008). Many will engage in survival sex to support addictions, get food, shelter, and other basic necessities while some are pimped out by their families to support household economics and many others are recruited while homeless by pimps (Chapkis, 1997; Raphael & Ashley, 2008).

According to research the average age of entry into prostitution is roughly 16 years; Silbert and Pines (1982) cited 78% of respondents were under the age of eighteen when they started while another study reports 56% were 16 or younger (Raphael &Ashley, 2008) at their time of entry. Based on these findings, and those of other projects, it can be taken for granted that the majority of women enter prostitution under the age of eighteen and legally speaking,

as minors. I asked Sean what the prime age range for a prostitute was and he at first indicated 18-25 years old but then went on to state:

> *"And what's the realistic range? I mean the reality of it... 12-45, maybe some bitches even 50 years old, but the older they get, they they ones we call the hard head hos, they ain't gettin' the pimp no money and really all they doing is getting money to get high"*

Aware of the illegal nature of what he was disclosing and not wanting to discuss underage prostitution in further detail, Seam quickly shifted focus to 'hard headed hos' who were considered senior citizens in The Game. Other respondents also echoed this reoccurring theme in being willing to acknowledge that under 18's were involved in prostitution or even worked for them but they were unwilling to speak in detail about the circumstance due to legality.

Girls make up the majority of teenage runaways, most fleeing abusive households and for girls, the most commonly abuse they were fleeing was sexual (Kempf-Leonard, 2007). Research indicates around half of all prostituted women were runaways when they started (Silbert & Pines, 1982; Williamson & Cluse-Tolar, 2002) and research conducted by Farley et al, (1998) indicates that the majority of women have in the past or currently have/are experiencing homelessness. Homelessness and/or running away, for adolescent females in prostitution, has been linked to getting kicked out of the house, parental neglect/ abandonment and/or severe abuse (Raphael & Ashley, 2008) which has been shown to play a significant factor in entry to prostitution (Vanwesenbeeck, 1994). Homelessness places women, many of whom are from dysfunctional households, have low educational training, have never held a legitimate job, are underage for employment, and/or have substance abuse problems, in a particularly vulnerable position and often they find themselves with little options for survival.

Overall, research supports that pimps are most successful in recruiting when they target vulnerable young women who are homeless, underage, in unfamiliar surroundings, runaways, and have no idea how to make it on the streets. This is more than just the observation of various research projects, but pimps themselves explicitly explain how they take advantage of women in considerably fragile states. Below are quotes from respondents' in response to being asked about the backgrounds of women in prostitution are or why women prostitute. Their candid responses highlight that they are more than aware of, and willing to take advantage of, the various predicaments individuals may find themselves in.

James explores the economic motivations behind many people's entrance to sex work along with the presence of low self-esteem and disenfranchisement as crucial factors to an inclination to entry:

"we have what's called low self image of self and what happens is this becomes a way of getting attention, 'wow, she's so sexy' and you being a woman you know the power of the womb, let's not kid ourselves if we are grown, and it gives so much sense of power, lots of reasons, well in my neighborhood one of the major reasons behind prostitution was poverty. Here is a guy driving around appearing to be very successful, who in the hell don't want success, here's a girl, 16, with a baby, no formal education and here is a 25 year old guy just like that offering you a way out"

Again, relying on abusive histories and desperate situations, pimps continued to explain the background factors that can lead individuals to prostitution. The background circumstances that Ken highlights shine light on the role of family dysfunction in the background histories of those in prostitution. He explains that all the women who worked for him came from abusive, broken families; thus he took advantage of this scenario repeatedly in order to recruit women to work for him. He also suggests he recruited women that were engaging in 'survival sex' to meet their basic living necessities and this created extreme vulnerability in those individuals.

"A lot of times they came out of situations where they came up poor, a lot of them don't have a relationship with both parents, a lot of them got kicked out and were living from pillar to post anyway, and they one step away from sleeping on a park bench. And they just kind of, they want to be a part of something. Even if they threw all their money out they want to be part of something. They want to have a roof over their head, they want some stability and make fast money too because they don't have a home, you know what I am sayin'? Everybody that was with me, was living pillar to post, stayin' here there, clothes were scattered all about town, I am talking about every single one of them. None of them had both parents, it was always a single parent and that parent was abusive to em', and they have no type of relationship with them, and they just done burned all the bridges around them and they really had nowhere to go. I am talking about every single one of them, I ain't never met one of them that came from a functional family, everyone was dysfunctional families." Ken

Richard explains his perception of how childhood sexual abuse connects to prostitution, and his insight into the continuum of violence experienced by most women involved in prostitution, again, show how pimps are acutely aware of the populations from which they recruit their stables and chose to exploit these characteristics and life experiences.

"Well people get into it for all different kinds of reasons right? Like a lot of girls they be molested at home and momma don't believe them, so they run away, so now once you run away, you still have to sleep and eat somewhere, so then I come along, so if you do what you do and I am going to make sure that you are cool and once you see that I am going to do what I said I am going to do, this is what you do, cause you've been gettin' molested at home since you was ten, you know what I mean? So

it's kind of like this is what was happening all the time and so it's kind of easy for you to go in there, plus the economics ain't so bad. And I mean, you know, how many old men have tried to mess with you? You see what I am sayin'? So if your self-esteem or stuff ain't right at home, you might go. So once you go once, 'oh this ain't so bad and I got $200 for this' you know what I am sayin' and 'my uncle has been doin' this to me for free' and now when you meet me, if I can treat you half way right, and cause a lot of times there actually be a lot of potential, and once I show you some attention, you'll keep doing whatever it is if I treat you half way right, and this is all you know to do anyway, we'll stay together and it's really just as simple as that if you think about it. If you talk to the women, most of them have some childhood issues, and most of the men, when you talk to them, well, when I meet her, now sometimes you'll catch em' and they'll just be clueless, their momma just be gettin' high, their daddy be gettin' drunk, ain't nobody payin' the child any attention, so now I am the only one payin' her some attention, the momma and daddy glad she ain't there cause it's one less person they've got to feed" *Richard*

The presentation of wealth to individuals living in extreme poverty and are struggling to live day to day, also assists pimps in recruitment. A pimp's ability to present The Game as all about glamour and money lends itself to getting women involved in prostitution and many respondents indicate that the promise of wealth and luxury is in part what attracts women to get involved in prostitution. Eric supports the usefulness the lure of luxury has on individuals, especially individuals who are marginalized and find themselves in desperate situations.

"New turn outs that's what I am talkin' about, the ones you find at the bus station, they ain't got nowhere to go. You find people at the greyhound, take em', feed em', cloth em', you understand, let the girls talk to em', let the ones in the house already talk to em; they funna let her know what is expected of her, what she has to do in order to keep getting what she is getting. See a turn out, a new turn out, she sees the flashy things, she sees the diamond rings, she will see the nice dress, she sees the girls sittin' in the back of a beautiful car, 'I wanna do that, what do I have to do?' Eric

All of these explanations offered by respondents lend themselves to explain some of the targeted and focused recruitment methods pimps utilize. The above descriptions are consistent with the explanations offered by prostitution research that identify the background typologies of women involved in prostitution. After identifying how pimps target specific individuals, and which individuals, for recruitment have been discussed this chapter will now move to explore the methods used by pimps to recruit.

Methods of Recruitment: Seduction, Strategem and 'Stable' Recruiters

Contrary to the public and media image of the pimp which "conventionally depicts the pimp as using physical, coercive means to compel women into prostitution" (Hodgson,

1997: 44) pimps' methods of recruitment are often much less aggressive and far more complex than brute force or outright violence. Hodgson's (1997) research identified two main means of recruitment used by pimps: 1) seduction and 2) stratagem. These two forms of recruitment differentiate based on the level and extent of pimp's disclosure about their intent, role and desired outcome. Hodgson's categorizations, though helpful, tend to strip individuals who get involved in sex work via these means of their autonomy or self-determination by portraying all individuals working for pimps as innocent, unsuspecting victims of vicious, calculated ensnarement. This is especially true with the seduction method (Hodgson, 1997) where unsuspecting victims are naïve and are victims of manipulation and coercion. Along with this tendency to infantilize women recruited into prostitution, Hodgson (1997) among other researchers fails to account for the majority recruitment work done by women in prostitution. This differentiation is used below to outline and frame various approaches but overall, it is with caution that this dichotomy is utilized as it frames prostitutes as either naïve, victims, or as willing, fully informed participants. Furthermore, most respondents in this research described entrusting the women who work for them to handle the majority of the recruitment as the main source of new 'stable' members. Thus, *recruitment through the stable* should be accounted for as a major recruitment method utilized by pimps even though not directly.

The first form of recruitment Hodgson (1997) identified is **stratagem**; this method utilizes an 'honest', up-front approach where the pimp makes it explicit and clear that he/she is a pimp. It is in this approach that pimps attempt to recruit by selling the notion of a glamorous lifestyle, wealth, false promises, and offers of protection and assistance. It is this method that pimps themselves assert they use most frequently and rely in when they are recruiting. Alternative methods are seen as dishonorable within The Game and reflect a lack of mental 'game' and skill. This method is generally used more with women who have some experience in prostitution as they are less likely to be unnerved by such a proposition. Sean describes below how this method works:

> *"First of all, you have to let her know that it's in her best interest and that's not an easy job. One of the main things is that if she wants to submit to you and hand you total control that you have to show that you are able to control, to led, she has to see potential in you, she has to see some things that you have done she has to see that being involved with you will take her places that she ain't never been. She has to actually envision herself going to another and see that's part of a pimps job is to sell that vision you know to paint that picture. So that's why you've got to have the gift of gab you know and on top of that you have to, you know, if you don't have a vision and you can't be no pimp, unless you a gorilla pimp who has no tactics, unless you good at manipulation ... the thing is the female has to feel that messing with you is the best choice that she could possibly make in her life and then you have to let her know that if*

she was going to be doing this, basically that she needs you, you have to key into that inner desire , like I said you have to uh demolish... demolish everything that built up in their mind and rebuild, reprogram, you're basically assembling them"

When Sean is talking about choice, he is referring to a process called 'choosing' within The Game. This is when an individual who is already involved in prostitution chooses to go with a new pimp. They can either be working as an independent or have a pimp when they decide to work for a new, different individual. There are specific processes put in place for 'choosing' that are described in the 'Rules of The Game' section, but as relevant to recruitment, pimps seem to reserve a stratagem approach for individuals with some prior experience in prostitution.

The reputation of the pimp is an important factor in the recruitment of women who are already involved in The Game. Pimps who are well connected and active in underground networks of pimps have earned respect, and credibility in the streets granting them a specific, individual reputation. Sean explained that this was important factor when trying to recruit women already prostituting:

"that's one of the reasons why it's so important for a pimp to have good street credibility cause if that's the case then his reputation will precede him, you know what I'm sayin. She might have already heard about you but even if she hadn't, I'm pretty sure she will. And if she doin' her homework, doing her checking, she gonna hear good reports"

Hodgson's (1997) concept of **seduction** refers to pimps method of befriending women, offering them help in the form of food, shelter, clothing and support, often becoming romantically involved with them and slowly creating a romantic bond and material dependency. When using the seduction method, pimps do not disclose that they are pimps initially; therefore, the 'unsuspecting' female generally has no idea what his intentions are. Generally speaking street pimps lack respect for this approach as it does not allow them to use their true pimping skills and relies on 'romantic manipulation' of which they do not approve. I asked Sean about this approach to which he explained to me that:

"I'm not saying it ain't true or that it doesn't happen, but a person that is really trying to feel that person out.. I mean you do have some chicks that you have to wine and dine or whatever, if she understands that he is a pimp, and he ain't never and he never said that he wanted her to be her woman or this or that, then there is no deception. But this whole thing I am going to be your boyfriend or your man, but when you say I am going to be your man with a pimp that different, that means I am going to bed you pimp . But if a pimp every uses the word boyfriend then that voids the whole pimp thing out"

He further asserted that *"Nah, I ain't going try to deceive anybody I'll let them know straight up what it is. A pimp is going to get straight to the point, cause he ain't trying to*

waste his time or yours." But even though Sean rejected this approach he does use tactics that are strikingly similar though they lack a false romantic premise. These pimps play off of the same emotional manipulation and factors in order to achieve a compliant and willing prostitute. Sean described that : *"the main thing that a pimp preys on he she's a woman's thirst and hunger and feeds on her, some feed on the thirst for compassion, the yearning for love and acceptance which some women don't get a chance to get cause some sort of disruptive situation in their home or some type of a mental/emotional thing whether they are dealing with the home situation or just a personal thing with themselves, or whatever it may be, so you know a pimp."*

The physical presentation of the pimp is vital for attracting individuals to The Lifestyle. Potential recruits need to be convinced that material goods and a luxury lifestyle awaits them should they become involved in prostitution and the pimp is the first point of reference for this. Eric supports this stating that *"see a pimp has to keep his front in order to keep his game, if there is one thing a person don't know, it's if a pimp is down on his game, you will never know it cause he is going to keep his front, he is going to stay clean, because anytime you might make a catch."* Michael also indicated that recruiting was easier when one's presentation was convincing *"Like when I was pimping, girls are attracted to what they see. You know like I have always been a dresser, you know I always drove a Cadillac so girls was attracted to the lifestyle"* Eric further described the need for pimps to always be actively ready to perform and present themselves through their personalities and appearance*: "See when you see a pimp, you ain't never going to see a pimp leave the house not dressed caused he don't never know when he is going to catch, his broads might bring another broad to the car, and she might be coming to the other side, she might be coming to look, so now I got another one to add to this stable."*

There is a fair amount of honor associated with the notion of using one's mind and powers of persuasion to recruit and control in The Game and it is because of this that many respondents did not openly admit to the use of tactics that undermined these values. But some pimps did suggest that they used methods similar to seduction in that they did not let on to the fact that they were pimps when they were recruiting. They instead actively concealed this reality and tried to develop trust and a relationship prior to turn out. James offered one such example of recruiting an exotic dancer:

> *"Some, turn outs, no they are naïve, it's me and you against the world, breakfast in New York and lunch in Paris baby, we are going to conquer the world and your pussy is the vehicle which we are going to use to do it. Don't trip baby and we are going to buy this big farm and we're going to do this at the end of the day, we'll get the big farm and raise our children, what's your ambition, what do you want to be, if you had ten million dollars right now, what do you want your own beauty shop, what do you want to do, you want to go back to college, want do you think…. Here's a college girl, can't pay her tuition, so she goes from being Mary during the day to Sugar Cane, swinging on the pole*

to pay her tuition, the club owner knows that basically she is a sweet girl, but she's fresh meat, and the fresher the meat the higher the price, so I come in the club one night, and I don't have anything to do and I might be in one of my recruiting moods, she sees me I give her a hundred dollar tip, and I tell her, 'nah, I don't want you to give me no lap dance baby, I don't think with my penis, why don't we have a cup of coffee after work?' and when she comes out my ride is shiny, my clothes are perfect we are talking Armani all custom made, and listen 'you are already in the game baby, I am gettin' ready to head out to Vegas, I am going to have my car sent out next week but I will have a rental, why don't you come out there with me? What do you make here a night? $500 or $600?"

Most of the respondents reported using their 'bottom bitch' or main prostitute to do the majority of their recruiting. The details of how the 'bottom bitch' accomplishes this are not clear as the pimps were not able to offer insight into that; they were sure that competition amongst prostitutes and good standing with the pimp were the main motivating factors to perform this task. Playing off of competition and tensions between the women that work for them, regularly bringing in new recruits fared well for the 'bottom bitch' by allowing them to maintain their position and favoritism within the group. Sean described this relationship: *"If she has really stuck around for awhile she would be the bottom ho, she would be the main girl she would be the trainer, the recruiter, and the straightener and the one pimp feels like he can trust."* Eric also reported relying mostly on his 'older lady' for recruitment: *"The older lady that I had helped me to get other girls, so she was my recruiter."* I asked Eric what they advantage of bringing more women into the house would be for the women who worked for him to which he replied: *"Because sometimes they feel as though then they have to work less, but they don't and they also think that if they do that, they might get an extra night with their man, they might get an extra night with their pimp, just them, just for the convenience of it."* Ken described that the majority of his recruitments happened in this way *"it would be real cool, I would come home and there would be new girls there and they'd say 'daddy look we done brought somebody new here, she wanna work' ' y'all know what to do, train her' and there it go."*

The use of 'bottom bitches' and other prostitutes for recruitment conflicts with previous research that highlights solely the role of pimps in seeking to recruit women into prostitution. Thus, the data in this research challenges the notion of pimps as the main predatory recruiters and manipulators (Pheterson, 1993). Pimp literature itself also downplays the reliance on this method as most authors are seeking to highlight their prowess and 'macking abilities' to recruit; for which the use of prostitutes does not necessarily reflect. It is through recruitment that women working for pimps begin to take charge of tasks that are assumed to be that of a pimp and the roles become less 'black and white' between prostitutes and pimps. This coupled with other tasks that women in stables are known to be responsible for suggests a more active role in the recruitment, maintenance and 'holding' of women in

prostitution.

This section has explored and presented the stratagem, seduction and stable methods of recruitment used by pimps using accounts offered by respondents to demonstrate the application of these. Because respondents suggest that their tactics and approach vary radically depending on the circumstances a woman is in, there needs to be flexibility and various options for approach. The approaches generally vary, as demonstrated in the narratives above, according to a woman's experience in prostitution or lack thereof. Respondents explained that new turn outs, or women who are new to The Game, require different recruitment tactics than those who are all ready involved. They describe this criteria as the main means by which they select their method of recruitment. So contrary to public depictions of pimps kidnapping, abusing and directly coercing women into prostitution (Pheterson, 1993; Hodgson, 1997), pimps tend to take a more covert and blurred approach to getting women involved.

Pimps and other third parties can and do, play a role in the recruitment of women into prostitution (Silbert & Pines, 1982; Kennedy, et al, 2007; Hodgson, 1997). Though not denying this trend, Vanwesenbeeck (1994) comments on the tendency of researchers to place great emphasis and focus on the pimps as the recruiter stating that "The role physical and emotional coercion by third parties to force women into the trade has been the subject of research all throughout the century and, it appears, has been overstated." Thus there has been an overwhelming reoccurring theme in the literature to approach prostitution research from a 'Neo-Victorian' standpoint that paints a picture of prostitution portraying the predatory, manipulative and violent pimp versus the innocent, naïve and helpless victim. The presentation of recruitment into sex work as a dichotomy between the helpless female versus the calculated male, and the passive victim versus the coercive offender, undermines any presence of agency, autonomy, and self-determination and ultimately infantilizes the women within the world of prostitution. The data in this research does support the presence of manipulation and psychological trickery by pimps to recruit individuals but it also highlights the active role of women in the recruitment of other women and suggests more agency and informed participation on the part of women in prostitution. These findings undermine the simplistic models of the above described assumed dichotomous positions of malicious pimp versus innocent, passive victim. Prostitutes' motivations, incentives, and reasons for entry into sex work are seemingly more complex than the existing models that describe offender versus victim (Weitzer, 2000a).

Also, the role that prostitutes play in recruitment has been predominantly overlooked thus far by research but proved to be a vital component to expanding stables in this research. Though noted in research as early as 1965 (see Bryan, 1965), current research fails to investigate the importance of this element within the underground sex economy. The use of

women to carry out the majority of the recruitment proves to be an interesting aspect of how pimps operate and in a sense removes them from the recruitment process more than originally thought. It is surprising that this recruitment method is often addressed in current prostitution research, but it would likely be an important avenue to explore in order to further understand how individuals become 'enticed' and/ or involved in sex work.

Cross Country Pimping and Sex Work Locations

This section will address two factors that have a strong impact on the success of pimps: the geographic location of the pimps' work and the spatial, work location of the women who work for them. All but two of the pimps in this research were nomadic while involved in pimping. They engaged in what is referred to as 'cross country pimpin' which entails regular moving, and travelling while pimping across the United States of America. Regularly these pimps maintained a home base in the cities where they were from, but often had apartments or houses in several cities across the country. Multiple factors motivated regular movement and travelling including big events, police crack downs, prostitution 'hot spots' and the location of peers. The majority of the pimps who partook in this research had the prostitutes that worked for them working the streets to earn money, but this was not always the case. At times, pimps did put women to work in brothels, strip clubs and for escort services; thus there was variety in the work environments of those who worked for the pimps. Various reasons influenced their selection of location for the women's' sex work including but not limited to police interferences and crackdowns, increased earning potential, 'safety' of the women, and personal preference for certain work environments.

Short term travels are often encouraged by 'big events' that attract large groups of people, especially men, to hotels and events for short periods of time: For example events such as The Kentucky Derby, Mardi Gras, The Super Bowl, large business and government conventions and Spring Break destinations are among many. At these large events, there is generally a high demand for prostitutes. Knowing this, pimps regularly migrate to these various events to put prostitutes out to work to cash in on the influx of demand for prostitutes in the location. The information regarding locations and the need for more sex workers is most often obtained through the close networks and regular communication pimps keep with each other.

When discussing travelling to 'the demand' in order to generate income, Sue discloses some of the 'big events' they regularly attended to make a lot of money very quickly:

> *"We used to work Mardi Gras, that was the best time of my life. we actually went down this year for the mardi gras, my girl and I but Mardi Gras, that is when you are making money. Key West, that is when you are making money, spring break you are making money, girls gone wild, girls gone wild trust me, girls gone wild with their*

mommy and daddy's credit card"

This pattern of geographic movement was reported in the narratives of the other respondents who also took these short-term trips to locations to maximize earnings. These trips, though frequent, are not necessarily what is meant by the description of 'cross country pimping'. As explained above, this phrase refers to a lifestyle in which pimps maintain residences in multiple states and regularly moves between state lines to conduct business and maintain their earnings. Michael explained his movement: "*I am from (city in Midwest) I started pimpin' there, my best years of pimpin was in (east coast city) I pimped in Cleveland, Detroit, but the highlight of by pimp career was in (east coast city)*." Eric originally started cross-country pimping as a draft dodging technique, but upon his return from Vietnam, went back to the same pattern of regular movement. *"I pimped from one end of this country to the other, from Chicago all the way to New York, I had gotten drafted so I kept movin' from state to state I kept the government from knowin' where I was but later on in The Game I had to go and that is when I winded up in Vietnam."*

Cross country pimping refers to a trend within select subcultures of pimping in the USA where there is a clear pattern of multiple residences and regular movement between states by the pimps with 'their' prostitutes. According to respondents, decisions about where to live were often based on information and feedback from their networks and well established underground communities. At times pimp chose to relocate for arbitrary purposes and other times, their actions were very calculated. Because these pimps do not regularly run their businesses in a permanent, spatial location (brothel, strip club, etc…) they have the ability to move around the country at will, regularly highlighted as a perk of being in The Life.

'Cross country pimping' is a well documented and reported trend within pimp literature and films (Maroy, 2006; Gholson, 2001; Funches & Marriott, 2002; Owens, 1999; Slim, 1969), pimp research (Hodgson, 1997; Raphael, 2004; Milner & Milner, 1976) and emerging North American Human Trafficking research (Raymond & Hughes, 2001; Ashley & Raphael, 2008); the data in this research supports the existence of regular geographical movement within pimping communities. In a likely effort to display the power they possessed while in The Game and to glamorize their lifestyle, respondents generally explained that boredom was their main motivator for relocation when asked directly. But their narratives seem to suggest that circumstances related to losing prostitutes to other pimps, loss of status and respect, drug abuse, and deteriorating peer relations were the more influential motivators for this nomadic lifestyle. Their direct and indirect engagement with the topic of cross country pimping suggests that pimps often maintain multiple residences in different states so that they can move swiftly between locations for whatever reason.

Pimps not only possess the authority to decide on the geographic locations for living and traveling, but also of the locations for the exchange between sex workers and their clients. It is often assumed that indoor prostitution venues (brothels, massage parlors, strip clubs) are 'safer' for prostitutes than outdoor-street prostitution because indoor presumably provides the presences of others, a prearranged-secure location, and less risk of robbery or physical harm. Though research suggests that indoor prostitution may be as dangerous and violent for prostitutes as outdoor (Raphael & Shapiro, 2004), street pimps assumed that indoor prostitution is safer. Pimps do suggest that it is physically safer for the women but ultimately, the word 'safer' as used by pimps does not necessarily relate to the women's' physical and psychological safety, more often 'safer' refers to 'less risk' legally for pimps. As supported by the quotes below, most respondents in this research utilized indoor prostitution in order to avoid run-ins with the police:

> "See cause indoors was safer cause you didn't have to deal with the police. Indoors was safe but when you outdoors, the police harassing you and also when we came outdoors, whatever we made in eight hours, that was all" Sue

> "Well they had a whore house up at (location omitted) and me and the place's man was cool so when it got 'hot'[27], I would put them up there but you really don't want to do it cause it cuts your money down." Richard

I then enquired further asking Richard if there was an economic impact to movement indoors as profits would have to be spilt with the owner of businesses and he described what the typical financial arrangement is between pimps and business owners:

> Richard: "They want 20% and that is for doing absolutely nothing. So if you are knockin' off say a g a night, that is $200 you ain't gettin'. So by the end of the week I am out $1,400. Now if it is just too hot for them to work, I've got to put them there, you know when the strolls are too hot and the calls aren't comin' fast enough, you take em' down there."

> Holly: "But don't the houses ever get raided?"

> Richard: "They basically didn't cause they paid the police off. And the police never really bothered too much about prostituting or pimpin' cause really they felt it was the lesser of all the evils, and then before the internet and all these stings and puttin' cops in hotel rooms, before, they weren't never really payin' attention"

Ken, unlike the other respondents, did not like to let the women that worked for him work outdoors, he instead preferred to function out of strip clubs because of the 'security' they provided. He explained that for safety, stability of income and ease of management strip clubs were his ideal location for prostituting his stable:

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[27] 'hot' is street slang for an marked increase in police presence, arrests and prosecutions generally targeted at a specific illegal activity.

"All my people was with clubs, we never did the street. I never could understand, my Game was at the clubs, the club scene and that was before internet and all that. So we came out up the clubs, and I knew a lot of guys that come up off the streets, it's like that guy (older pimp) had told me, he said 'girls that work the street don't last long, they might be out there for a week and get popped at the club they last longer, you want them to last longer, put them in the club or a massage parlor or something like that.' So that's what I did. I never really understood why they, if they not gonna last long why they do it, when she only gonna be with you for one week, you know what's the point, I had girls been with me for like years, the same ones."

Within cities across the USA, there are established and known locations for the solicitation of prostitution referred to within The Game as 'ho strolls'. These prostitution hot spots emerge in various communities as known locations for clients to solicit prostitutes. The locations are illegal and are thus known mainly through underground and illicit circles; there are very few prosecution-free, 'safe-zones' for prostitutes as prostitution is illegal in all but one state in the USA. Richard explains these 'ho strolls' in detail after I asked him how a pimps chooses where their women will work. The following exchange explores these locations:

Richard: "They got tracks. Right (names a couple of streets in the city and explains their proximity to places such as race tracks and stadiums) You know any area where there is major traffic in and out, you can make it a track. See tracks normally they have been established for like a hundred years, and this is why the police can always pick em' up"

Holly: "Cause they know where to find them, but you can't just change streets?"

Richard:" You can but how much traffic does that street have? Anywhere that there is traffic you can make a stroll, but your established stroll, if they ride, they are lookin' for some action. Now you could take right here and make it a track right, and if they look good they might get some business but if you are down on (street name omitted but an established stroll) if somebody drives by and everybody that honks their horn, they want action. Out here they might just be meddling. But see when they are out on the track, they know they are there for work and now what I used to do was give em' a number, so you can work by phone during spells when the streets are just too hot. You get what you call regulars, I get paid on Friday, I am going to give you $100 before I go home, that is a regular trick and I actually think, every Thursday for an hour, you my girlfriend, for an hour so I am going to call you the minute I leave work, 'hey I am coming to get you' that why we always had a black book, cause there are regulars and they come here to see a certain girl."

Above Richard explains that the 'ho strolls' are generally a street pimp's preferred working location for the prostitutes that worked for him; this sentiment was common amongst respondents with the exception of Ken and Sarah. The ho strolls are necessary because these established locations minimize ambiguity and confusion, increase customers by way of

regular traffic, and overall, require much less involvement and work on the part of the pimp. It is usually when the streets get 'hot' that pimps turn their attention to alternative venues. Prostitutes face less risk of arrest indoors which minimizes the potential costs of bail, lawyers and imprisonment; when these events take place, pimps stand to loss significant portions of their income, thus it is in a pimps best interest to minimize the stables' interactions with law enforcement. Pimps do lose a percentage of their income when they place women to work within indoor establishments but they stand to lose more if the prostitute is arrested. It would seem that pimps who work in illegal street prostitution 'specialize' in and prefer, the streets as their location. But even so, they do still participate in and cooperate with other industries and venues for prostitution in order to maintain income. The Game changes with the various locations and venues, therefore, even street pimps need to possess the flexibility and 'know-how' to maintain their positions as pimps within other prostitution/sex work settings.

Multiple residences for some pimps, does entail multiple distinction groups of prostitutes who work for them, but generally, the data suggests that the groups of prostitutes move with the pimp. The respondents in this research therefore suggested that it was unusual for a pimp to go out of town for long periods or move without the stable as distance generally made management more arduous. This continuous movement not only means avoiding the law when necessary and reaching new markets, but it also means that the women working for the pimp maintain consistent dependency on pimps as they are uprooted and placed in unfamiliar cities regularly with no social/familial connections or local knowledge.

Overall, cross country pimping grants pimps the opportunity for generous incomes while allowing them to secure the prostitutes' 'need' for their management. It could be seen that these nomadic trends have become part of the subcultural experience of street pimps echoing that of mainstream American 'Kerouacian' tradition and spirit. Ultimately, the freedom granted to pimps by this regular movement and continuous travel feeds into their experiences of autonomy and power within their roles as pimps and further glamorizes their lifestyles within The Game. But it also acts to provide an element of instability as pimps have to be ready and able to uproot and move at any given time. This is part of the stresses that Milner and Milner (1972) reported pimps experiencing which they claimed to have an exhausting impact on pimps through the demand for constant vigilance and 'readiness'. The networks and underground communities can provide some support and stability, but ultimately, the regular movement and constant geographic changes undermines a sense of security and established community for the various actors involved in illegal prostitution.

Often it is the underground pimp networks that allow for the information exchange and sharing which supports this lifestyle. As will be discussed in the following section, peer and professional connections allow pimps to keep an 'ear on the street' for information that play a significant role in determining their locations, activities and incomes. The reliance on

street culture and pre-existing communities underground networks allow them to be more efficient in their decisions and movements. If not for these networks, it is questionable the extent to which trends such as cross country pimping and movement between various sex work locations would exist within this subculture.

Networks

The data in this research suggests that rather than functioning solely as independent and competitive parties, pimps tend to cooperate and rely heavily upon strong and well maintained underground networks of peers to prosper. Far from being unique from other underground criminal networks and deviant groups in networking and organization, pimps seek the professional support and advice from OGs and other pimps in order to strengthen their career performance (Becker, 1965). Research into various other deviant groups has also highlighted the personal and professional benefits to maintaining networks. Becker (1963) suggests that movement into organized deviant groups serves two core functions; The first being indoctrination into the new rules, norms and order which allows individuals to rationalize and justify their deviance and/or criminality. Thus an individual who " quiets his own doubts by adopting the rationale moves into a more principled and consistent kind of deviance than possible to him before adopting it." (39) In application to this research, pimps become immersed into The Game through these connections and proceed to fully dedicate themselves to pimpology. The second outcome Becker (1963) identifies to such deviant connections, relates directly to the benefit of the experiences and information held by others within the community.

The data seems to suggest that within the world of illegal street prostitution, peer networks and business connections play significant roles in the decisions, support, and day-to-day functioning of pimps. Pimp sources and literature stresses fierce, cut throat competition between pimps yet they simultaneously highlight and acknowledge a strong connection and camaraderie between members of the underground pimping community (Gholson, 2011; Hunter & Ivy, 2007; Marriott & Funches, 2002). Previous research acknowledges the tendency of pimps to social with one another casually and their camaraderie (Milner & Milner, 1972), but their 'professional' cooperation has not yet been explored. Pimps are in competition with one another for reputation, status and prostitutes, but ultimately, the benefits of collaboration and information sharing within their communities greatly outweighs the costs. These underground networks also offer individuals within these communities the opportunity to find peers support, understanding and friendship. As noted in the chapter 'Entries and Gateways' the apprentices and training offered through these networks of OGs and other hustlers is crucial to learning The Game which heavily relies on these professional

networks and pimp hangouts.

Pimps often rely on the communication between one another to make decisions about working locations and to get information on police crackdowns. Michael described how this works: *"You hear or know that the town has dried up, police keep locking the girls up, but then they say "man there is a nice strip in Virginia" that or " they pimpin' good in Boston" you hear other pimps talking about "man I'm gonna go to L.A. " or "I'm going to go to Virginia, Washington, D.C."* Eric explained that these networks are still in effect today in pimping by highlighting the case of his nephew: *"I have a nephew now that is pimping and so yeah he gets calls from all over the country from all of his different buddies, that 'hey man, they are gettin' money here' he might go there and stay a week, and if he thinks it is more profitable he might try to rent a house there."* Thus respondents reported using this information to guide their choices in cross country pimping and decisions about residency.

I asked Michael if he could explain why it was common practice in pimping to stay in regular contact with other pimps, to share information and to cooperate within work environments. He described the impact these arrangements had on business and the incentives for cooperation:

> *Michael: "Yeah but it is better for the business because the more girls, the more it broadens the horizon. And what I mean by that is it's in your favor really, because if the police come bust some girls, maybe they just need to bust five girls, if there ain't nothing but a few pimps there, that means most of they girls gonna get popped. But if there's more pimps there, with the five they get they may miss you."*
>
> *Holly: "Safety in numbers…"*
>
> *Michael: "Right. And when tricks come to look for girls, if it's the same girls every time, the need new girls, fresh girls, they need young girls, so it's a plus to the network and the network is needed. It's competition but you've got to let each other know what is going on. Warning like don't go to New Jersey man they giving girls cases"*

Michael suggests that more women on the ho strolls equates to more clientele which work to the advantage of the pimps by increasing business[28]. His thinking, which is consistent with the explanations of other respondents, is that a 'fresh' and consistent 'supply' of prostitutes is necessary in order to meet the demands of johns. While fierce competition can exists and rivalries can and do form, overall there are advantages to pimps working collaboratively to 'meet market demands'.

Socialization and immersion into The Life cements an individual's indoctrination into

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[28] This evades acknowledgement of issues such as competition, violence and robberies amongst/between prostitutes, but it is rare pimps ever interfere with these issues.

it over time. Pimps eventually begin to adopt a world view/mind-frame that is unique to the various players and actors within the subcultures of illegal sex work. Adherence to the norms and expectations within The Game means the rejection of mainstream values and norms. As such, individuals in The Life often seek solace and support from those also in The Game as they are most likely to be capable of understanding the unique experiences and perspectives that accompany the lifestyle. The mindframe adopted by pimps often causes them to feel alienated from and misunderstood by people outside of The Game. So beyond professional incentives to maintaining close networks, respondents suggested that these networks and peers provided support, advice and understanding to them. Respondents repeatedly asserted that pimps are lonely and that no one really understands their experiences and mindframes, therefore, other pimps become an invaluable source of friendship Richard explained the tendency for pimps to rely on each other for friendship and support within The Game:

> *"Yeah cause the Game kind of messes up your thinking. You know what I am sayin'? So you have got to have some people that kind of think like you, it's just like, you tryin' to get a PhD, you've probably got some friends that didn't finish high school, but you know that you don't have much to talk about cause you've got different goals and friends, that don't make yours better than hers, it just makes it different. Yeah so you kind of stick with your element. You know they call it snobby or whatever but roses go in the rose garden and weeds go in the weed garden, and that's just kind of how that is. It's like once you've done made your bonds in the Game, you know who to talk to and y'all talk to each other and you stay in close contact because now you done gotten older and changed so you be tryin' to see if they be havin' the same problems you havin'."*

It is commonly asserted that pimps can never form trusting relationships with prostitutes and furthermore, that a pimp can never let a prostitute know what they are really thinking as this could be used against them in the future. Thus prostitutes can in some circumstances provide support and friendship, but ultimately pimps cannot be completely honest and open with them. Again, for this they turn to other pimps. Sean describes the tendency pimps have to befriend one another, but further warns that one can never really trust other pimps completely either:

> *"Any pimp that has been in the game for a while, they'll tell you that the life of a pimp is a lonely; the hos they don't really understand what you go through but you have other pimps that understand and that's mostly why pimps hang together cause there are very few other people that can understand you understand when you in the lifestyle that you not pimpin' a chick to stay with you for a long period of time, you would rather they do because of the money, also it's a part of you that wants somebody to be with you (put me on hold) one of the lonely things is that you never know who you can trust, if you can trust her or if another pimp is going to be taking that girl outta your stable or they tryin to put you in the cross or they tryin to get you out of the game or if the pimp is trying to steal your game"*

While prostitutes are out working the streets, pimps frequently meet up at club and pool halls with one another to pass the time. Sean, among other respondents, suggested that there are certain known bars or clubs which pimps would frequent when seeking each other's company. These hang out spots were the location of social gathering for the pimps when they were not actively out recruiting or collecting money from prostitutes. It is also in these locations that multiple generations of pimps come together socially and professionally. Most of the respondents in this research who identified as former pimps, still frequented these locations to seek conversation and the company of current pimps. Eric described why he still engages with this community so actively: *"even if you not in the Game, you gonna still go around pimpin', you gonna still gonna go around young pimps and ask em' how the Game goes, and they young pimps today, they will actually come and seek advice and a lot of em' what they advice and they ask questions, but I sit em' down, now I have been outta the Game for a while."* It is in this social environment where these former pimps can once again revel their former reputation and status and relive the 'glory days' of their pimping careers. As OGs, it is these locations that they still command respect and their knowledge and experiences are greatly valued. James highlights this trend within the subculture: *"So talking about passing the torch that is an honored privilege, its like this is my prodigy this is my turn out, so if he becomes successful, that's another feather in my hat, because of the knowledge that I gave him propelled him to another level in his game. Actually, some I had even paid for my services, consulted."* As previously noted in the chapter on training and apprenticeships, pimp hangouts are locations where contacts are made between novice and experienced pimps. Thus pimp hangouts are invaluable locations for socialization, training, apprenticeships, mentoring, relaxation and social engagement; and it for these reasons that active and retired pimps alike seek these environments.

Conclusion

Exploration of the over-reliance on the 'purse-first' rhetoric offered by pimps suggests that money may represent more to pimps than just function. The power, status and respect that is tied to income within the world of pimping supports its symbolic representations within this subculture. The unstable relationship that pimps have with money due to various elements within The Game that create inconsistent incomes and unpredictability may foster the obsession and constant focus on making money. But the lifestyle and presentation maintained by many pimps ensures that the majority of money made goes to maintenance of their image and lifestyle; thus, though their incomes are significant, they are more than often poor. But the data would also suggest that over-reliance on the idea that 'money always coming first' serves as an means of excusing or justifying behavior that respondents otherwise had a difficult time identifying explanations for.

Pimps must create a need for their services, since as renegades demonstrate, they are not a necessary actor within prostitution. Pimps have a created a specific subculture, code and rules in order to maintain and hold their place within illegal prostitution. Widely publicly accepted is the notion that pimps provide protect and work to procure clients, when neither is true (Hodgson, 1997). Pimps do provide some vital and helpful roles in the lives of those in prostitution but it is pimps who create the need for their services. Through harassment, threats and denial of access to main ho strolls, pimp effectively recruit renegades and others who attempt to work pimp-less.

This chapter then sought to detail the various approaches and techniques utilized by pimps to recruit individuals into their stables. First presenting the background typologies of prostitutes provided by previous research, and then describing the various techniques used by pimps to recruit, the chapter offers a multi- layered description of the recruitment processes that tend to be oversimplified in other research and literature. Current literature supports a dichotomous model of how pimps work to recruit (seduction and stratagem: Hodgson, 1997) and in doing so deny other methods/tactics, particularly those that grant autonomy and acknowledge self-serving decision making on the part of prostitutes. This trend also denies one of the most efficient means of recruitment for pimps; recruitment through prostitutes. The data presented suggests a more nuanced exploration is needed of the role that prostitutes play in the recruitment of other prostitutes. The role of stable recruitment challenges current focus on male pimps and male 'traffickers' by fogging the lines that are currently drawn as very black and white between offending actors and passive victims assumptions. Moving beyond current debates in prostitution literature between opposing camps, this data can provide a more representative and holistic view of the multi- faceted roles and complex interactions that take place between the various social actors within The Game.

Trends of constant movement and a nomadic lifestyle are well documented in pimp literature, but have not been addressed by academic enquiry. This facet of The Lifestyle furthers understanding of the means by which actors within the sex industry arrange their work environments and locations based on factors such as demand and police activity. The freedom of movement and ability to travel at will is both part of the glamour of The Life and a major source of instability and stress for those involved. The nomadic lifestyle and multi-residential patterns that pimps engage in is mostly reliant on pre-established networks of pimps that foster the active exchange of information about the current conditions and activities on the streets. These networks prove invaluable for many pimps that work in illegal street prostitution as they allow individuals to exchange professional information, career advice, and up-to-date insight on current police activities. The isolation and 'loneliness' experienced by pimps encourages camaraderie amongst other pimps within The Game. The social support provided by these networks grants pimps the opportunity to establish

interpersonal relationships with individuals who can appreciate and relate to their experiences; something they claim is impossible to establish with prostitutes and squares. These underground networks and communities help pimps to prosper and provide support, strategic throughout, and even after, their careers.

As much as competition and rivalry is present and a reality for this subculture, there also exists a community and 'professional network' that enables more desirable work, conditions and outcomes. Suggested as critical for staying ahead of law enforcement and fast, reliable information about clients, networks and regular communication within these communities can prove invaluable for their purposes. For the reasons and purposes discussed in this section, these networks, some organized enough to hold annual banquets and award ceremonies[29], seem to be an important resource for this criminal community. There are independent pimps and the use of networks is not likely generalizable to all individuals who function as pimps, but those interviewed for this research suggest that within their experiences these networks are alive, vibrant and well maintained particularly within illegal, street prostitution. This suggests that pimps are more cooperative with one another than suggested by previous research and literature and that there are incentives for such cooperation. Be it professional or social, these underground networks and peer networks suggest a more cooperative and well organized subculture than previously acknowledged in the literature.

Through the exploration of these various trends in the career experiences of pimps, the groundwork is laid for understanding the details and specifics of how pimps operate within these elements to eventually practice pimpology. The next chapter, Pimpology: Part 2, delves deeper into the cultures, rules, management tactics and presentation styles of pimps within this underground career. Having laid the groundwork for insight into the supporting elements and foundations of pimping, this chapter has suggested several original contributions to the existing body of literature and research on pimps. The new insights granted by this data and its subsequent analysis could have far reaching implications within the current discourses on sex work and the various actors within those communities.

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[29] A specific community within illegal street pimps organizes an annual event called the Player's Ball. It is at this event where pimps and prostitutes alike attend for the awarding of the coveted 'Player of the Year' award (Ken & Hunter, 2007; Gholson, 2004; Ray, 2000; Hughes & Hughes, 1998; Owens, 1998).

Chapter 6: Pimpology Part 2- Performance, Rules, and Management

This chapter explores the topics of identity, performance, rules, management, violence, and relationship maintenance; all issues which are highly complicated, especially within The Game. The first theme explored is that of performance in pimping with special attention paid to issues of intersectionality within pimping and masculinity. The next theme explored is that of the rules of The Game which pimps claim have been passed down for generations. These 'unofficial' old laws act as the template for the rules pimps develop during their careers and prove important for the cohesiveness of the subculture. Management in pimping includes a wide variety of tasks but respondents most often chose to focus on management in relation to the women that worked for them; that is, their management of the women, the relationships between themselves and the women and the relationships between the women that worked for them. It is within this management that issues such as violence, manipulation and coercion begin to take center stage and the asymmetry of the pimp-prostitute relationship becomes clear. It is within the discussions of these themes that the ideologies and methods of pimps become lucid. Some of these reoccurring themes are located specifically within the subcultural context of street pimping while others resonate with insights from research on other tiers and experiences in sex work. This chapter offers in great detail, the interworking and complex dynamics that define the relationships and behaviors of pimps. This chapter elaborates on Pimpology Chapter 1 and it is in conjunction with that chapter, that Pimpology Part 2 helps to offers a more comprehensive and panoramic understanding of the pimp and pimpology.

Performance and Pimping

In order to be successful in recruitment, to visibly demonstrate power and wealth, and to set specific cultural markers identifying themselves as pimps, pimps actively manage and perform their roles as pimps. The pimpology chapters have thus far offered detailed explanations of how pimps pimp, and have explored the various characteristics of street pimps but have not addressed the personal presentations and subcultural characteristics of this population. Because this research approached data collection through in-depth interviews rather than participant observation or other ethnographic methods, details regarding social interactions and physical appearances that would offer deeper insight to this topic are lacking. Therefore, this section is meant to briefly address these various aspects as highlighted by the respondents and described in the literature (both academic and non-academic) (Milner & Milner, 1972; Beck, 1967 ; Funches & Marriott, 2002; Giones, 1972) as important to the groups' subcultural and personal identities. Pimps who work the streets possess subcultural

identities that are directly and intrinsically tied to Black ghetto and street hustler identities and culture. As highlighted in the methods chapter, in the subsection on race, it is within the wider context of Black American identities that Black street pimps must be analyzed; thus the bulk of the attention in this section will be framed around intersectionality, especially the element of gender, in order to better frame and conceptualize The Game and the pimp.

Performance and presentation are crucial for street pimps. From head to toe the street pimp uses visual props including jewelry, cars and clothing to consciously create a visual spectacle for audiences. He further sets the stage with performances, displays and enactments of behavior, rituals and mannerisms that are required within the role of the pimp. The daily performances required of pimps in order to play The Game were often cited by respondents as core skills to master in order to succeed in pimping. A successful pimp was able to walk, talk and act like a pimp and was expected to at all times, both frontstage and backstage (Goffman, 1959). Within this subcultural context there exists a specific script that social actors are expected to follow, and that of the pimp is exceptionally prescriptive. Expected to always be on their game, and to be putting their best face forward, pimps meticulously and obsessively regulate and control their presentation.

As if borrowed from Goffman (1959) himself, respondents regularly referred to the need to maintain and keep up a good 'front' to be successful in pimping. In their glossary of Black hustler street slang, Milner and Milner (1972) offer an explanation of what 'front' means within street culture:

> " the behaviors and props needed to present the self in a particular way in order to play a particular game. In the pimping game flashy clothes, an expensive car, and jewelry are considered important part of the front." (269)

Goffman (1959) defines a front as "that part of an individual's performance which regularly functions in a general and fixed fashion to define the situation for those who observe the performance. " (32) The dramaturgical approach allows us to examine the ways in which pimps perform, embody and enact the identity of a pimp. These performances range from clothing to vocabulary to attitude and anything in-between. A pimp's persona, presentation and performance must be constantly managed, enacted and repeatedly 'proven' in order to maintain respect, authority and a positive street reputation. Eventually though, this 'surface acting' becomes 'deep acting' after full immersion and socialization in to The Game (Hochschild, 1979); therefore eventually pimps do stop acting like pimps and just become pimps.

The performances that dominate the behaviors and expectations of street level pimps in the USA are partially also products of the social locations and identities of the individual partaking; therefore identifies such as race, class and gender are highly relevant when

assessing performance. It is therefore crucial to also incorporate these various components of identity when considering presentation and performance. The interconnectedness of varying social identities and experiences makes separating them to talk in more coherent and compartmentalized ways arduous. Thus this section will first briefly introduce fashion and pimp goods, then expected behaviors and other characteristics of street pimps specifically and then move into discussions about performance related to issues of race, class, heteronormativity, and gender that relate to pimps.

Appearances, Props and Pimp Goods

Within the subcultural world of Black street pimps, fashion is their most noticeable trait and their appearance is arguably what street pimps are most popularly and commonly known for. Alligator shoes, old-fashioned hats with feathers, furs, brightly colored, tailored suits and flashy, loud jewelry produce a clear caricature of the Black American street pimp. According to literature and respondents, this character and presentation was far more common in the 1950-1970's in the USA, but some street pimps still do present this way. Fashions amongst pimps now vary as much as forms of pimping even though some pimps are still marked by their fashion choices, for example 'sneaker pimps' or 'suit pimps' (Gholson, 2004). This fascinating element of The Life has been the focus of other studies (Milner & Milner, 1972) but requires a more ethnographic, observational methodology than this research project. Fashions are important and relevant to this research as they represent symbolic and cultural capital, and financial power within the street and cultural environs of the Black American ghetto. Fashion and pimp goods also play a major role in the frontstage performance and presentation of the pimp.

Fashion and other accessories were coded and identified within this research under the label of 'pimp goods' which is meant to cover all materials goods highly valued by pimps and viewed as characteristically relevant and critical to the identity of street pimps. This would include expensive clothing, precious jewelry, furs, cars (particularly Cadillacs and Rolls Royce), car accessories, shoes, and beauty treatments (such as perms, manicures, pedicures, etc…). Specific brands, styles and symbols are utilized by this subculture to indicate their role as a pimp and to demonstrate wealth and success.

A successful pimp has acquired a large flow of incoming cash to spend on highly valued goods, so in a means to assert power, status and respect in street culture, pimps flaunt often flamboyant and flashy goods to symbolize their success. But these good represent more than just wealth as Anderson (1999) notes, certain material objects act as powerful symbols within street life as flamboyant and expensive goods not only represent the ability to afford expensive products, but also "a willingness to possess things that may require defending."

(73) Therefore, it is the actual ability to wear and display these items without the threat of having them taken or stolen that itself acts as a representation of power and authority within street culture.

For example, Sean noted that he tended to embrace a style most closely associated with high-powered drug dealers within street culture:

Sean: "The way I dressed, when they looked at me, people thought I was so dope and that I was a drug dealer. But that's how I dressed, that was the style I liked."

Holly: "What exactly does that mean?"

Sean: "The drug dealer style is like the big expensive gold chains, with the diamonds on it and the diamonds in your mouth, and the $500 shirt, you know, and a throwback jersey or something, you know lookin' like how those rappers look on TV. So when they saw me they thought I was a big time drug dealer. I always wore the biggest chains, the biggest gold necklace, find the one with the most diamonds, in my mouth I had diamonds and a gold grill. And boy they think I was rich."

And it was this presentation of wealth that Sean felt help him to recruit women more easily; as his wealth was on display through his various goods and fashion, women were offered a sneak peak at what they could expect from involvement in The Game. Michael explained to me that *"when I was pimping, girls are attracted to what they see. You know like I have always been a dresser, you know I always drove a Cadillac so girls was attracted to the lifestyle"*; thus the appearance and presentation of wealth is crucial for a pimp in order to attract new recruits and keep their attention. This presentation of wealth and riches suggests a luxurious lifestyle to potential recruits and the public, and projects a career filled with glamour and plush living. The fashions and props also act to establish hierarchies and competition between pimps as they are constantly trying to one up each other. *"And then especially so far as a pimp is concerned, a pimp in his mind, he likes like well I wanna have it going on and I want to show out all the other pimps, they can't mess with me, I've got the best game, I've got the best hoes, I go the best clothes and I am this and I am that and I guess it feels more of like a ego thing"* Sean.

There is consistency in that pimps were expensive brands, high end and very valuable jewelry, and drive expensive, well maintained and often customized vehicles, but there is great variety in the various styles and presentations as uniqueness is a critical element to pimps. Because as Sean describes:

"you got all different kind of pimps, all different styles and looks and stuff, like it is definitely going to be very very rare to find that you see two pimps that look alike two pimps in the same suit or it might be the same kind of car but they not gonna look alike. A pimp, one of his main things he does is to make it plain and obvious that in a sense that he is in a class or a category all by itself"

Though there may be variety in the appearances of pimps, it was made clear by respondents that presentation and appearance are very important factors for a pimp. Because appearances display wealth, power and status, mark and identify individuals as hustlers and demonstrate a high income, luxurious lifestyle, they send important social cues and signals to the various audiences, mostly importantly prospective prostitutes and other pimps. Along with appearance and physical presentation playing a major role in the experiences of street pimps, behaviors, attitude and social performances are also contributing factors to the performance of pimps.

Walking, Talking and Acting like a Pimp

A specific set of skills exist within The Game which act to gauge how good a pimp really is. Highly valued characteristics such as coldness, charisma, smooth talking, 'rapping skills', apathy and an emotionless demure all work to create a caricature of the ideal personality of a street pimp. Funches and Marriott (2002: 6) describe the need for coldness and the ruthless pursuit of money in a good pimp: "Pimping demands that you maintain a desolate heart, an interior cold and cruel enough to 'let a ho be a ho' no matter what the cost. One must chose money over love, money over sex, money over all that is holy. Emotions, soft feelings, have no place in such a cutthroat game." Thus emotional management becomes crucial for pimps as the feeling rules prescribed in The Game vary drastically from those of the mainstream as is notable throughout this thesis (Hochschild, 1983). Total immersion into The Game and complete socialization ensures that the mainstream beliefs systems, values and feelings those in The Game once adhered to are eradicated and replaced by the values, norms, beliefs and rules of The Game (Hodgson, 1997: Matza, 1964). Thus what may start as presentation, as suggested by respondents, becomes an internal reality; in other words, coldness, apathy, violence and toughness may have in the beginning of their careers been 'surface acting' but as time went on, it became 'deep acting' it became their internal way of thinking and mindframe.

Many of the respondents seemed to suggest that what started off in their early pimping careers as surface acting became 'deep acting' and thus they fully emerged into the pimp mindframe and mentality. The application of Drift Theory (Matza, 1964) becomes relevant when analyzing the accounts and narrative of pimps. Their socialization into, loyalty to, and strict adherence to pimping and its code impacts their relationship to and experiences of emotions directly. Emotions are strictly managed within in pimping and if/when present, are often an element of the performative nature of the pimp role. Having rejected normative cultural structures and the emotional and interactive norms defined within them, pimps have been socialized into a world that does not experience or express emotions in the same way

mainstream populations do. Respondents reported that once completely and fully socialized into The Game, their perspectives, attitudes and ultimately internal identities shifted.

Once the mindframe has been completely embraced, acting like a pimp becomes effortless as the individual has completely internalized and become the sought identity. Strict regulation of emotions is expected and the only emotion that is encouraged and allowed to be openly displayed is anger but even anger is regulated though as pimps are expected to have 'kept their heads' and remain cool, calm and collected at all times. The importance of remaining emotionless and always in control is reflected in elements of The Game such as in street names. The street names of often include adjectives which relate to coldness: for example Iceberg Slim's name, as he claims in his autobiographical novel, was earned during a bar shoot out where he remained completely unaffected and calm, thus he had proved his coldness to earn him the title Iceberg. These names are earned in pimping and often reflect the personalities and reputations of the pimps (Milner & Milner, 1972).

There is a wide range of personalities that exist within in the world of pimping but those that are most successful are most likely charming, witty, talkative, extroverted, bold and confident; thus a form of symbolic capital exists within The Life that revolves around personality traits. Wacquant (1998) describes pimps in his work explaining that Pimping, as a form of street hustling, is possesses, like other forms of hustling, but 'a particular type of symbolic capital, namely the ability to manipulate others, to inveigle and deceive them, if need be by joining violence to chicanery and charm, in the pursuit of immediate pecuniary gain.' (3) This symbolic capital is crucial for pimps to be successful as it is essential in order to gain new recruits, keep the women that are working for them and to maintain status and respect within The Game. Eric explains that personality wise   *"Pimpin' is about being cunning, tricky, pimpin' is about having the gift of gab and being able to follow up that gift of gab, with doing what you said. Pimpin' see the next pimp that you talk to, no two people pimp alike. They may have some basic traits, but they are still different in the way that they pimp. When you talk to the next pimp, they gonna tell you the same thing."*

Sean offered a description of the people/social skills one needs in pimping after I had asked him how pimps could recognize a potential recruit:

> *"There are certain signs that a PI[30] can pick up on just by looking at a female like me, I am good at reading body language each part of the body is used as a form of communication without even speaking you know you got the eyes, you got the nose, the lips, the finger tips, feet, legs, shoulder, back, butts, every part of the body can send a different signal , every part is relevant when you are trying to communicate with somebody, especially that is, when you are trying to feel someone out, a person can pretty much say anything but the body movement is not going to lie. A*

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[30] Street slang term for pimp.

> *good mack he be in tune to all of that and if he can't, the next PI is going*
> *to pick up on it"*

He then went on to describe how a pimp must be convincing and possess the manipulation skills to 'deconstruct' through charisma and charm:

> *"A pimp his job is really cut out for him because he is trying to win*
> *the submissiveness, the control over the women through his*
> *charisma, you know his personality and his wisdom, a complete*
> *deconstruction. Basically you trying to sell yourself, you*
> *understand? And if the female in question buys what you're selling*
> *there's a good possibility she could become one of your women."*
> *Sean*

Pimps are also known within street culture for a set of verbal skills know as 'rapping' or what Eric was alluding to as 'the gift of gab,' Generally to 'rap' in street culture means to talk but rapping for pimps has special characteristics. When pimps are recruiting or story telling, they are often known to rap through rapid speaking in lengthily monologues that include stories, metaphors, humor, analogies, and life/Game lessons. This form of speech can be see throughout many pimpumentaries such as *American Pimp* and *Pimp's Up, Hos Down* where pimps showcase this particular skill frequently. Rapping is difficult to capture in writing as it is an exceptionally performative and multi-layered presentation but it would appear that often it is meant to impress, entertain, and charm the intended audience, be it a potential recruit or other pimps.

The above facets of performing as a pimp were those which were most commonly and strongly stressed in the interviews and focused on. These traits and characteristics are likely in some ways to be specific to the culture of illegal street pimping but may also reflect large reoccurring themes across other levels of pimping and management in sex work environs. Pimp goods serve as a major focal point on the population within mainstream American culture with Halloween costumes fashioned after pimps and the ever popular 'pimp and ho' themed college parties. These styles and fashions thrust pimps into the national spotlight during the period of Blackxpolitation and these are still strongly associated with pimps within the subculture itself and within wider culture. The data suggests that images of the pimps offered in say the film *The Mack* may be a vestige of subcultural trends of the past, but data suggests that pimp goods and fashion remain highly valuable forms of symbolic capital within The Game and the streets. Also greatly prized within The Game are a set of personalities traits and characteristics which respondents suggest contribute to the success of the best pimps. These behaviors and characteristics are often spoken of in direct relation to pimping, but they are highly connected and correlated to other factors within the social experiences of pimps that must be addressed to fully contextualize these performances. The next section in this portion on performances will address issue of intersectionality, with a

specific focus on gender, to further explore the various performances and reoccurring themes in socialization within pimping.

Intersectionality and Pimps: Masculinity, Race, Class and Heteronormativity

Within the subculture of street pimping and possibly even in within wider ghetto street cultures (Hill-Collins, 2005), the successful pimp achieves a status of hyper masculinity and is presented as surpassing mainstream hegemonic masculinity to achieve 'real manhood' through pimping (Milner & Milner, 1972). At the macro social level, pimps occupy social locations in subordinate masculinities due to their gendered behavior, race and class; thus hegemonic masculinity is unobtainable (Hill-Collins, 2005). More directly, hegemonic masculinity excludes Black males in the United States because as Hill Collins (2005) indicates, "Black men, by definition, cannot be real men, because they are Black." (193; emphasis that of the author) But within The Life, at the micro level, pimps and other hustlers assert that the pimp as the ultimate trickster (Milner & Milner, 1972) and ghetto hero has subverted dominant social gender ideologies, racism and classism to rise above to a position of social divinity and has thus achieved 'real manhood.' This section will explore pimp gender ideology, identity and performance, and social location all in relation to gender in pimping. Because so much of what pimps do revolves around their perspectives on social hierarchies and positions, gender becomes a crucial element to explore in order to truly understand the mindframe of the pimp and what The Game really entails.

When it is suggested that pimps perform gender and have learned to act 'male,' this section is suggesting that as noted by Butler (1997), gender and performance are intrinsically linked as:

> "Gender ought not be constructed as a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts follow; rather, gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a stylized *repetition of acts*. The effect of gender is produced through the stylization of the body and hence, must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and styles of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self." (Butler, 1997;122) (emphasis that of the author)

> "gender reality is created through sustained social performances means that the very notions of an essential sex and a true or abiding masculinity or femininity are also constituted as part of a strategy that conceals gender's performative character and the performative possibilities for proliferating gender configurations outside the restricting frames of masculinist domination and compulsory heterosexuality. " (Butler, 1997: 122)

This section will explore pimps in relation to masculine identities, gendered performances of masculinity within The Game, pimp gender theory and the gender of

pimping. In tandem with these discussions on gender, throughout this section topics such as race, class, and heteronormativity will be integrated in order to fully contextualize the experiences of pimps in reference intersectional identities. Attempts to tease out and separate these elements of identity and social location becomes impossible as all these social variables are deeply connected and interwoven to create the unique positions and experiences of pimps (Crenshaw, 1991). This section will attempt to embrace an intersectionality approach which is defined by Hill- Collins (2005) as " analysis claiming that systems of race, economic class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nation, and age form mutually constructing features of social organization, which shape African American experiences, and in turn, are shaped by African Americans." (351) It is in this approach that the following discussion is based and it is through the exploration of these various issues that the various social, political and personal identities of the respondents become more visible.

Pimps and Masculinities

Over the course of twenty plus years, Connell has suggested the existence of plurality in masculinity, thus masculinities, and existing hierarchies amongst these various masculinities, has been widely supported by research and theorization (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Within Connell's model of masculinities, respondents in this research occupied a form subordinate masculinity but they project, claim and attempt to employ roles of hegemonic masculinity. Again, mainstream, macro level American culture would ensure that hegemonic masculinity was/is unobtainable for these men and women. There are many locations of various identities belonging to respondents which would make the achievement of 'real manhood' impossible. Within the world of Black males in the United States, privilege and power is granted to this group based on gender but is in turn stripped by race. Hegemonic masculinity and other masculinities are not simply defined by gender but are deeply impacted by various other social elements including but not limited to race, class, sexuality, and physicality.

The respondents identified as Black, mostly working class, heterosexual (with the exception of Sue) and thus their social positions are comprised of identities outside of just gender and play a major factor in understanding their position within gender spectrums and locations. When considering the additional identity elements highlighted by Hill Collins' intersectional approach, a racial and class specific understanding of masculinities becomes clear. Specific to both lower class positions and heterosexism, Hill Collins (2005) suggests that Black gender ideology itself has been constructed and presented in such a way as to mirror white hetereonormativity and gender roles; thus within Black gender ideology, it is Black men that are constructed as inappropriately weak and Black women who are presented

as inappropriately strong. In an effort to reverse this situation and 'reclaim' power and control over women, Black men have sought to undermine this representation. Hill Collins suggests that representations of Black, working class men as "aggressive thugs or as promiscuous hustlers seemed designed to refute accusations that Black men are 'weak' because they cannot control Black women. If "real" men are those that can control women, then these representations suggest that Black men can shake the stigma of weakness by dominating unnaturally strong Black women. Being strong enough to " bring a bitch to her knees" becomes a marker of Black masculinity." (189) And it is within this mindframe that pimps exist: to claim control and power from women, requires pimps to actively and aggressively manipulate, control and dominate women in every possible aspect.

Respondents suggested it is the square Black man that is most degraded and emasculated (Milner & Milner, 1972); reflecting Hill Collins' (2005) notion of the 'inappropriately weak Black male', because according to pimp gender theory, Black men "are castrated not only by Black women, but White society as well" (Milner & Milner, 1972:163) and therefore Black pimps see themselves in a powerful position to subvert these racial, class and gender hierarchies. Milner and Milner (1972) suggest " through the domination of a White woman, however, the Black man can "reverse the game" (163) and simultaneously refute marginalization based on race, class and heteronormativity. As James explains, there are deep social meanings within and outside The Game between pimps and prostitutes depending on racial identity that are often tied to race and power:

> *"some guys called me a white ho's boss, I had a preference, I always wanted to be something, you understand? White girls gave me status, so I thought, that's why a lot of ball players have white girlfriends, it's a status sometimes I even think it's a case of we're getting back at you now, When I would walk into the door of an expensive restaurant, and I watch their face, she was with me and I looked good and that was reassuring, and I knew with you, I could conquer the world because I believed that she could get me in doors."*

In order to resist subordinate masculinities and failure to achieve being 'real men,' pimps assert that they achieved everything subscribed by the white heteronormative hegemonic masculinity but through pimping have achieved an even higher placement within masculinity hierarchies. According to pimps, white men may have privilege based on race and class but they are still tricks and are still controlled by women, therefore, only is it the Black male pimp that is truly a man (Hill- Collins, 2005; Milner & Milner, 1972). Thus pimping to pimps and within street cultures, is seen as a site of resistance to both women and white men; a means of reassert the power and position of the Black male in America. But ultimately it acts to reinforce racism and classist ideals about Black working class men deeply entrenched in American history: "The image of the Black male hustler works with historical notions of African American men as too lazy to work … Representations of hustlers suggest that African

American men would rather live off of other people, very often women, then go to work."
(Milner & Milner, 1972: 162)

Performing Pimp Masculinity

Much like pimps must perform being pimps through their daily presentations, so too do they perform a specific gender within pimping. Pimps perform masculinity throughout their daily lives in their activities, behaviors, actions, speech and fashion. Their specific masculine identity is located within a particular race and class context which further rewards and glamorizes violence, displays of dominance, exaggerated heterosexuality and the degradation of women. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) have elaborated on the concept of necessary performative elements of hegemonic masculinity, explaining that "To sustain a given pattern of hegemony requires the policing of men as well as the exclusion or discrediting of women. Women, girls, men, and boys all engage in this policing. Masculinity is embodied and enacted through displays of strength, athleticism, risk-taking, and heterosexual prowess."(844) In order to perform masculinity convincingly in the street environments, the respondents adopted the masculinity emulated and respected within the surrounding street cultures of their childhoods in the jungle. Master Pimp (1999) suggests about pimps in his book that "He was and is the product of Black ghetto life. There is no way to understand him without some understanding of the interplay of the forces of human deprivation, social deprivation and betrayal that produce the atmosphere in which he thrived." (1) And thus in order to contextualize and better understand the experiences of pimps, multiple facets of their masculine identities will be examined.

Being male in The West, and arguably elsewhere globally, means essentially being not female and the active rejection of all traits designated as feminine (Hill Collins, 2005; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Interestingly, pimps embrace activities and fashions usually reserved for women in mainstream culture and claim that this ability to 'pull it off' provides further support for their masculinity. Respondents claimed that that engaging in feminine gendered behaviors such as getting regular manicures and pedicures, receiving perms and other hair treatments, and wearing makeup, they proved their manhood through their ability to adopt 'feminine traits' yet maintain 'real manhood' through their actions, roles and relationships.

> *"sometimes the pimp has been stereotyped to like loud colors and stuff some pimps do and some pimps don't one of the reasons why some pimps don't like loud colors and stuff like that cause they average man wouldn't feel right in that type of clothing in that type of color and that would be one thing right there that would set a pimp apart from another man cause he can wear whatever and will where as a lot of men feel right wearing a pink suit or a baby blue suit, or you know what I mean?"*

So not only does this appearance and style set them apart from other men because other men lack the confidence to do so, it places pimps in a class above other men because their style, appearance and self- care reflects power, status and wealth that other men would not 'confident' or strong enough to present. Thus the presentation of masculinity that pimps project is contextualized within The Game and street culture, as this presentation is likely interpreted differently outside of that specific social context. The performance of pimp masculinity through fashion and self presentation underlines that pimps are selective in their image in order to signal to social audiences their status, wealth and power. And by challenging mainstream gender norms in their dress styles and activities, they are laying claim to masculinity that in some aspects actively resists and counters mainstream culture.

Hegemonic masculinity calls for men to exhibit complete control over their emotions, control of all forms of violence and the achievement of positions of power and leadership (Hill Collins, 2005). "Men's access to the apparatuses of authority and violence differs depending on their social location within race and social class hierarchies" (Hill Collins, 2005: 189) and within the world of pimping, pimps have full access and power to use their authority and violence in whatever context and way they deem necessary. Within dominant society they would lack this power and position, but within The Game, they rank within the top tiers of the underground criminal players. This coupled with their exceptionally disciplined presentation of emotions, or lack thereof, creates a powerful, strong masculinity archetype who is un-swayed by sentimentality or emotions.

The emotional control and the public demeanor of pimps are presented as an act; it is internalized and idolized but ultimately, it is claimed to be a performance. Milner and Milner (1973) suggested that pimps and prostitutes conceptualized their world as a stage and the individuals within it as literal players or actors. But recent work into explorations of prescriptive social/behavioral expectations can also provide insight into the performances of pimps, specifically with focus on race and gender. Majors and Bilson (1992) describe a variation of performative trends in Black masculinity that they define as 'cool pose'. Characterized as calm, emotionless, fearless, tough and aloof, cool pose and behavior for Black males are "an expressive performance that helps them counter stress caused by social oppression and racism." (Majors and Billson, 1992:3) Cool pose is exceptionally exaggerated and glorified within the world of pimping and if within mainstream society "even when he is offstage, a black male may feel that he is onstage" (Majors and Billson, 1992:4); thus the stress and pressure is greatly emphasized within The Game. The surface and deep acting (Hochschild, 1979) that are required of pimps help to create the image of an individual who is cold, apathetic, hard and strong. Ken described the mental state and attitude towards toughness and violence he regularly displayed to enforce his position and status:

"If you a pimp but you are weak then somebody will run over you and take your girls, you know, push you out the way. Through my eyes I saw a whole nother world based on respect and fear, and people moved out the way when I came through cause they knew I wouldn't follow no rules. But I have seen some other guys get mishandled though. It's all about the person and how you hold your ground. But I was no nonsense, I wasn't playin' and I wasn't havin' it, you want to shoot out, hey, let's shoot out."

Cool pose (Majors & Billson,1992) relates directly to pimps description of 'true men' as those with complete control over their emotions though pimps take this a step further and claim that 'real men' also have complete control over women. As highlighted by Master Pimp (1999) " A man that had total control over his desires and emotions at all times. He doesn't allow himself to become a servant to pussy but instead to control and dominate it as only a master can." (44) Respondents saw any 'soft' or feminine' emotions as out of place and in direct contradiction to pimping behavior as Sue explains, she couldn't carry a gun and embody masculinity while being 'emotional'*: "you can't be soft and try to jack up your flash and walk around with your strap on, you can't do that cause the two don't mix."* Thus with emotions and the display having no place in pimping, pimps must learn to management and control emotions at all times. This hardest and apathy was often referenced by respondents as the core of their pimp identify, so their ideals of masculinity and pimp behavior overlap strongly in this sense.

Performing masculinity for pimps also encompasses having complete over women which relates directly to their theories on gender and the 'nature' of genders. Their 'natural right' to domination influences their 'masculine' behaviors as further defining them through descriptors offered by respondents such as 'master', 'leader', 'boss' and 'ringleader'; all adjectives that they must project and embody to sufficiently carry the title 'man.' The immediate next sub section will explore the links between theories on the 'nature of gender' and what this means for pimps' relationships to women and other men. The next few sections will then explore specific ideas within pimp gender ideology and how that relates to their performances and ideas about masculinity.

The Nature of Woman and Original Sin

Pimp gender theory is highly patriarchal and is based on the reverse breadwinner model; that is women are supposed to financially support men. Pimps consider women to be subordinate and inferior but responsible for taking care of men. According to their thinking, pimps believe that women are drawn to pimps, even abusive pimps, because women long for protection, support, love, and discipline. Sean explains that *"she wants a man that is going to stand up on her someone that's initiate some discipline, someone she won't be pussy footin' around with, cryin' and pleadin' to her, she wants somebody that going to put her in check. "*

Thus pimps believe that: "When a woman finds she can easily dominate many men and extract money from them, she is lost without a "real man" to give the money to." (Milner& Milner, 1972: 167) Ultimately, pimps believe that women should serve men in all capacities; within The Game Eric suggests that this is a social reality because women view serving men as a pleasure: *" I means that she was sellin' her body to get me what I needed, to buy me clothes, food and money and things like that. Because she was a street woman who liked to please her man."* Thus women pleasing men and serving them is at the nucleus of the way that pimps view male/female and pimp/prostitute relationships. Because as Gholson puts it in The Pimp's Bible, "He never lets a female be equal with him; Equal Rights (ER) are just fantasy; it will come back to normal pretty soon… She was put on earth to serve men" (48-49) These ideas about male/female relationships are not born out of thin air but rather have origins in both biological explanations and religious ones according to respondents.

Pimp gender theory is deeply entrenched in carefully selected notions borrowed from biology placing strong emphasis on biological determinist explanations which purport gender essentialism based on the 'natural world.' In Milner and Milner's (1972) study, participants agreed that "men and women have forgotten their essential natures " (166) and that the resulting 'battle of the sexes' for power and control in society is to blame for most social turmoil and ills. Pimp gender theory would propose that "woman embodies the principles of basic animal biology. She is by nature concerned with obtaining security for herself and her offspring, and with pleasing her man. Because part of her essence includes the role of mother she tends to be concerned with matters of basic sustenance (food, money, home life), and is therefore a natural provider" (Milner & Milner, 1972: 164) Biologically deterministic ideas essentially help to support and encourage 'natural' interpretations of how gender relations are supposed to play out and be expressed.

Pimp gender theory further supported by Judeo-Christian theology and ideologies that place women as subordinate to men. Respondents in this research made regular reference to biblical stories for support and Milner and Milner (1972) found that respondents directly linked matriarchy and female claim to power and control back to the story of Adam and Eve, as in their view, "Adam was not the first man, but "the first trick". The use of biblical stories and gospels for substantiation granted respondents a sense of assurance and legitimacy for their views as they were supported religious works. By relying on the authority of both religion and 'nature', respondents felt justified and well supported in the statements they made about the way relationships should be/are between men and women. Also highly reliant on biblical and 'natural' arguments, was the ways in which pimps expressed and discussed issues of human sexuality.

Pimps and Sexuality

Most of pimp gender theory and ideas about the 'nature' of man and woman are highly reliant on heteronormative assumptions and thus frame all power and sexual dynamics within heterosexist spheres. Thus heterosexuality is framed as the default assumed 'natural, normal' order while homosexuality is framed as 'other, abnormal.' These ideological tendencies became clear in the data along with several other trends in how pimps view sexuality in general amongst the sexes and genders.

According to pimp gender theory, it is women who naturally have stronger sex drives and stronger sexual urges; highly contrary to mainstream thinking. Thus it is a woman's true nature to be a prostitute as she naturally seeks sex from as many partners as possible. Respondents explained that tricks are called tricks as they are easily fooled and tricked by prostitutes into being controlled by women's sexuality and into giving them money for it. What is not explained by this theory is why men then pay for sex in much higher proportion than women.

A major source of pride for many of the male respondents came from their refusal to have sexual interactions with the women that worked for them or to have any active sex life at all as it is through sex, they believe, that women control and manipulate men. Thus unlike tricks and prostitutes, pimps do not need and/or want sex; this control over their sexuality is part of they believe sets them apart from other men and therefore makes them 'true men' as they are not at the mercy of any sex drive. Therefore, many pimps would believe that: "White men (and square Blacks) are thought to be "pussy-whipped" by their wives, after having been brainwashed by their mothers to accept female dominance as the natural order of things….Women are able to achieve this control because square men are weak and sexually undisciplined." (Milner & Milner, 1972:161) And furthermore, respondents adamantly asserted that they did not see women the same way that square men do as Sean noted*: "A pimp doesn't have the same type of feelings for a woman that the average man has, and a lot of men are bred and taught to more or less honor a woman and treat women delicately and this and this but a lot of women, if you treat them delicately like that they gonna use you, they gonna step on you; they gonna treat you like a rug."* So in order to prevent themselves from becoming 'pussy-whipped' and subjected to cultural matriarchy, they dominate and control women to protect their 'manhood' which is closely linked to sexuality and sexual behaviors.

The data from this research suggests that pimps claim a significant amount of pride in their ability to refuse sex and to not be controlled by sexual urges. James explained that he felt this was why it was easy for him to recruit women; unlike other men, James wasn't after sex. He explained a typical recruitment scenario:

> *" so I come in the club one night, and I don't have anything to do and I
> might be in one of my recruiting moods, she sees me I give her a hundred*

dollar tip, and I tell her, 'nah, I don't want you to give me no lap dance baby, I don't think with my penis, why don't we have a cup of coffee after work'"

Ultimately, it is this control over their sexuality that grants pimps a sense of superiority to others. Milner and Milner also noted this trend in the 1970's, indicating that one of the most basic mechanisms of control which the pimp must master in order to manage women is the discipline of his own libido p 55, " 'A pimp keeps his dick in his pocket,' which is a double entendre meaning (1) he controls his sexual desire, and (2) his dick is where the money is. "(55) Therefore, it is within the refusal to engage sexually with prostitutes that pimps can assert even more control and power within the relationship.

Many of the pimps offered unprovoked explanations of how they have never been with someone of the same sex nor do they have 'homosexual tendencies'; many of the respondents felt it necessary to make a point of that within the interview in case it was somehow offered or suggested as an 'explanation' for their behavior or choices. This might indicate that this is a suggestion they have confronted before or is an underlying perception they are concerned about giving off. Whatever the explanation for their offering of this information, which was often offered at the end of interviews when I asked if they had anything else they wanted to add, highlighted a conscious attempt to distant themselves from homosexuality or assumptions of it. This merely cemented the heteronormativity and homophobia within pimping culture.

The heteronormativity and homophobia that is rife within pimping culture, and African American street culture overall (Hill-Collins, 2005) is clear in many of the statements made by respondents. For instance, when I asked Ken about how he felt about female pimps, he voiced a lack of concern for their activities but automatically connected female pimps to lesbianism in a not so flattering way:

"I don't really are cause they never really got in my way. But if they did I would pull them and make them go to work. To each his own, go do you thing faggot, don't come around me, I don't care what you do. Pimp, do you thing, but don't come around me with it. To each his own with me, but as long as you didn't fuck with me, we is good. Female pimps, I don't care, do you thang, just stay away from me."

Interestingly, Sue who herself identifies as a lesbian was exceptionally outspoken about male homosexually in reference to her brother when she described his male homosexual sexual engagements with his clients as " wrong, just wrong. That's sick." Thus her expression of homosexuality did not threaten her identity but her brother's she explained feminized him and made him effeminate therefore he was degraded by his homosexuality while she was empowered by hers. But as discussed below, Sue did not really conceptualize herself as

female therefore she did not seem to completely view her sexual interactions with women as an expression of lesbianism.

Michael also connected female pimps to lesbianism when I asked him what he thought of female pimps:

> *"I ain't got no problem with it, I knew a couple of pimps that did have a problem with it, but I didn't have a problem with it, actually I was cool with one of them. She was down, she dressed nice, she didn't dress like no boy, you know that some of them think they got to dress and act like a man but she was a straight lady. She didn't look like no pimp and she didn't look like one of them bull dykes. So was like us, she had a dike in her squad and I did too actually, yeah I had a butch"*

Overall, violations of The Game's gender norm roles of male as pimp and prostitute as female, is automatically by those in the lifestyle taken as a message about sexuality. Thus it is assumed that women who are pimps must be lesbians and men who are prostitutes must be gay. Sarah provides an example of a straight woman acting as a pimp while there are numerous studies that support the participation of heterosexual men in prostitution (Weitzer, 2011) . The intense homophobia that was projected by the respondents was thus turned on those who violated The Game's gender norms and ended up serving as anther means of reinforcing the true identity and gender of a pimp: straight men.

The Gender of Pimping

> *Holly: "And from what you have said, am I correct in the impression that pimping is a man's world?"*
>
> *Sue: "Pimping is aggressive, and if pimping is aggressive means that pimping is a man's world, so be it."*

Heteronormative, aggressive, emotionless, power based, fixated on domination and built on strict, rigid hierarchies of status, pimping does appear to be masculine. The vast majority of pimps within street pimping are men though there is an emerging trend of emerging lady macks. Even with these female pimps, the culture of pimping remains male dominated and patriarchal. Madams, a female dominated management position in sex work, exist as a role close to pimping, but they do not follow the same reoccurring themes of exploitation and control that street pimps do. The specific qualities of the wider subcultural world of the streets mix with street pimping to create a particularly harsh, brutal and forceful masculinity (hooks, 1994)

Sue suggests that there exist some differences in the way men and women pimp indicating that:

> *"Also know this that a pimp is just that, a pimp. If a lady pimp another lady she knows how that lady wants to feel, but she knows how she don't want to feel too, what she don't want a man to do to her. So if you want*

> *that man, and that pimp, that man with that beating mentality, you get that man but truth be told it is a balance, it all depends on the pimp and the ho."*

But even though Sue stressed these differences, she herself often described herself as 'the man' and even began to physically embody masculinity. In an attempt to assert her sexuality, and powerful position, Sue began to wear a strap on dildo regularly that had previously only been used for sexual encounters with her prostitutes. She expressed what this strap on dildo began to represent for her: *"When I found out how much power I had when I put it on, I started walking around with it on. Oh Okay like now I really am the man, I felt like I am the man for real, I got my strap on on, girls on the corner are giving me cards, the whole nine yards, it was exciting "*

Sue faced extreme sexual violence in response to her occupation by other male pimps. Sue was gang raped by five male pimps one evening at a party after which Sue regularly started to carry a gun, wear a strap on dildo and claim to have reached/achieved being the 'man' for having proved herself capable to taking whatever the male pimps dished out. She reflected on the gang rape as an equalizing experience after which she was able to claim the status of 'the man':

> *"I guess in some areas and ways, a pimp is a man's world, but in my world, we all equal cause I done took your beating, I done took five of your dicks, so right now, we are equal. Cause I'll pull mine out faster than a man will pull his out, and see right now I still be like "what don't touch me" cause you showed me that you don't care about a woman, now I am like, I don't trust you. My sayin' is this here, love all trust none. I can love every pimp out here but I don't trust none of them bastards because of what happened with me. They violated me cause my girls were getting more money than them. Well hell yeah, my ladies are ladies, yours are whores "*

Sue took a sense of empowerment and strength from her experience, furthering cementing her determination to prove herself and make it in the male dominated career of pimping. Sarah had no harrowing tales of experiences with male pimps as she was much more low key and discreet than Sue; thus they never felt threatened by Sarah as she was not visible. Sue and Sarah pose interesting challenges to explorations of gender within pimping but even though they are biologically female, they self identified as socially male and therefore simply acted to replicated and reproduce the male domination, patriarchal nature of pimping. Sue saw herself as 'the man' and did everything within her power to uphold behaviors and roles traditionally seen as male within The Game. Therefore, even though there are lady macks, pimping remains male and masculine.

Exploring gender in relation to prostitution and pimping leaves many questions yet to be answered: Is there a significant difference between the way that men and women pimp? Do male street prostitutes have similar relationships with clients and pimps as women prostitutes?

Are the same interactions and experiences of violence the same between male and female prostitutes and pimps? Posing questions of his own that are similar, Weitzer (2011) in his work on males prostitutes suggests: *"such research would be invaluable in answering the theoretical question of whether prostitution has certain "fundamental" or "essential" qualities, irrespective of the gender of the worker and the customer, or whether it varies significantly according to the actors involved. To answer these questions we need systematic examinations of male prostitutes who service men in comparison with those who service women and of female prostitutes working in the same tier"* (381). More research into these topics is needed but this point serves to suggest gender within pimping may not be as 'black and white' as pimps are male and prostitutes are female; variations in these dominant reoccurring themes may or may not challenge current understandings of gender within the sex trades. This research suggested that pimping is exceptionally masculine and is framed within patriarchal ideals and expectations, but varying identities of social actors in different tiers may offer different insights into these interactions and experiences.

The Rules of The Game

Within the United States, many underground communities and street cultures adhere to particular rules and codes related to the streets and hustling. There are general codes to the streets (Anderson, 1999: Majors & Billson, 1993; hooks, 2003) within the Jungle, but these rules tend to specialize and vary according to the specific activity one is engaged in. These codes set the various norms, behaviors and conduct expected of those who operate within street cultures (Anderson, 1999) and underground economies. As is the case with other hustlers and groups involved in criminal, underground careers, pimps adhere to a set of rules and codes which dictate the founding principles and tenets of their trade.

The rules can vary from amongst pimps and communities, but there are consistent trends in the reporting of rules within the subcultures of street level pimps. The variety within pimping communities is highlighted by Gholson (2004) in *The Pimp's Bible* when he describes fifty-two varieties of pimps and is further demonstrated in Pimpin' Ken and Hunter's book, *Pimpology*, who described forty eight laws of The Game. Regardless of this heterogeneity of pimp varieties, there are core principles and ideals that are relatively consistent within street level pimps. The laws that are located within this sector of pimping act as the framework by which all actors within the industry re-orientate themselves into the underground world of The Game.

The aim of this section is to explore the trends and themes that surfaced in the data within this research, with support from the writings of pimps, regarding the Rules of the Game. Firstly, the unknown origins of the rules will be described. Secondly, the Rules of The

Games will be explored highlighting the rules for pimps and between pimps, and the rules for stables. The rules of the various actors regularly overlap and directly relate to other actors and other rules making distinction and separation between the rules difficult as most of them interconnect. The heterogeneity of the rules will be addressed, but ultimately, within communities of pimps involved in illegal street prostitution, there exists striking homogeneity in adherence and reverence for the Rules of The Game.

Origin of The Rules

The history of pimping and the emergence of pimps as they known today in the United States are fairly opaque which further shrouds pimps in mystery and legend. Proving as enigmatic as their origins, the Rules of The Game have historically emerged within specific pimp subcultures and have supposedly existed for at least the last one hundred years in the USA (see Beck, 1967 and Giones, 1972). Following the well documented trends in oral histories traditions within Black American communities (Quinn,2000; Horton- Stallings, 2003), it is possible that pimps relied on these pre-existing social trends to orally pass on the knowledge of pimping that became known as The Rules of The Game. Pimps interviewed for this research and pimps within pimp books (Gholson, 2001; Pimp, 1999; Funches & Marriott, 2002; Ken & Hunter, 2008) assert that the rules have been passed orally through the generations but their origins are unknown. It is most likely that these rules were initially stories of successful experiences and norms within the community that evolved over time to form the revered code. Consensus exits that these rules are American in origin (see Funches and Marriott, 2002; Beck, 1967; Gholson, 2001; Milner & Milner, 1972) but the individual/s and time period directly behind the development of the rules is left unaddressed by respondents, authors and academics alike.

The brief exchange below between myself and Eric, demonstrates how the conversations proceeded with most respondents when I enquired about the origins of the rules:

> Holly: "How were the rules established?"
> Eric: "The rules were established years and years and years ago"
> Holly: "Do we know by who?"
> Eric: "No we don't, it's been passed down, each year, each generation, in
> the pimping game, certain rules changes. The rules in pimpin' never stay
> the same, it changes with the generations."

Thus it stands to reason, that the rules followed today are not the same as they were at their creation. With every generation there are changes and adaptations made to the rules to suit the particular context and various social, political and legal changes. Changes in the rules will be addressed further in the subsection, Changes in the Code, but it is crucial to note that literature and the data from this research supports consistent themes in rules since the 1930's in the USA.

The mystery behind the creation of these rules and where they come from grants pimps the ability to infer and imagine grand, glorious legacies of pimps and pimping in the USA. Often trained and apprenticed into pimping, respondents simply know that their rules came from the OG that schooled them in The Game and his knowledge came from those who taught that OG. Individuals do not suggest mythology around the Rules but instead accept that they have been passed down orally for generations and only fairly recently, have begun to be documented in texts. Regardless of the lack of insight about the origins of the rules, respondents and authors engaged with the subculture of pimps involved in illegal street prostitution proclaim an almost religious adherence to, and reverence of, the Rules of The Game.

The Rules

The first thematic trend within the rules revolves around money. An unwavering drive to make money is hailed as the number one goal in pimping. It is claimed continuously that cash is the principal and core loyalty recognized by individuals within the subcultures of The Game. Phrases such as 'purse first, ass last' encapsulate the message to place income above all else and are frequently relied upon in speech, or rapping. Pimps overwhelming assert that their deepest devotion is to money and the literature, pimp books and research all repeatedly report this sentiment. There are several rules in The Game that relate directly to money, but as money is the core of The Game, the rules related to it are the most diligently observed and enforced.

Firstly, the pimp takes one hundred percent of a prostitute's earning. There is no percentage divide between these two parties; the pimp takes, manages and controls all of the incomes. A prostitute is expected at the end of a shift to surrender all of their earnings to the pimp. Sometimes pimps will locate women on the ho stroll while they are still working to collect money so that the women are not out with large amounts of cash. A prostitute who withholds money from the pimp is said to be '**outta pocket**.' This is one of the biggest infractions one can commit with the rules of The Game. Because prostitutes are not meant to hold or keep any of their income, action is often taken to 'discipline' or 'punish' those in violation. Even though pimps claim to practice 'aggression with discretion', it is very common for women in prostitution to endure physical assault and battery at the hands of pimps for violating the rules (Hodgson, 1997; Raphael & Ashley, 2008; Giobbe, 1994; Williamson & Cluse-Tolar, 2002); the 'outta pocket' rule is often cited as calling for the most severe physical reprimands.

Another rule that revolves around money relates to the nightly **quotas** that pimps set for the prostitutes in their stables. A quota is a set amount of money that each woman is

required to make within a shift of street walking before they can stop taking clients. Eric explains how this is carried out *"I had a quota for each one every night, she couldn't come home unless she had that amount, she could not come into the house unless she had that money."* Regardless of weather, circumstances or physical aliments, women in stables are generally not allowed to return back to their place of residence until they have reached their nightly quota. Multiple respondents explained that the quota for each prostitute was dependent on age, experience and level of attractiveness; thus the quotas varied amongst the women in the stable. It is common that prostitutes in order to gain favor or the attention of the pimp, will exceed their quota for various perks.

The Rules of The Game call for specific codes of conduct between pimps professionally that ensures cooperation and (ideally) minimizes conflict within the community. The most critical protocol for street pimps relates to 'choosing.' Choosing in The Game refers to the act of a prostitute, choosing to go with a new pimp. If and when a prostitute is persuaded to change pimps, it is necessary for the new pimp to contact the old pimp and inform them of the change. At which point, the two pimps meet to settle the issue of choosin' costs (amount owed to old pimp for losses) and the negotiation of the prostitutes' possessions. Eric explains that "*if a ho has a pimp and she is choosin' this one, the other pimp has to call and let the other one know that she is choosin', see that is the respect that one pimp has for another.*" He further elaborated on this by highlighting more specific rules related to choosing within The Game:

> *"there is a code of ethics with pimps, if you my ho, I don't wanna see you in another pimp's face unless you choosin' and if you are, you still gotta pay your quota for that night. See they can't get in another pimp's car, that is part of the code of ethics, you don't get in another pimp's car if you've already got a pimp, unless you are choosin' that pimp, then that pimp has to come and see if old pimp, and then that pimp has to paid the quota for the night. Then you can go, but you still ain't out of the Game, you still in it."*

As alluding to in the quote above, women in The Game with pimps are not allowed to make eye contact with pimps other than their own and are not allowed to approach and/or get in a car with a pimp other than their own. If a prostitute violates these rules without intent to 'choose' she is placed under 'pimp arrest.' Pimp arrest refers to a pimp physically seizing and holding a prostitute until they can contact her pimp and inform him/her of the exchange that happened and that the prostitute violated the code.

Choosin' may be one of the main motivating factors for the use of women in the stable to act as recruiters as it seems there are often no rules regarding the interactions of prostitutes with one another; only with pimps. James was smart to this and stated that, *" if you have wife in laws, you have no reason to become friendly with someone else's stable."* Other

respondents did not mention this as a rule within their stables, so this may explain the reliance on the prostitutes to carry out the majority of the recruitment.

Rules surrounding money such as quotas, and choosin' were the two main rules which were consistent within the narratives of interviewees. The other rules within The Code are often varied amongst different pimps and stables. Sean commented on these differences by noting that one had to 'retrain' new prostitutes as his rules were likely different from their previous pimps:

> *"when you get a steam head that's already been involved within the game, especially if she's been involved with another pimp, then she's learned the ways of that pimp and some of the ways might be coinciding with the next pimp but then some ways are not and so you basically have to re-program em' and that's not easy for every female cause a lot of people will feel that whatever they were taught first is the right way, and you try to teach em' something some times they have a problem with that"*

Rules are also often set for prostitutes regarding drug use and alcohol intake, clothing and appearance, work hours and locations, code of conduct with other prostitutes (or wives-in-law) within the same house, and restrictions placed on what kind of clients a prostitute can take. Below are two examples of the responses offered by interviewees when asked if they had rules for their stables:

> *"my rules was they always had to listen to the news before they went out so they could dress appropriately, they couldn't drink alcohol in the summer, they could have a little reefer, in the winter they would have a shot or two to get ready for the cold, if they was going to wear hooker clothes, they couldn't come out of the house wearing hooker clothes, they had to either have them in a bag or on up under them"* Michael

> *"Nobody can mess with heroin or cocaine, smoke cannabis and a little bit of drinking, that has always been like a no no. That's the first thing they are explained to, and if a women uses heroin or cocaine she can't get her money right, you gonna lose a lot of respect. And that is stuff you can't use for too long cause it is going to show in the way that you look, they way you dress and all that....There were things like don't get in the car but with one guy, just little normal rules that go with it right. If you are going to steal from them, go home-make sure it is worth it before you take it because you can't work no more that night, but get the money at all costs but go home then."* Richard

Ken was the only pimp interviewed in this research that was not involved in street prostitution, but instead his stable worked out of the local strip clubs he made arrangements with. He was fully aware of the code and the way other pimps work, but refused to adhere to the rules and what they called for. He described in detail his feeling about the rules that the street culture of pimping include:

> *"The guys that had the girls workin' the streets, they come, I don't know, I don't want to say that they look down on the guys that take em' to the*

clubs, but they feel like you a hardcore pimp if you've got the girls workin' the street, they feel like that's more hardcore. I didn't look at it like that though, I looked at myself like finesses so I did things with finesses and I was lookin' for longevity, I wasn't doin' it for no short term and I don't care about no title…. I don't follow no rules, I break them. So you know if, the rules of the Game, if your girl goes to another guy, he's gonna call you and say 'hey your girl done chose me' you know, thinking you send me her clothes and all of that, and by law, you know the law of the street, you supposed to give that guy all her belongings and that's supposed to be it but I never followed that. Because it's 'hey your girl chose me' "nah, 'where she at? you better bring her back because there is going to be a problem' and they bring her back. But the rules of the Game is when your girl chose another guy you let her go and give the other guy her belongings, but I never followed that, my way or no way."

This example is important because it highlights the specificity of 'The Rules' to street pimps, the consequences to refusal of them and supports the 'professional behavior' and courtesies generally followed within street pimping. As a pimp who worked indoors, Ken felt these rules were irrelevant to him and he outright refused to engage with other pimps in the boundaries of these rules. Because he worked outside of this code, Ken was a loner in The Game and was not well connected to other pimps. He did not rely upon or need the same network of peer support that the other pimps needed. In order to defend and maintain his role outside of the code, Ken, unlike the other respondents, was regularly armed and engaged in far more violent confrontations with other pimps. He had to be ready at all times to defend himself against those who would seek to 'encourage' him to follow the rules. But as with the other pimps, he did uphold specific rules and expectations within his stable to maintain control and a smooth running operation.

While variation in rules existed for conduct within The Game depending on the pimp, but there was again consistency in the responses of interviewees regarding their rules and protocol regarding women trying to leave prostitution. Basically, a prostitute leaving the stables means a loss of income and because of this, a prostitute cannot simply decide to stop prostituting. She can leave to go with another pimp but not to exit The Game completely. As reported in literature and research, pimps are notably violent, harsh and strict when it comes to attempts at exit. I enquired with Eric about how a prostitute can leave and his response demonstrates the general approach and attitude towards this by respondents:

Eric: "If she wants to leave the Game? She has to take off, she has to run off."

Holly: "She can't just come to you and say 'I am done'?"

Eric: "No, it don't go like that. That's why the average ho today is so afraid of getting hurt….. just imagine, you've got five girls in the house, you let this ho leave with no static, now the rest of the hos feel like they can leave whenever they want without nothin' being said. Where is that going to leave you on the street? You a petty pimp man. That's why when

the average ho leaves, when she exits the Games, she had better go where that pimp cannot find her for 2-3 weeks or a month. … So if you let her leave without anything being said, that's gonna have an effect on everyone that is in the house. If she leaves, it can't gonna be pretty, she comes with money and when she leaves, 'ho that's my money' because you mad."

Prostitutes are usually forced out of the stable once they reach a certain age and are no longer able to bring in the same money that they used to. Some pimps helped to take care of these women after they exited by helping them set up business or providing the monthly stipends, but other pimps simply ceased to have contact with them. Pimps tend to take better care of bottom bitches when they retire than other prostitutes due to their longevity and loyalty to them within The Game, but overall 'senior citizens' and women who were burned out were abandoned by their pimps.

Though functional, day-to-day rules vary for prostitutes depending on the pimp, the consistency in aspects of the code offer insight into the social organization and norm coherence within this underground street career. The rules are well known by both pimps and prostitutes, and as such the norms, expectations and interactions are clearly prescribed and made explicit to both; there is little compromise afforded to the interpretation of the rules and their enforcement. Loyalty to the code is expected of all individuals participating within these illegal street level cultures of prostitution and as such, they are diligently enforced and infractions are not well tolerated. These rules help to ensure more amicable interactions between pimps and set in place protocols to deal with disagreements and business arrangements. Respondents seemed to suggest that their own unwavering loyalty to the code, along with that of other pimps, creates a sense of security and predictability within The Game that is not offered by any other element within it. The code thus provides justifications, security, reassurances and consistency for those who uphold its messages.

The code is enforced and upheld by pimps and prostitutes alike which suggests that the participation of both parties within this regulatory framework is based on full disclosure and willful participation. Though far from an a-symbiotic cooperation in the authorship and benefit from the rules, respondents regularly offered defenses for their actions by asserting that prostitutes agree to live by these rules and therefore, understand the varying potential outcomes of their infringement. To the respondents, prostitutes compliance with the code relieved pimps from responsibility for undesirable outcomes. Furthermore, especially when regarding violence against prostitutes or forcing them to endure harsh conditions, respondents frequently relied on the rules, to justify and explain questionable, untoward behaviors and actions (Scott & Lyman, 1968). By invoking the code for support, pimps are able to distract from other factors and influences that impact their decisions. It also acts to divert responsibility from the pimp as one should 'hate The Game and not the player.' In other

words, they did not write the rules they are just following them, thus alleviating them of any personal accountability for their use and enforcement of the rules, regardless of what that entails.

Full indoctrination and adherence to the code, and a pimps specific rules, are imperative for a pimp to maintain stables, especially larger ones, with success. Thus these rules and their enforcement are critical to stable management by ensuring the control and respect of the pimp within a stable. This provides the necessary framework for specific styles, approaches and techniques pimps use to maintain and successfully manage their stables.

Management

According to pimps, 'management' claims of a huge portion of a pimp's workload and demands the most time and energy from them while actively pimping. And as this research defines a pimp as an individual who lives off of and *manages* the earning of one or more individuals involved in prostitution, management is a core component of what a pimp is and what they do. A pimps responsibility to 'manage' includes management of all of the stables' activities, the prostitutes individually, enforcement of the rules, the living accommodations, legal issues and fees, oversight of the various relationships within the stable, travel, living arrangements and all financial transactions and allocations. Management does not represent the glitz and glamour of the lifestyle but rather the mundane and everyday tasks that accompany this role. This responsibility, that of management, is presented as the bane of the pimp's existence and is clearly the least enthusiastically discussed element regarding it. It was anticipated that narratives disclosing methods of management would be divulged in great detail as they often are offered as such in prostitution research. It was expected that pimps would offer insight and details into the everyday facets and experiences of general management, but instead, there was a notable silence on this facet of The Life. The respondents were not enthusiastic about discussions on management and generally only breached the topics when prompted.

Management did not appear to be a topic that pimps were keen to talk about or engage in lengthily discussion on unless it related to proving their domination, control and power within The Game. With their identities deeply entrenched in notions of hegemonic masculinities (Connell, 1995) and cool pose (Majors & Billson, 1993), respondents had a vested interest in presenting themselves as ruthless, apathetic and dominating (Anderson, 1992: 1999). A significantly more violent and manipulative character begins to emerge from the narratives of pimps than has been presented thus far when discussing management. After offering descriptions of violence and/or control, respondents often fell silence and hesitated to further explore these issues. An element of silence and avoidance was injected into the

interviews around this topic. As noted in the methods chapter, there is possibility that my female identity gagged the respondents in relation to this subject but there are other possible explanations for their silence. The main alternative explanation for their silence lies in the fact that admission of the use of regular violence would undermine and minimizing their pimping skills. Overall the respondents in this project corroborated much the data offered by prostitutes in other research regarding violence, abuse and control, while simultaneously contradicting it. This will be examined to assess the possible contributions of this research to the existing body of work on pimp-controlled prostitution. Additionally, I will use literature on batters and sex offenders (Scully, 1990), in this section to examine the various excuses and vocabularies of avoidance and motive(Scott & Lyman, 1968) used by respondents regarding violence.

This section will discuss and explore the elements related to management that the respondents presented. It will highlight the factors and experiences that they identified as relevant to management and in doing so, demonstrates the various themes that emerge related to power, control and violence. The first section will discuss the use of **violence** in pimping in conjunction with pimp- controlled- prostitution literature. Secondly the various methods of **maintaining relationships within the stable and between the prostitutes** will be explored. And lastly, a brief description of the narratives offered by respondents about their relationship with their prostitutes will be assessed. Through the discussions on these elements new rules will be highlighted, subcultural elements will be addressed and complex systems of interactions and relationships will emerge; it is within these contexts that the vital interpersonal workings of the pimp will surface to shed light on the convoluted, and often uncompromising, methodology of pimpology.

If one reflects on a popular quote offered by Iceberg Slim that in relation to prostitutes, it's a pimp's goal to "con her that Lincoln never freed the slaves" (1967:104), it becomes clear the extent of exploitation and manipulation that can be anticipated in the pimp-prostitute relationship. Respondents' insistence that women in their stables 'chose' them and that no one makes prostitutes do what they do bellies the fact prostitutes are actively and coercively 'managed' in their lifestyles and careers when with pimps. Nowhere does this become more evident then within discussions around management. It is within these calculated and systematic modes of operation that pimps demonstrate their expertise in exploitation, manipulation and abuse. Their past aptitude for almost psychopathic behavior (Spidel, et al, 2006) is stealthily camouflaged within their narratives where they seek to appear posed, in control and blameless. Probing of unflattering revelations often lead to an almost indignant silence on their part and more often then not, attempts to engage in a more detailed discussion about violence and force lead to embittered protests of non-responsibility.

Through a closer examination of these issues, the image of a highly exploitative, violent and abuse relationship begins to emerge.

This section will briefly explore the issue of psychological abuse and violence, but I wish to strongly stress two points prior to engagement with this topic. Firstly, the brevity with which I am covering the topic of violence does not serve the severity and prominence of these experiences in pimp-controlled prostitution justice. The data and analysis that could be afforded to this topic is tremendous, but within this project, I must limit the focused attention I grant this topic, but this is not due to a lack of importance. Violence is a core experience in pimp-controlled prostitution and again, the condensed coverage of this aspect in this thesis is not intended to undermine the gravity or extent of it. Secondly, the following discussions on violence are strictly in relation to pimp-controlled prostitution, that is prostitutes who have pimps, rather than a sweeping, characterization of all sex work. This analysis is based strictly on this relational context and is not intended to be applied or generalized to other areas and/or experiences of sex workers.

An Introductory Note on Violence, Control and Management in the Pimp-Prostitute Relationship

Women who prostitute in the United States experience an almost unparalleled and relentless amount of violence in the activity of streetwalking (Brewer, et. al, 2006); prostitutes face capricious physical, sexual and verbal violence while engaged in prostitution which has devastating and detrimental impacts on their mental, physical and emotional health, even after existing prostitution (Raymond et al, 2001; Nixon, et al 2002; Dalla et al, 2003; Williamson & Cluse-Tolar 2002; Norton-Hawk, 2004; Raphael & Ashley, 2008; Dalla, 2002). Women involved in prostitution experience varying degrees of violence; on one extreme, Brewer, et al (2006) asserts that "Prostitute women have the highest homicide victimization rate of any set of women ever studied," (1101) while women also described "being honked at, yelled at, pelted with eggs, or "tailed" by residents who hoped to shame them away" (Bernstein, 2009: 61). "Street sex workers are embedded in the same violent social spaces where street violence and other subcultures of violence exist. As such, it would appear that to a considerable extent, street sex workers ply their trade in a subculture of violence (Surratt et al., 2004: 45)" and thus, the violence they experience while operating within this subculture of violence, is significant and alarming. A respondent of Surratt et al (2004) offers an explanation for the 'tolerance' of violence, "It's like there are two worlds, there's a good world and then there's a violent world and it's like alls we know is violence, alls we know is violent men (53)." Pimps utilize this culture of violence, and the vulnerability of prostitutes to continued exposure to various forms of violence to justify their own use of violence. In acting as additional sources

of violence, pimps in this research undermined long-standing assumptions regarding the pimp's role of providing protection for prostitutes (Hodgson, 1997).

Violence and exploitation were inherent characteristics within the pimp-prostitute relationships that were discussed in this research. Unlike other projects that have highlighted a more cooperative and symbiotic relationship between pimps and prostitutes (Shelby 2002; Harpocopos, et al., 2000; Marcus et al., 2012), this research uncovered relationships deeply entrenched in exploitation and were highly a-symbiotic. The continuum of violence experienced by prostitutes throughout their lives and careers (Russell, 1995; Nixon, et al, 2002; Silbert & Pines, 1982; Hogdson, 1997), appears to be perpetuated and heightened in severity by involvement with pimps. Bourgois & Schonberg (2009) suggest, "Violence operates along a continuum" which targets vulnerable segments of the population. This concept of violence "refers specifically to the mechanisms that lead those who are subordinated to "misrecognize" inequality as the natural order of things and to blame themselves for their location in their society's hierarchy (Bourgois & Schonberg, 2009:17)." Thus prostitutes internalize shame, marginalization and deviancy leading to an 'acceptance' and expectation of violence for engaging in an activity that is socially disdained (Pyett & Warr, 1999; Nixon, et al. 2002; Bernstein, 2009). Surviving abusive, violent histories (Hodgson, 1997; Nixon, et al., 2002; Raphael & Ashley, 2008), prostituted women likely merge into close interpersonal relationships tainted with violence from pimps, and additionally experience high levels of violence within their work; they are throughout their lives and experiences engrossed in cultures and experiences of violence (Arata, 2000; Messman-Moore &Long 2003).

The frequency with which pimps utilize physical violence against prostitutes is largely unknown (Weitzer, 2009) and varies greatly across projects, ranging, for example, from prostitute victimization rates of 85% for sexual assaults, 95% for assaults, and 77% for kidnappings at the hands of a pimp (Raphael, 2004) to figures of just over half of prostitutes having experienced violence from pimps (Nixon, et al. 2002; Raphael & Ashley 2008). Evidence from previous research supports that women with pimps experience violence more frequently than sex workers without a pimp (Williamson & Cluse-Tolar 2002; Norton-Hawk, 2004; Raphael & Ashley, 2008). This increase may be the result of several factors: 1) most women with pimps are engaged in streetwalking where violence is higher, 2) pimps set quotas for the women, encouraging them to take greater risks to meet the monetary requirements (Williamson & Baker, 2009; Norton-Hawk, 2004; Williamson & Folaron, 2004) and 3) women with pimps are more likely to have less experience in prostitution when compared to women without pimps, thus, their ability to evaluate risk and avoid harm may be limited (Bernstein, 2009). These factors are in addition to the physical violence women experience from pimps.

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Respondents spoke of violence solely in reference to *physical* acts; often overlooking and ignoring the presence of violence in language, relationships and employment environments that they were party to constructing for those individuals who worked for them. Interviewees did not recognize sexual, verbal, emotional, social and psychological violence as violence; so again, they reflected directly on violence by referring to physical acts of harm towards prostitutes, while negating others. From the violent, degrading terminology of The Game ('ho', 'bitch', 'woman', etc…) to the often dehumanizing rules, (for example, while in the presence of pimps, prostitutes are not to speak unless spoken to and are not allowed to make eye contact with pimps) the dominance and omnipotent power of the pimp is enforced while systematically and aggressively demeaning and subordinating prostitutes. It is within this context that 'tactical' and strategic acts of physical (including sexual) violence is employed to enforce rules and discipline. Interviewees framed a pimp's ability to maintain control and respect over prostitutes as at least partially dependent on the use of (or the potential use of) violence. Discussions on management revealed that though pimps idealize the notion of pimping being a mind game (psychological control and violence), physical violence is often relied upon to ensure powerlessness and consistent cooperation. So in an effort to not diminish their pimping skills in management, respondents insisted that the use of physical violence was relied upon strictly to enforce rules and as punishment for rule infractions. These justifications for violence against prostitutes as offered by interviewees leads to the next section where respondents' narratives of 'tactical' violence are analyzed and discussed.

Narratives of 'Tactical' Physical Violence and Violent Enforcement

Pimps are exceptionally skilled in glorifying most other aspects of the life, but it is in the management of their prostitutes where they seek to provide evidence for how cold and hard they were/are; thus they begin to glorify and romanticize violence in The Game. Respondents tended to be unapologetic about their often callous, and abusive methods, actions and behaviors towards prostitutes as this provided evidence of their 'coldness' and indifference. Thus when they did speak of management, they spoke of it overwhelming within the context of rule enforcement, control and compliance. Often, this cold management boasted the use of verbal, emotional and physical violence. The use of violence is claimed by pimps to only happen when rules are broken or disrespect takes place; thus it is claimed to be' justified' as a means of reinforcing discipline, punishment and respect for their authority. The means of inflicting various violence and their expressions differed amongst pimps depending on their style, 'pimping personality' and how their relationships were constructed with their stable. This section will explore the explanations and descriptions of violence as offered by

pimps. In their explorations of violence, respondents offered three main accounts of and for their violence: 1) as tactical and punishment, 2) lack of personal responsibility for acts and 3) scapegoating. This will be then be linked to the literature on pimp-controlled prostitution to highlight similarities and contradictions in the reporting of pimps versus those of prostitutes.

When I asked Sean if we could talk about 'aggression with discretion', he obliged but his hesitation was clear. He took a clear pause before speaking and his pace had slowed significantly while breaching this topic. Sean chose his words carefully understanding the social distaste for violence against women, especially while talking to a woman:

> *"I hate to use god as a (inaudible) he wants us to not only love him but to fear him as well right, that's the same thing with a PI, you want your woman to have a certain amount of respect for you, to honor you, you want her to respect you, you don't want her to uh, like I said you want her to respect you, and so sometimes in order to get that respect you might have to use some discipline, and that didn't always mean with me that you had to get physical, but in some cases, things happen, you know, I've got to have respect, I put respect before money and all of that I don't care how much money you making you don't respect me I don't want it , so there have been some times when um, I might have slapped a chick or something sometimes you threaten a beat down and I'm not saying that didn't sometimes happen was no ongoing thing, but the majority of the time, if I could slap, kick, the chick or something like that, it only happened once, that's why I say aggression with discretion because like some people think like well I'll slap her and I got her in line so now every time she get outta line I'm gonna slap her nah, no, it happened one time, hopefully she got the point, and I'm going to try and keep her in line, but she has been shown I will get a little physical"*

The sentiment that a pimp's maintenance of respect required violence was echoed in many of the narratives on management and rules. Overall, respondents justified violence through denial of the victim (Scott& Lyman, 1968); ultimately asserting that prostitutes cannot be victims of 'undeserved' violence. This tactic of explaining violence acts to deny the violence as a wrongful act towards an 'undeserving victim' and instead seeks to frame the violence as an acceptable response to challenges of authority, the breaking of rules and disrespect by a 'willing and deserving victim.'(Scott& Lyman, 1968) Pimps suggest that participation in The Game by prostitutes and the adherence to the code renders them compliant and consenting in experiences of violence. Furthermore, similarly to problematic assumptions made about battered wives who stay with their abusers, pimps contend that because the women stay in prostitution and with them, they are cooperative in this violence. Also, as discussed in more detail in the section titled 'Pimps and Masculinities' pimps adhere to a gender model which contends that women by nature are meant to be subservient and that it is in their best interest to submit to the control and power of men (Milner & Milner, 1972; Ivy, 2007; Funches & Marriott, 2002). It is within this framework that pimps suggest that violence is in the best interest of the prostitute as it is how they learn and modify their

behaviors and attitudes.

Violence was further justified by pimps through the use of the appeal to their loyalties to The Game and the code that accompanies it (Scott & Lyman, 1968). Because pimps saw violence as normalized and frequent within The Game, it was to be expected and encountered frequently by prostitutes. Thus minimizing their contribution to experiences of violence and framing violence as normal and expected for those in prostitution. This perspective also serves to support the notion that prostitutes were complacent in their experiences of violence by their involvement in The Game alone.

The use of violence may suggest pimps' decreasing ability to use emotional manipulation or psychological coercion to control women reflecting a failure in their abilities to utilize their verbal pimping skills to gain cooperation or compliance. Thus they may first try to use threats of harm to them or family, harm other women in front of them, or will threaten verbally or with weapons (Hodgson, 1997; Raphael & Ashley, 2008; Nixon, et al, 2002) before resorting to direct physical violence on the prostitute. But if the disclosures of prostitutes in various projects are true to reality, violence may become a part of the relationship between pimps and prostitutes as time passes regardless of psychological control; violence becomes another means of further cementing the hold and bond between prostitutes and their pimps (Farley, 2007; Raphael & Ashley, 2008).

Pimps often suggested it was only other pimps, particularly gorilla pimps, that relied on violence as a way of asserting dominance and control within their stables. As none of the respondents classified themselves as gorilla pimps they saw themselves as something different than *other* violent, abusive pimps. This was striking because the respondents who sought to distance themselves from this style of pimping often self-reported narratives of the capricious and arbitrary use of violence that would suggest they had similar pimping styles. If they perceive violence on a continuum, their own use of violence may have been less than what they classified as violent or 'gorilla' but it was nonetheless violent.

Regardless of the current inability to offer and suggest the frequency with which prostitutes experience violence at the hands of pimps, there does appear to be a discrepancy between the reporting of prostitutes and that of pimps. The respondents presented violence as a means of tactically enforcing discipline and compliance with rules, but did not talk about the arbitrary and unpredictable violence that is often disclosed in the narratives of sex workers (Farley, 2007; Raphael & Ashley, 2008; Williamson & Baker, 2009). Instead, respondents spoke of 'justified' violence for the infraction of rules.

Respondents suggested that their preferred method of dealing with prostitutes who did not meet the quota was to not let them back into the house until they had met it. But James, along with others, suggested that inference with money and failure to earn enough put women at risk for violent retribution.

> *James : "what you need to do shorty is put your foot in the bitch's*
> *ass, if you want your money, man you too soft"*
>
> *Holly: "What exactly does that term mean? foot in the ass…."*
>
> *James: "Literally. what do you mean that's not a term- it's a*
> *statement, literally, beat her ass."*

James' use of the word 'need' emphasizes the entitlement and justification felt by him to utilize violence against women in that they needed physical violence inflicted on them to rectify the situation. Keeping prostitutes in fear of violence was reported by respondents to serve as an effective method of enforcing rules, making money and ensuring the women did not leave the stable without permission. Pimps suggested that the unpredictability of their use of violence left prostitutes unsure of what to expect and therefore kept them 'inline.' Many of the respondents spoke about the **need** to keep prostitutes in line and respectful as well as the **need** to use violence. The use of the word need suggests that pimps felt violence was absolutely necessary for the maintenance of the pimp-prostitute relationship. As with several respondents, James suggested this need was based on the pimp's dependency on prostitutes for money, food, cleaning, and as James explains *"we are talking about a man who had everything I didn't have to wash my own ass baby, not if I didn't want, I didn't have to wipe it. My lady would go to the store and I would be like "oh shit, who is going to turn the TV now, don't take too long, daddy don't know what to do without you.""* In his assessment of this relationship, James paradoxically suggests that it is the prostitutes who hold all the power due to the pimp's dependency on them; He describes this

> *James: "you become a severe co-dependent what happens, what they*
> *don't know, who then has the power? If she is giving you all this*
> *money and one day they decide we just gonna punish daddy, there's*
> *only one way to hurt a pimp baby, "we're not gonna give him no*
> *money" he'll become submissive or he'll become very dangerous"*
>
> *Holly: "Which is more likely?"*
>
> *James: "Oh, that will be dangerous"*

In the above quote, James asks the question, who then has the power? And in doing so suggested that it is women in this exchange who hold a position of power, This explanation of the power position in the pimp-prostitute relationship reverberates through pimp literature (Slim, 1968; Giones,1972) . Furthermore most pimp literature and respondents go a step further and suggest that matriarchy justifies their violent reclamation of power from women in these relationships and in society at large. This topic has been discussed in more depth in the sections that discuss gender and masculinities, but for now, it is important to note that it would seem that pimps have a firm belief that men are meant to be in control and to dominate while women are expected to be subordinate. Thus according to pimps, achievement of this

subordination is justified even if by means of violence and intimidation.

Ken, like Sean, asserted his preference to be feared rather than loved as he suggested keeping women within his stable afraid of him and in fear was an effective means of management. He explains *" people don't get out of line around you when they afraid. Even if the fear ain't real, they don't know, they've just heard so much they don't want to chance it so they stay in line or they don't get out of line."* I had asked Ken further if he ever had trouble with women coming back at him legally with vendettas to which he responded:

> *Ken: "nah,I was feared, I am telling you, they would never, they wouldn't even call the police on me. They would never, right even to today, they would never. And nobody has ever come back with a vendetta, it's not worth it. The trouble that they are going to endure, it won't be worth it. One lick out and they are going to get a thousand licks back. You had better think about what you are doing and you had better choose your words."*

> *Holly: "Was most of the enforcement of the rules with the women physically then?"*

> *Ken: "Nah it was violent, cause I would make all the girls in the house jump on you. If they did it wrong, everybody in the house is gonna jump on you. I didn't have to do nothin'. So if you did it wrong they are going to make sure you get it right cause even if you just got done talkin' to her, and she is your best friend, she is going to jump on you too. But I didn't let them mess they face up cause that's they money, but body punches, head shots, nobody gets punched in the face cause that's your money."*

> *Holly: "So not only did the one do the recruiting and training, they also did rule regulation?"*

> *Ken: "The women would tell them , don't do this or that, if you do that there will be a problem and we will have to whip your ass and don't do this and don't do that. They would let em' know."*

The above excerpt points to a management tactic that a few other respondents reported using as well; they themselves would not inflict physical violence on prostitutes but would have the women in the stable do it instead. They are therefore not the ones directly responsible for the violence and thus deny 'using' violence to manage their stables. This explanation also acts as a form of scapegoating in that by placing the blame and responsibility of others, respondents felt vindicated in that they were not 'directly' responsible for the violence. Sue used the same method as Ken by enforcing discipline and punishment by using the women that worked for her as the inflictors of the physical violence:

> *Sue: "I never fought with them, they fought each other, if one fails out line, baby you take care of that one for me**, I never never never** cause …"*

> *Holly: "So you were never violent with the women"*

> Sue: "**No it was never me**, but they would fight each other, if one do
> wrong when it comes to me the other one would take care of it and would
> keep it inside the house, once we fight inside this house, we don't want it
> outside this house whatever you guys do to each other in this house is in
> here"

Pimps who rely on this method were/are responsible for 'giving the order' but overall, they projected a sense of immunity from criticism for this as they never got their own hands dirty. Ultimately, in their view, 'it was never them.' This form a 'discipline' inflicted violence on both the individual at the receiving end of the assault and of the perpetrators. As the carrying out of violence was essentially forced upon those who inflicted it, their coercion and manipulation also constitutes an experience of violence. The group of women who would assault the other women for infringement of the rules were essentially acting under the threat of experiencing violence themselves. So while respondents tended to understand this situation as one in which the blame and 'offense' rested on the women, this method increased those impacted and afflicted by the pimps' violence and does not act to relinquish guilt from the pimps but rather exacerbates it. This tactic of violence further highlights the extent of control and persuasion held by pimps over the women who worked for them.

Another utilization of scapegoating violence rests in drug and alcohol use and abuse. Respondents occasionally suggested that being intoxicated justified their violence as they were not entirely in control of their behavior; the substance was. As described by James, drug abuse radically impacted his pimping style and the frequency and intensity of the violence he inflicted on women:

> Holly: "You had said that this drug use created a monster in you…"

> James: "Well it actually created another kind of pimp too. I was now
> taking no excuses, now, 'you go get my mother fucking money!' cause
> now I got this gorilla to feed too along with trying to shine and look
> good, so now you doing a whole lot of shit….I became very violent, I
> almost beat my woman to death, literally, I snapped, every woman I got
> on top of, it was like this built in,, I was trying to beat her to death. … it
> was 'what bitch, I will fucking kill you'. It changed the whole face of my
> career"

James later explained a break-through situation where he seriously assaulted a women due to a drug induced psychosis: *"So I took my shoe off that particular day, after losing all of my money in a craps game, her feet bleeding from blisters from walking on them all night, literally and that was the money for us to get a hotel room and I blew it again. I took my shoe off and I threw it at her and said 'get the fuck on' I started having what you call drug induced psychosis. She started looking like a man to me, literally, I fractured her arm with that shoe."* After this instance, James experienced a series of events which lead to his exit from pimping

which is a similar narrative to those often disclosed in pimp literature and novels (see Slim, 1968;Funches and Marriott, 2002) Even though substance use can be framed a means of scapegoating it is also an attempt to offer a justification for undesirable behavior. Thus, as it is generally normative for the influence of substances to explain or 'justify' behavior, even callous behavior, respondents may be relying on substance use as a justification for acting in abuse and violent ways towards women.

Not only was the influence of drugs or alcohol on the pimp cited as a reason for using violence, but a prostitute's use of drugs or alcohol also acted a 'reason' and/or justification for inflicting violence on them. From James' disclosure of seeing a pimp murder two of his prostitutes for drug use to Ken disclosing his use of 'corporal punishment' against prostitutes for drinking on the job, for pimps who had rules against prostitutes using drug or alcohol, it is clear that use of substances put women at risk for assault. But for pimps like Ken, who had strict no drinking or drug use policies, he regularly partook in substance use and expressed what a 'mean drunk' he was or how violent he became on certain drugs. The rules that pimps hold themselves to are very clearly different from those that they hold prostitutes to, and regardless of who was using (pimp or prostitute), substance use tended to be a consistent variable in the narratives of physical assault disclosed by respondents. Often respondents seemed to be attempting to undermine any stereotype of the pimp that gets the women that work for them substance addicted to assert control; historically there has been a long standing assumption that this is a core tactic used by pimps and has traditionally and even currently led to greater distain and abhorrence for the figure of the pimp (Keire, 1998). Substance addiction can be used as a means of manipulation and control by pimps and is used, but many of the respondents, again seemingly aware of the presumption, sought to make a point to that they did not allow drug and strictly enforced this policy. But this was not the case with all respondents.

A few of the respondents reported drug dealing along side pimping in order to increase income and to make sure they were more spread out among illegal, underground activities in case one of their areas of economic venture became 'too hot' or slowed down in revenue generating. For these pimps, their exposure and access to drugs for regular use was relatively unlimited and they tended to have a more relaxed approach to the women who worked for them using as they were in control of the supply. Michael explained: "See drug dealing and pimping go together because a lot pimps have a dope habit, a lot of the women that worked for pimps had habits. So the pimps actually played on that type of a woman, you know that had that needed that crutch. And that's how I started sellin' dope, so I was sellin' dope at the same time I was pimpin'… But I knew that if I dropped out of the dope game I still had the pimpin' game and the girls would have to pick up their pace."

Thus drug use played regularly into the narrative of physical violence offered by respondents. For many of the respondents, illicit substances played a factor in their everyday lives in one way or another and in doing so, added an additional element of criminality and unpredictability to their interactions with the women that worked for them. It is in 'exit' from prostitution that it becomes clear the level of control pimps hold over women. The inability for women to simply leave or stop prostituting is highlighted by the severe violence that they face if they attempt to leave. In many research projects and in my own interviewing experiences, it is clear that the ramifications and beatings received for attempted escapes are often the most severe and lucidly remembered by prostitute women (Raphael & Ashley, 2008; Farley, 2007). The severity of the violence experienced by women who try to leave pimps underscores and highlights the lack of autonomy, free will and agency that women with pimps experience. Their inability to leave is indicative of being held and trapped in prostitution by the control and holding of the pimp (Raphael & Ashley, 2008; Farley, 2007). Women often report fear for not only their own lives and safety in trying to escape but also for their families, friends and children; by ensuring that they are actively involved in, and aware of, all aspects of prostitutes lives, pimps can effectively wreck havoc and destruction in most areas of a prostitute's life. The few respondents that I asked about women leaving, responded flippantly and often laughed at the suggestion of women being able to chose and decide to just leave The Game.

This topic and aspect of The Life deserves more detailed and focused analysis than can be offered in this project, but ultimately it is critical to draw attention to a prostitute's powerlessness to leave prostitution as a telltale indicator of the abuse, coercion and almost slave-like conditions that women endure when with pimps. Prostitutes with pimps cannot simply quit prostituting according to their own desires though a prostitute can leave and escape a pimp, but doing so runs huge risks for their safety and well being and in order to do so, they need significant assistance and support networks to remain hidden from the pimp and to stay out of prostitution.

The tales of unabashed violence and physical abuse offered by pimps were stressed by them for a variety of reasons, but in many ways it was the unstressed and often ignored daily violence which was most abhorrent and shocking within narratives. The physical violence experienced by prostitutes is regularly focused on as it produces a physical, documentable and visual representation of the relationship between pimp and prostitutes and often elicits a response from people; it is the subtle (and not so subtle) psychological and emotional violence that transpires in these relationships that proves arduous to explore and explain.

Managing Prostitutes and Relationships: Means of Maintaining Order

For pimps, maintaining order amongst prostitutes relies on two core conflicting circumstances: 1) peaceful cooperation and co-existence and 2) fierce rivalry and competition. On the one hand, pimps do not want to deal with drama, fights and disagreements because they end up having to find solutions or intervening which is the middle management role that they deeply resent. On the other hand, having competition and rivalries in the group of women that work for them ensures they do not all work together against the pimp, encourages them to earn more money to out perform the others and makes sure they are regularly vying for the pimps' attention. So for pimps, part of their task was to maintain a careful balance between these opposing sentiments to both keep peace with the women and to also encourage more productivity from them.

Some of the respondents reported living with the women that work for them while other pimps house the women that work for them separately from their own residences. But either way, usually the women all live together thus making getting along with each other critical for daily activities, functioning and co-existence. Women who work for the same pimp are also highly reliant on one another when they are working the streets; therefore, any conflict within their relationships can equate to serious trouble and repercussions when working the streets. Often relying on each other for information about dangerous vehicles and johns, police presence, other pimps and aggressive prostitutes, the women usually work together to help physically, legally and psychologically protect one another when working (Vanwesenbeeck, 1994; Hodgson, 1997; Lowman, 2000). When there is competition and disagreement amongst them, they instead withhold critical information from one another and will report back to pimps any behavior that infringes on the pimp's rules (Hodgson, 1997; Milner & Milner, 1972); thus not only do the women then lose support in their safety but they must remain extra cautious to not violate the pimp's codes. It is highly advantageous for alliances to be formed and for professional working relationships to exist amongst their women in order to help protect them in a work environment of normative violence.

Many of the respondents spoke of setting rules about how disagreements in the house were to be settled, which often relied either the pimp or the main woman to solve. Some respondents chose to settle conflict amongst the women with violence or withholding material good, other engaged in more 'creative approaches' as one respondent reported handcuffing two prostitutes to each other for 48 hours that were always fighting. Regardless of how they deal with disagreements between and amongst the prostitutes, these disagreements are often presented by pimps as the management task that takes up the bulk of their time. Thus the maintenance of these relationships and mediating conflict become a core responsibility for pimps, especially those who are managed many prostitutes; for example,

some respondents reported having up to thirteen women working for them at one time. Respondents often explained that it was not so much the number of women in the house at one time that impacted household harmony but the personalities of those in the house that made all the difference.

Sean laughed his way through explanations of the daily disagreements that happened with his prostitutes: *"Yeah yeah see I've girls try to stab each other and all kinds of stuff cause they jealous or one girl might be getting more attention than the other one, one might be bigger one thing than the other one, a ho might get mad cause a trick did this this and that, and man, it's crazy, this is true."* And for Sean, as with other respondents, this caused him enough stress and aggravation that he ultimately claimed it was the constant conflict amongst the women that attributed to his emotional and mental burnout from The Game. Sean then continues to discuss the relationships amongst the women by highlighting the role of competition amongst the women:

> *"competition can be a real issue, some hos you just can't kept together you know, all of them is not going to be able to work together and not all of them is going to be able to reside together, and that's another thing the PI got to be able to deal with, you've got to juggle with them, you've got to known when you've got women that are gonna work together or if you've got to keep bitches over here and bitches over there or what, that's all part of the game you might have a solid stable and then one rotten chick comes in and rips everything up"* Sean

Eric suggested that *"The personalities alone can run you batty, over a numerous amount of years, it gets to be hectic and the nerves get bad, it just has you on the edge."* Sean also experienced high degrees of stress from 'the personalities':

> *"I was tired, tired of messin' with them hookers, it's hard work, that's why they say, pimpin' ain't easy. Its hard work cause you dealin' with these different attitudes, these different personalities, each one got a different problem, but its your job as a pimp to stay on top of all of that"*

Ideally, respondents such as Sean and Eric wanted the relationships between and amongst the women who worked for them to run smoothly with minimal intervention on their part but this was an unrealistic expectation. Thus multiple respondents clearly found themselves frustrated having to carry out tasks that they did not think they should need to do. As a goal for most pimps is 'minimal effort maximum benefit', it is evident that many of the pimps started to experience resentment and frustration having to put in more effort than they wanted to 'earn' their income. Over time, the reality that they would have to engage in a fair deal of micromanagement and daily tasks consistently exposed them to the part of the non-glamorous side of pimping: middle management.

Competition seems to play a more significant role in households where pimps have sexual and pseudo romantic relationships with the women that work for them. Pimps who

disclosed that they never had sexual relationships with the women who worked for them reported far less competition in the household than those who had active sex lives with the women. The respondents who had sexual relationships with the women tended to encourage competition for their attention and affections in order to increase cooperation and income from the women. Eric spoke to this experience stating*: "I had five women at one time that was in my stable, and each one of em' wanted to spend a lot of time with me, there was always confusion about that, I always had women that wanted that type of action."* To win favors and more attention from the pimps, respondents reported it was not uncommon for women to regularly bring in more than their quota or to do extra hustling (mainly shoplifting or robberies) to impress the pimp. Respondents claimed that within the subculture of The Game it is a point of pride for women to be able to brag about bringing in enough money for the pimp to buy for example a brand new car or an expensive fur coat. Michael explained,

> *"you may have two three girls say they go to jail one night, and they come home and they say "Daddy, so and so just bought their man a new car, do you want a new car?" It's like a competition like when we have player balls you know the pimps come dressed up the girls get all dressed up my girls be coming up to me " baby his girls all have mink coats" and I be like "how y'all want mink coats if you don't bring in but $100 a night" and they be like "well, we'll do better" see it's The Game."*

These pimp goods act a symbol of their hustling skills and allowed them to boast about providing for their pimp. Similar reoccurring themes have been found in other pimp research (Milner & Milner, 1972; Hodgson, 1997) and it is this fierce commitment to supporting and appeasing the pimp that lead many respondents in this research and pimp authors alike to claim that pimps then turned prostitutes into tricks by making the women pay for *their* sexual and other services. Mottos in The Game such as 'Purse first, ass last' illustrate that only once a pimp has received money from a woman, can they have sexual relationships with them. Pimps did not see this as a form of prostitution but rather as further support for their power, dominance and ultimately their manhood. Iceberg Slim explains in his autobiographical novel that "a pimp is a whore who's reversed the game in the whores" (Slim, 215) thus it is now the women who pay for sex, attention and affection.

Though pimps described what otherwise sounded like romantic relationships, albeit highly dysfunctional ones, they refused to acknowledge affections or caring for women who worked for them. They did express appreciation for the hard work and loyalty of those women who stayed with them, for some respondents in excess of twenty five years, but respondents would never claim these relationships as romantic in the mainstream sense. Most respondents who had women working for them long term maintained contact with them after exit and a few respondents were engaged in intimate, romantic relationships with these women once they had left pimping. Most respondents were uncomfortable and tended to trip

up a lot trying to verbalize the relationship that existed between themselves and the women that worked for them long term. But not all of the respondents were as nostalgic or gracious when speaking of former prostitutes, to them they were nothing more than employees and when their purpose and usefulness ran out, so did their role and interactions with the pimp. It is commonplace within street prostitution, regardless of what is promised, that once a woman can no longer pull in a decent quota and starts to become a 'burden' on the pimp, they are simply kicked out of the house and leave with nothing regardless of how much they have earned for the pimp or how long they have been working for them.

Managing the women that work for them requires pimps to strike a crude and unpredictable balance between violence, psychological manipulation and periods of temporary reprieve that includes affection, attention and praise (Farley, 2007). In addition to having to maintain their own relationships with the women, they are also required to manage the relationships between the women that work for them which requires a various approaches. Often encouraging both harmony and competition amongst the women simultaneously, pimps ultimately create environments of contradictions and opposing pressures for prostitutes. It is likely that this dynamic itself creates stronger bonds and dependency for prostitutes as learned helplessness, and increased reliance are encouraged (Farley, 2007). Pimps have varying approaches to management and often expressed the need to shift between approaches depending on the circumstance or the interpersonal dynamics of the women working for them, indicating that pimps needed to be flexible and perceptive in terms of correctly reading situations and deploying the correct tactics to deal with them. Or as Sean explains, one needs to be a 'ghetto shrink": *he basically has to be a psychiatrist or psychologist he's got to be a ghetto shrink cause he is dealing with the female mind and most men don't have the energy or agility to do that not in a formidable manner, especially not to where it would benefit them. "* Thus it the ability to manipulate the behaviors, thinking and actions of prostitutes to their own benefit that defines a good pimp and it is through violence, 'mindgames' and management of relationships that this is achieved.

Regardless of varieties in approaches amongst respondents, themes emerged that indicated respondents relied on tactics that would ensure cooperation, and elicit a drive to please through competition and malleability in the women that worked for them. A fuller picture of these dynamics become clear when compared to narratives and reports from women in prostitution about their experiences with pimps (for example see Hodgson, 1997; Dalla, 2002; Kennedy, et. al, 2007; Williamson & Cluse-Tolar, 2002; Farley, 2007) . Again, I wish emphasize that the many of the complexities and details of pimp-prostitute relationships are beyond the scope of this particular research project and analysis; and significantly more research is needed that explores this topic. But this research can offer insight into the means by which pimps perceive their actions and roles in the relationships and it is in this capacity

that the data offered above sheds light on the inner workings and motives of pimps within their management capacity. For respondents, management in their criminal careers focused primarily on inter and intrapersonal relationships rather than on management of prostitutes careers and daily activities within their capacities as prostitutes. Certainly, the management of bills, household needs, clothing and transportation was required of pimps in their daily roles but it was their roles as 'ghetto shrinks' that they primarily focused on as their main management task. It is through the exploration of management that key components of pimpology become clear and more detailed understandings of the pimps' role, tactics and incentives are illustrated.

Concluding Notes on The Mindgame

The mindgame that is pimping, is highly reliant on psychological violence and abuses against prostitutes. For a pimp to be successful, they must rely heavily on coercion, manipulation and false premises while decreasing the self-esteem, identity and ultimately, self-determination and autonomy of prostitutes. Respondents did not classify psychological and emotional abuse as violence and as such, minimized the impact, gravity and long-term consequences of these interactions. From the perspective of the respondents, there was nothing violent or problematic about their interactions with prostitutes as these violences are normative within the pimp-prostitute relationship; what other might define as abusive, controlling and violent, they would simply define as pimping. The mundane and daily violence within these relationships that did not fit the pimp's understanding of violence, arguably and likely certainly had a heavy impact on the prostitutes. Within the convoluted and high volatile relationship between pimps and prostitutes, there are variables which encourage women to remain within prostitution akin to women battered in romantic relationships. The violence infested environs that prostitutes exist and work within, serve to further complicate and intensify their experiences of violence with their pimps. It is critical to examine the interpersonal dynamics that create the bond between pimps and prostitutes and to explore the motivating factors and elements which influence prostitutes' decisions to stay with pimps. Again, the discussion below is limited in reach and breadth but this is not reflective of its importance. Although it proved a topic that respondents rarely *directly* talked about it proves crucial for the overall discussion on pimps, but not as much as detail other core factors and themes. The use of psychological violence is scattered throughout this thesis and is likely glaring obvious to its audience; it is in this section though that a direct exploration of this violence as such is dealt with head on.

Farley (2007) suggests an extensive explanation, from a psychology perspective, of the dynamics and violences that transpire within pimp-prostitutes relationships. In doing so,

she attempts to highlight the ways in which pimps command control and effectively exert of sort of 'brainwashing' over the women who work for them (Farley, 2007). Social isolation has been identified by several studies (Farley, 2007; Hodgson, 1997; Williamson & Folaron, 2003) as the primary start to achieving control over women by pimps; by cutting women off from all previous social institutions along with family and friends, prostitutes are kept isolated, misinformed and disorientated (Farley, 2007; Hodgson, 1997; Williamson & Folaron, 2003). In a Chicago study, almost half of all women were banned from seeing family or friends by their pimp (Raphael & Ashley, 2008) and moreover, generally among prostitutes as more time is spent in prostitution, women will begin to distance themselves from conventional institutions such as church, school, family, and various other social institutions as increasingly time is spending socializing within the lifestyle and those involved in it (Williamson & Folaron, 2004). Or as Hodgson explains "The ideology embraced within the prostitution environment is produced and reproduced, which contributes to neutralizing the individual identity of the new recruit and weakens any attachment to previously learned values and norms." (Hodgson, 1997:69) Additionally, cross-country pimping and the constant movement it entails, leads to confusion, disorientation and unfamiliarity in prostitutes that encourage dependency on pimps for assistance, information and connections.

Other extreme violence is inflicted on prostitutes by pimps to assert control as well; sensory deprivation is also used as punishment as physical and mental exhaustion are deliberately induced to keep women weak and unable to protest treatment (Farley, 2007). Strict regulation and monitoring of food intake, clothing worn (regardless of outdoor temperatures), working hours, working locations and even access to medical attention are also elements within the pimp-prostitute relationship. Pimps will often threaten to harm the prostitute's family or friends or to expose them as prostitutes to their families or friends; this blackmail is often made possible due to the prostitute's (forced or chosen) involvement in pornography. But throughout all the negative experiences and violence pimps inflict on the women, sprinkled in-between are times of reprieves and indulgence which enforced the notion of the pimp being supportive and care taking and creates a strong traumatic bond (Farley, 2007). Farley explains that "The psychological and neurobiological reactions to alternating terrorism with gratuitous rewards deepens traumatic bonding and reinforces the twisted attachment system through a variable ratio schedule of reinforcement, among the most potent methods of behavioral conditioning know to social scientists. (55)"

Pimps seem to borrow tactics from various other leaders to incite fear and maintain cooperation: "using techniques like those of cult leaders, charismatic religious figures, and military drill sergeants, pimps manage to create an inflated sense of their own power, prestige, and importance (Farley, 2007: 55)." Degradation is physically enforced through abuse, humiliation and loss of physical autonomy, but also employed is verbal and mental

degradation. Pimps create capricious rules, send inconsistent and mixed messages to keep the women alert and confused, they create double binds and forced choices which Farley (2007) explains " This particular method has the effect of undermining critical thinking, creating post-traumatic anticipatory dread, and eventually a severe, at times unremitting case of learned helplessness." (57) All of this could easily be critiqued as only being the most extreme of extreme ways in which pimps work, but to the defense of Farley (2007), the majority of primary source literature offered by pimps suggests that do they do in fact consciously and actively participate in these methods to gain compliance from women.

Though pimps do rely on denial of the victim (Scott & Lyman, 1968) in their telling of violent narratives, more frequently they do understand quite clearly the impact their violence has on the women and know what is accomplished. Thus there is not a lack of awareness for the harm done as with other batterers (Boira & Marcuello, 2013), there instead exists an apathy and lack of concern for the harm done as pimps justify their behavior to meet their own gains. And as previously mentioned, it is this coldness and lack of emotion that is the mark of a good pimp. Pimps exploit the normativity of violence experienced by prostitutes and use that to frame their own actions. They describe their violent actions are 'minimal' and infrequent compared to what prostitutes deal with almost daily, therefore, is not important or noteworthy. Also, pimps rely on social apathy and indifference towards prostitutes and fall back on the justification of the woman 'just being a prostitute.' Thus, not only may she deserve it, but no one is really that bothered because of what she does for living (Pheterson, 1993).

In addition, pimps, even the female ones, fall back on gender social structures and roles to justify their violence. They suggest that women are meant to be kept in line and they want men who will not let them get away with things, thus this behavior is acceptable and warranted. According to respondents, men are meant to be in control and to dominate and women are intended to be subservient; this is the basic underpinning of their understand of the 'natural' gender order. This was covered in more detail in the section on gender and pimping, but it is relevant to this current topic of violence in that because men are supposed to be in control and power, any means (even violent) used to secure and maintain that role is accepted and in their eyes, normative. Furthermore, it is their belief that women seek men who are 'not afraid to put them in their place' and 'don't let them get away with bullshit'; so according to pimps, women actually *want* men to respond violently if necessary to their behavior.

Chapter 7: Exit From The Game: Becoming an Ex-Pimp

The 'pimping is for life' and 'pimp or die' mythologies that inspire players in The Game fail to address the inconvenient reality that pimps can and do leave The Game. It appears to be a rare individual who lives to an old age still pimping and 'exits' by natural death. Pimps who do not 'pimp or die' and leave pimping before the end of their natural lives, have broken a code within this lifestyle to which they proclaim loyalty to and ultimately fail in their dedication to The Game. Desistance from pimping directly challenges pimpology by highlighting contradictory 'rules' and mythologies within it. This phase of the criminal career sheds light on the grim realities of this lifestyle and demonstrates the fallibility of these individuals who seek to represent themselves as impervious. And if what James says is true, that "a winning gambler doesn't leave the table", then the gamblers, or pimps, only leave the table when they start to lose in The Game.

Previous research on this population has neglected to explore and present exit from this criminal profession leaving gaps in current understandings of the population. Focusing on background, entry and life in The Game offers invaluable insight into the career, but different reoccurring themes begin to emerge when exit is accounted for. Thus solely focusing on the components up to and including life in pimping excludes crucial insight regarding the fragility, hostility and expiration of the career. Narratives of retirement by former pimps not only demystify this subculture in various ways but they present an alternative view of The Game as offered by those no longer involved. Their withdrawal from The Game points to elements of the lifestyle seldom highlighted in previous research; elements which provide insight into the not- so -glamorous elements of pimping.

To investigate these themes and reoccurring themes in the narratives, this chapter will rely directly on the works of Fuch Ebaugh (1988), Scott and Lyman (1968) and Bjorgo (2002) to frame data themes. To explore the process of *becoming* an ex, Fuch Ebaugh's (1988) work will be integrated to highlight the sociological processes of becoming a former or an ex, and what this could mean for pimps. The accounts framework by Scott and Lyman (1968) will be utilized to explore the various justifications and excuses heavily employed by respondents during their explanations of exit. And the final major influence for the outline of this chapter comes from the work of Bjorgo (2002) who studied individuals' exit from Neo-Nazi groups. The similarities in the modes of exit and themes in motives for exit in both Bjorgo's (2002) work and this research justify the application of this literature to the current data.

When seeking to explain their retirement, respondents shifted narrative reoccurring themes away from praise for pimping and begin to reveal the underbelly of The Life to explain their loyalty divergence from The Game. Respondents across the board asserted that pimping was an amazing lifestyle that they loved, but as Michael lamented, *"the lifestyle of a*

pimp Holly, I am just going to tell you, the upside to it is glamorous, the downside to it is pain." And years and years in pimping guarantees that experiences of 'pain' in The Game will occur. Interviewees proclaimed that once pimping becomes monotonous, and self-deprecating, and failure becomes inevitable, pimps exit the lifestyle. But respondents struggled to negotiate explanations for their exit because it required them to undermine their glorification and praise for The Game.

Narratives which were earlier in interviews confident and clear became obscure, inconsistent and scattered when respondents started to speak about their exit from this criminal career. As former pimps, respondents needed to re-evaluate and assess their motives for involvement in pimping and for exit, which presents difficulty due to the inconsistencies in perspective and experiences they attempt to juggle. Former pimps struggled to explain to both themselves and me how a lifestyle, which they have described as glamorous, generous and electric eventually, turned on them. Inconsistencies within pimpology begin to appear in the explanation of their motives for retirement. Whilst respondents consistently asserted their full control and dominance in The Game there is a remarkable shift in representation when discussing exit. In explaining their exits, pimps must shift the focus of their experiences from one of dominance and conquering to submission and failure. In order to do this, they adjust the framework in which their experiences are presented: they become victims of The Game. Funches and Marriott (2002) describe the average pimp's fall from grace in stating: "In the end, the vast majority of so-called macks and players end up spent, strung out, and desperate. Even before the glories of the life are gone, the fancy clothes can barely conceal the ravages of corruption. The scars all tell stories of their own." (7-8) These scars become the focus of the exit narratives and act as defense against the respondents' ethical contradictions and shortcomings.

Incarceration, and debilitating drug addiction were offered as motivating factors for retirement for those who did not 'chose' to leave The Game; in other words, they burned out. For those who felt their exit was voluntary, their 'choice' was influenced by a range of factors from prison to emotional stress. Ultimately for respondents, they reached a point where the costs of engagement in The Game, whether experienced or anticipated, outweighed the benefits of remaining active. This chapter offers an exploration of the 'how' and 'why' of the respondents' exit from The Game. Focusing on the interviewees that have left pimping, this chapter highlights the stresses, motivations, crises and traumas which lead to abandonment of The Life. The explanations offered for exit will be assessed within an accounts framework (Scott & Lyman, 1968) complimented by a focus on the respondents' reliance on 'feeling

rules' (Hochschild, 1979) to explain their withdrawal from The Game. As the final[31] stage of their criminal career cycle, retirement signifies major changes in their lives and forces them to exist in mainstream society; a world that has become completely foreign to them and directly challenges the values they have become use to.

Emotional 'A(E)ffect'

Harrowing tales began to emerge as the respondents provided evidence for the loneliness and emotional/mental stresses of pimping. When prompted to describe their motives for leaving, respondents began to integrate stories of trauma, loss and emotional stress. Prior to discussions on their retirement, respondents refrained from 'putting a black eye on pimping' but were eager to divulge the darker side to justify their desistance. Respondents started finding it useful to discuss The Game very differently than its previous presentation as an omnipresent and infallible force. One of the most frequently utilized accounts the respondents used to explain their exit relied on explorations of 'emotional distress'.

When respondents recalled emotional hardships they relied on the presentation of pimping as acting and/or as a 'front' as noted in Pimpology Part 2. Thus what they do in pimping is not really them, relinquishing most responsibility for their actions and behaviors. Because they are just acting, their 'real selves' where hidden and restrained when 'acting' as a pimp. This view of self also diminishes responsibility for actions and behavior since it is not 'the real' person taking part in these activities, it is the performative self. During interviews, respondents began to express narratives of recalled emotional hardships that they were forced to subdue and restrain while they were pimping.

But these stories of woe are relatively inconsistent with the themes disclosed throughout the interviews; also, respondents' insistence that they have mastered emotional performances calls into question the extent of intentional performance within the interview setting. As self proclaimed masters of manipulation and 'ghetto shrinks', former pimps may have left The Game, but they still carry habits from The Game with them. It is probable that they still possess strong tendencies to engage in communication that relies on manipulation and distortion in order to present as trusting, charismatic and suave individuals (Harocopos, et.al, 2000). As discussed in the next chapter, respondents explained that they had left pimping but their minds were still very much in it because pimping is a mind-frame as much as it is a career.

Presenting themselves as 'good' and/or 'moral' people required respondents to rely on normative emotion rules which they are aware of, but they do not subscribe to (Hochschild, 1979). The inconsistencies in their reflections of traumatic events and emotional

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[31] This research was an ad hoc exploration, therefore it is possible that some of the respondents have returned to pimping (though it is very unlikely) and a few were not completely out yet.

distress suggest that the sudden inclusion of 'sad tales' in the interview had more to do with their desire to redeem their character than explain why they left The Game (Scott & Lyman, 1968). In order to support their claims of exhaustion and stress from pimping, it became necessary for them to expose the underbelly of the lifestyle and articulate their negative experiences within it.

This chapter will outline the excuses and justifications proposed by Scott and Lyman (1968) to explore respondents' narratives of exit. The emergence of the use of 'sad tales' was particularly striking when narratives reached explorations of retirement. 'Sad tales' are introduced into the respondents' narratives allowing them to rationalize their failure and exit from The Game. Scott and Lyman (1968) describe the careful use and purpose of the sad tale as, "The sad tale is a selected (often distorted) arrangement of facts about a dismal past, and thus 'explain' the individual's present state." (52) As sad tales were used by some of the respondents to explain entry into The Game and their draw towards it, the sad tales tactic is re-introduced in the interviews to validate their desistance. Respondents also began to overtly rely on denial of the victim and denial of injury within these narratives to further explain their motivations for exit (Scott & Lyman, 1968).

Respondents explained that the performances demanded of them around the clock, especially their emotional performances, eventually started to exhaust them and become detrimental to their mental and emotional wellbeing. Blurred boundaries between their 'backstage' and 'frontstage' performances impress an unrelenting stress on pimps which leads to an increase in 'sloppy' pimping, poor judgment, an increased need for coping strategies (usually drugs) and desperate, drastic actions (Goffman, 1959). These effects are triggered by years of working in an environment that consists of stressors from police, interpersonal network drama, family issues, competition, financial pressures, inconsistent, unstable relationships and high emotional stakes; all slowly chisel away at the individuals dedication to staying alive in the Game. Thus, "The strain of constantly dodging the giant foot takes its toll; the degree of sadism, masochism, drug and alcohol abuse, and violence in The Life is born of profound stress and frustration" (Milner & Milner, 1973:109) Pimps describe experiencing emotional stress regularly from everyday 'job requirements', occasionally from major traumas and loss, and nagging 'guilt' when addressing the topic of exit. These three sources of 'emotional strain' were the main focus of discussions on emotions within the interviews.

Respondents asserted that one of the most taboo emotions in pimping does manage to creep into the psyche of a few individuals: 'guilt'. This emotion is frowned upon in The Game because as noted throughout this thesis, pimps continuously invoke accounts that deny injury and deny victimization of those they harm. The normative violence experienced by prostitutes, strain on family relationships, injury to friends and their treatment of prostitutes supposedly occasionally shakes their firm footing in pimpology and triggers self doubt and

remorse. The inconsistent application of this 'guilt' and it selective utilization suggests its use as a justification (Scott & Lyman, 1968) for exit rather than a reformed emotional reflection of self. Furthermore, respondents' insistence that they do not feel remorse or regret for their involvement in pimping calls into question the extent to which they experience guilt.

Witnessing the physical aftermath of the violence regularly experienced by those in prostitution, Sue described a scenario that provoked the nagging question: is it really worth it?

> *"one of em gets kidnapped, she went to a bachelor party, everyone in the bachelor party decides they wanna fuck em', so her they kidnap my girl two days, when she is found, she is found in the worst condition you can every imagine vagina torn up, butthole torn up, she had to be packed from the back cause they actually tore her up she, the literally tore her up and she literally oh my god, not go back out on the streets anymore cause they beat her so bad, they beat her so bad and tore her up, her hemorrhoids were torn out, everyone wanted to fuck in her in ass, they were doing unmentionable, you've got a penis in your mouth a dick in your ass someone is trying to stick a dick in your pussy at the same time and this is when you starting thinking oh my god, is it really worth it?"*

She then reflects on these experiences of witnessing the aftermath of violence as part of the job and while exploring the overlap between the normalization of violence within prostitution (outside of her control) and her personal responsibility (within her control).

> *"Oh my god that was my fault, I assigned her to that setting, and then you know you do this guilt trip, and if you have a heart, it bothers you because you set that person up for failure not so much failure, but to be hurt, and you don't know that's what's going to happen but that's taken chances it all about taking chances. Each time they are going out on the street they are taking a chance"*

Sue remained pimping following these events, among many others, regardless of feeling partially responsible for injuries and physical harm incurred by the prostitutes. Sue's 'heart' interfered when she faced a situation that encouraged her to reconsider her career choice. Sue did 'feel bad' about the situations discussed above, but it was not until it directly impacted her and her family (well her sister not her brother) that the motivation was there to re-evaluate. Sue had previously pimped her brother, who was involved in prostitution prior to involvement with Sue, but according to Sue it was not until she started pimping her sister that she started face a moral crisis.

> Sue: *"If you have a heart you say I'm not going to do this anymore, so I withdrew myself for like six months but I looked at one of my sisters, she started getting high and going out on the strip, I'm like damn, I can't pimp my own sister, that's my blood sister, " come on sister I need you to look out after me" I can't do this you my sister " but you can take care of them bitches?" You right, they're bitches but you're my sister, and they can be a bitch but you're my sister, and you sit down to think and you have to separate, what's the difference? If you a pimp you a pimp*

whether its your sister your momma, you still a pimp so I'm like damn do I want to do this or not? Ended up watching over my sister, while she turned dates, okay and this started to do something to me cause this is my sister, my baby sister, its wrong, its wrong"

Holly: "Did you feel that while you were doing it or before?"

Sue: "No I started having the thoughts after my sister got involved"

Holly: "So you agreed initially and then had second thoughts afterwards?"

Sue: "Yes because it's wrong to look at those six women and do it, but when it became my sister it became no this ain't right. The only difference is that this one is my sister and wrong is wrong"

Witnessing her sister's increased drug use and regularly watching her engage in sexual acts with tricks, hit a nerve with Sue which made her feel that her role as a pimp was 'wrong.' Following this, Sue remained out of The Game for about six months before she was pulled back in. It is unclear exactly how many times she left and returned, but it is apparent that she struggled for months, if not years to leave as she was experiencing difficulties with disidentification (Fuchs Ebaugh, 1988). For many other pimps though, trauma, loss and intense emotional situations were a part of The Game and did not necessarily act as the reason for leaving pimping. Instead of acting motives for exit, these traumas and events set the stage for explanations of retirement. These sad tales and those that follow seem to act as evidence to support their claims and likely acted as a neutralizing element against challenges in the interview setting. Scott and Lyman (1968) identify 'background expectancies' as valid accounts within verbal exchanges meant to invoke emotional expectations and empathy: They are defined as:

> "those sets of taken-for-granted ideas that permit the interactants to interpret remarks as accounts in the first place. Asked why he is listless and depressed, a person may reply, "I have family troubles." The remark will be taken as an account, and indeed an account that will probably be honored, because "everyone knows" that "family problems" are a cause of depression." (Scott & Lyman, 1968: 53)

Likewise, in the interview setting, explaining these various emotive and distressing experiences, set a tone in the communication in which their explanation for retirement from The Game may go unchallenged. Accounts which invoke background expectancies are situational, and therefore, respondents may have considered these explanations 'understandable' and compatible with a mainstream squares' (myself) understanding and reading of social cues.

Towards the end of the interview, Michael explained that he had recruited a woman to work for him who was later murdered by her husband who found out about it. Michael

suggested this situation had a profound impact on him, *"Man that bothered me for a long time and even today when I talk about it, it bothers me cause even though you are what you are and doing what you doing that don't make you not human, you know, you still have feelings."* He highlighted this situation as evidence of hardship in pimping while explaining his exit to me. Michael expressed that a combination of loss and guilt caused by this situation weighs heavy on him and was regularly returned to in the interview as evidence for the loneliness and emotional isolation that exists in pimping.

Richard relied on 'sad tales' as well to illustrate emotional stress in The Game. Richard explained his inability to express emotions within pimping by describing the death of a prostitute.

> Holly: *"So how did you deal with Maria's death?"*
>
> Richard: *"That's that thing that you can't show because they can't find out that as a pimp you ain't stone cold. You going to throw her a burial and a wake, but you know, you have to keep movin'. But internally, it bothers you because you actually feel like this wouldn't have happened if she wasn't doin' what she was doin' right? But the reality is, she was doin' what she was doin' before she meet you, it just happened on my watch, so I didn't personalize it for too long."*

Richard seems to relinquish any personal responsibility for the death of one of his prostitutes by highlighting her prior participation in prostitution; she would have been doing this anyway, thus, not to weigh on his conscience. But when Richard described this situation to me he started by expressing his continued regret about this situation and how affected he was/is by the loss. His explanation above could be exploring his response at the time as opposed to his views on the experience now, but it is more likely that at the time, he felt both guilty and apathetic at the same time. He is supposed to feel, act and respond to the death of a prostitute in pretty apathetic and objective terms as pimpology demands, but the performance required of a pimp does not normally allow for genuine emotional responses, anger being one of the only 'genuine' emotions occasionally permitted. As he suggests *"That's that thing that you can't show because they can't find out that as a pimp you ain't stone cold"* because to violate his stone cold persona would mean a significant loss of respect from *'they,'* 'they' being the women who work for him, other pimps, other criminals, other prostitutes and anyone else who he come in contact with while pimping. When he explains that *"internally, it bothers you"*, it becomes clear that he was under immense pressure to manage his emotions and to just *'keep movin.'* " Thus his emotional response at the time did not, and could not, reflect internal turmoil.

Richard, like Richard, relies on denial of victim accounts and even victim blaming to explain violence towards and the murder of prostitutes.

> *"the girls that I have worked with have lost friends on the track. You know when johns uh, they found them in garbage cans, all tore up and you know they try to show that stuff on TV, it's worse than that. Because*

when it come to the dollar, some girls will do anything. I mean literally anything they will try."

His statement above suggests that the physical harm inflicted on the women was consensual: 'they were doing it get money.' His explanation denies the victim victimization and instead implies their accountability and participation in their own abuse. In both Richard and Marcus's experiences, they were not responsible directly for the violence inflicted further reducing their responsibility. From their perspective it would seem that 1) prostitutes lives are insignificant 2) prostitutes would have been doing the work with or without a pimp 3) they somehow agreed to the act that lead to their death and 4) that violence is normal and expected within The Game. Supported by the apathy and denial in their descriptions of these events, these events are utilized within the interview to highlight the horrors of The Game and the emotion stress they may face.

Denial of the victim appears to be used by respondents as a 'feeling rule'; Hochschild (1979) explains that a feeling rule can act as to "delineates a zone within which one has permission to be free of worry, guilt, or shame with regard to the situated feeling (565)." The feeling rules that exist within The Game appear to grant this zone free of guilt and responsibility when faced with violence against prostitutes; be it inflicted by others or themselves, The Game itself is responsible, not any specific individual. Though this feeling rule is relied on frequently, it would seem that when pressed to place responsibility, pimps place blame on the prostitutes themselves. This acts to simultaneously deny the victim and blame the victim. In order to minimize their actions, relinquish responsibility, and support their claims for 'moral convictions', if the prostitutes are deserving victims and at fault, the pimp is less culpable and/or not guilty.

Feeling rules within this subculture are very prescriptive for pimps and become constraining and complicated when death and traumas occur. Pimps are supposed to lack any emotional relationship with their prostitutes, but regardless of this 'supposed to', they claim that they do have them and despite The Game indicating they should not feel and/or display any emotions over losing prostitutes. Because of their retirement, it seems that the respondents had a hard time negotiating their residual adherence to the general The Game's code of conduct (the performance elements of pimping) and 'actual' emotional accounts (backstage insight) which they are now at liberty to express (Hochschild, 1979; Goffman, 1959).

Emotions and their expression, especially 'feminine emotions', are equated with weakness, lack of self control and frailty and expectations to refrain from experiencing these emotions greatly restricts pimps' ability to grieve and mourn. According to respondents, the emotions they described feeling after deaths includes sadness, loneliness, depression, and guilt among others; all emotions which pimps are not allowed to carry therefore, these had to be forced backstage as much as possible in order to maintain respect and status on the frontstage

(Goffman, 1959). The extent to which these emotional rules are actually internalized and accepted by pimps is questionable, especially in the case of loss. Their accounts further complicate potential for reading their motives and emotional responses due to their reliance on denial of injury, denial of victim and scapegoating (Scott & Lyman, 1968).

Respondents proclaim that regardless of the code, which calls for the absence of emotion, they do internally emotionally respond to death and loss like members of mainstream society (acknowledging mainstream feeling rules). They express the difference between how they *did* feel versus how The Game enforced what they *should* feel (Hoshchild,1979). They claimed that the tension between the how they *should* feel versus how they *do* feel is so great that many actually start to question their survival in The Game because emotional and mental control is absolutely central to pimpology. Their inability to adhere to the feeling rules of The Game signifies their 'slipping' in the lifestyle.

James expressed straining to mask emotions over the loss of prostitutes in the Game. He describes the need for 'numbness' which was at times inadequate:

> *James: "But yeah I have known a few ladies to die very violently."*

> *Holly: "How do you cope with that in The Game?"*

> *James: "You don't, you pretend, that's where the drugs come in babe. The numbness, its part of the game you know a little bump of that, can you imagine stuff like that …. you can't even bring yourself to go to the funeral, how can I go see my lady now? even though I paid for the services"*

Pimps lose others within the Game as well. For James, the death of his best friend, also a pimp, lead to a major change in his perception of The Game. Because the 'cause' of his best friends murder was a prostitute who intensified and escalated an everyday encounter, he turned his bereavement directly towards the women who worked for him. The 'real' responsibility for his friend's death was another pimp, but James stressed solely the role of the prostitute and even defends the other pimp in his narrative. It was a game changer for him. An argument had broken out between one of his friends' prostitutes and another pimp. He explains the prostitute *' she won't shut the fuck up…'daddy this motherfucker,' confusing the situation and infusing it"* and verbal confrontation then ensued between his friend and the other pimp:

> *"So he said something to the guy and this spun off, the guy said something to him which made him do an abrupt spin around, and when he did that, he scared the guy, and the guy stuck him. I thought he had hit him, he said to me ' man shoot that mother fucker man, he just stabbed me' so now we are all frantic, shit Holly, I am looking at this cat, just like I am lookin' at you and he is lookin' at me, and my friend is right there dying, holding his stomach still standing, 'shoot that mother fucker man' and my thinking told me if I kill this mother fucker man, and if you not that bad hurt, so I told his lady go get the ambulance, go get the ambulance and he was looking at me like holy man I didn't mean to, I*

didn't mean it, and I could see it, I am looking at the guy and his buddies just done ran past me, got in their car and pulled off, 'give me the gun then god dammit, I'll kill him' I cocked it, I leveled off, and the bullet shattered the back window, and we are on a very dark street, I walked him over to the car on the passenger side. I was going to drive him but I didn't even know where the hospital was, I was going to go somewhere, by the time I got in by the drivers side to get in and he was stretched out, I jumped out, he hadn't quite died yet, he looked up at me and I looked down, we are talking thirty years ago, and there was a silence that I cannot adequately explain, and we said good bye to each other"

After this experience, the emotional rage and grief that the death of his friend instigated within James impacted his pimping style; it switched from 'gentleman' to 'gorilla.'

James: "So yeah, I became very violent, I almost beat my woman to death, literally, I snapped, every woman I got on top of, it was like this built in,, I was trying to beat her to death."

Myself: "What were you thinking at the time was that blind rage that stemmed from that or.."

James: "Yeah it came from that, it was 'what bitch? I will fucking kill you'. It changed the whole face of my career, I didn't care about any person in the world, that was my friend, we had our own thing, we was going to buy hotels and shit, so that kind of started a downward spiral"

Thus for James the death of his best friend provided a justification of his violent behavior. Responsibility for severe physical assaults and, by his own admission, attempted murder/s, is placed on the loss of his best friend and not on his own actions.

After years of intense emotional management and stressors, pimps get 'worn out' and burn out, which is made more evident to them through aging. A few of the pimps I interviewed had been in The Game for over twenty years, but most fell between ten and fifteen years; more than enough time for playing the 'ghetto shrink' to take a toll. They expressed that as time went on their ability to keep up with the demanding pace and intensity of pimping was waning. Eric admitted, " *It can be said that it had gotten to be too much on me, I had gotten older, and it was wearing on me."* The high stakes, fast paced lifestyle had also caught up with James who reflected on the same experience *"I am on my way out, I am getting older, my catch hand is getting badder, I am not catching as fast as I can, cuz the pimps game is for the young, that handsome young man that can stay up all night, school all day, all of that, I was getting older, my body was breaking down, my mind was starting to settle, I had no one, if I died today, no one to mourn me."*

Again, questioning the reliability of emotional distress as an incentive for exit is justified when one reviews respondents' hindsight accounts of regret or remorse (or lack there of) for involvement in The Game. I straightforwardly asked Richard if he had any regrets about his involvement in pimping to which he replied*: "I wouldn't change a thing. I*

wouldn't change any part." Respondents, with the clear exception of James, responded similarly when asked about regret and/or remorse. If they did express regret it was for actions that impacted them directly and negatively and not for impact on others; they did not feel regret or remorse for the violence against prostitutes, violating laws or the impact it had on others in their lives. They did express regret for decisions and actions that looking back they realize would have secured their future in The Game. Ultimately, they regretted actions that led to their exit. Thus, it is within reason to suggest that the exploration of these situations acted as an appeal to a 'sad tale' approach to avoid in-depth exploration of failure and violation of the 'pimp or die' code.

Ken's response to 'do you have any regret or feel any remorse about your involvement in pimping,' highlights the overall tendency for pimps to solely focus on their own well being, but to avoid responding to anything that could lead to an admission of 'wrong-doing.' When I asked Ken this question I got a slightly different response from the others:

> *"I don't know in some kind of way, sometimes in the back of my mind I wonder what would have happened if I would have stayed on the other side of the tracks and went to college and all that. I always wondered about that, cause how my mind works I can take anything and make money with it. I wonder if I would have been well educated, if I would have stayed on the good side of the tracks, that is not a regret, I wonder. Not so much a regret but I do wonder how my life would've turned out."*

In this quote, Ken admits to thinking about his life without pimping because it would have meant more education, less jail time and overall less stress for him. His second-guessing of his life choices are because of the impact these had on *him* and *his* life opportunities. Thus because generally when respondents assert regret and remorse, it is in relation to themselves and not others, it is questionable how much of an impact the severe injury, trauma and death of those around them really had on their retirement. And ultimately, in the above quote Ken is expressing that he does not regret his choices.

Overall, emotional effect and affect did impact the respondents but only proved a supporting motivating factor to exit The Game; it was not a sufficient cause for any of the exits. Emotional impact and burn out impacts pimps by encouraging them to engage in other practices and coping mechanisms that in turn lead to their exit. It would seem that pimps do master control of their emotions are able to withstand a high emotional pain threshold and are capable of remaining apathetic in the most trying of traumatic circumstances. But analysis of these sad tales calls into question the legitimacy of their claims of emotional hardship and stress. Careful investigation of these narratives reveals individuals who are cool, calm and collected about their traumatic histories and rely heavily on denial of the victim and victim blaming (Scott & Lyman, 1968). These accounts highlight the individuals' attempt to

construct empathetic tales of themselves and in doing so, call into question the extent of their performance during the interviews. Though the extent of emotional effect is questionable, it certainly played a role in leading to the respondents' burn out within The Game regardless of how effected or affected they were. Like emotional burn out, familial relationships, and the destruction of them, also rose to the forefront of exit conversations frequently but were not a main factor in desistance. This chapter now shifts to explore the role of another contributing factor the exit of pimps: family.

Family

Respondents suggest that family impacted their decision to leave the Game in two keys ways. First, and mainly, the adoption of or addition of a child whose care they were immediately responsible for, forced a re-evaluation of their involvement in pimping. Similar to the research findings of Bjorio (2002), the establishment of new family and responsibilities can act as a strong incentive for desistance as new bonds and relationships means new perspectives and priorities. Secondly, many families of the respondents were embarrassed and ashamed by their relatives activities in pimping which lead to great strain in their relationships. Family strain did not seem to have an immediate influence on respondents' exit but improved family relations was mentioned frequently as a motivating factor *to stay out* of The Game currently.

Individuals who cited children as a motivating factor to exit often did have children earlier in their pimping careers and that did not have a deterring impact on their involvement in pimping. In other words, having children early in their careers did not influence their lifestyle choices. For example, James rather callously describes the death of his infant daughter in the middle of a response and quickly moves onto another topic: *"But anyway, so me and this guy named (omitted) and I gave him his pimp alter-ego, he was such a (inaudible) and it killed a part of me, I knew I had something to do with it in some kind of way, what happened was that I had a daughter too that died as a direct result of the lifestyle, her name was (omitted) she died of bronchial pneumonia, cause I worked her mother from the day she was conceived to the day she was born, she was almost born on the ho stroll, but anyway, I had to be about 18 I think at the time."* According to James, this was a the very beginning of his pimping career and seemed to have little influence on his involvement in pimping. He just kept going.

But respondents suggested that the arrival of new children *later* in life and career, when combined with emotional, mental and physical burnout, did influence retirement decisions. Already worn down by their activities within The Game, responsibility for the care of children became a final motivation for staying out of pimping.

James describes the strain placed on his relationship with his parents as a result of his pimping: *"I know how to stop this, this madness, my mom wouldn't kiss me, she didn't allow me to kiss her, my dad wouldn't shake my hand."* While in prison, Michael's mother game to visit him and he was forced to acknowledge the ignorance he had been carrying regarding the impact of his career on his family. *"I asked my sister why my momma look like that, she looked all old with grey hair, and she said " damn fool, you in prison facing natural life and you askin' why she lookin' like that" I didn't connect it. Holly, at that moment I asked god, man get me outta this, and this wasn't no foxhole prayer, I was serious, get me outta this one. I was through"*

In another instance, after years of cross country pimpin' one respondent returned to his hometown where his parents were still living. He had established a spot in his city where he nightly dropped the women who worked for him off and spent time socializing with other members of The Game. The location that he had acquired in his new hometown had attracted the attention of the location community that ended up directly impacting his mother. Michael fought tears describing the incident:

> *"This story is a personal story and it hurts, I'll tell you, I came back from (east coast city) and I wanted to know where to put my girls, so happened they told me where to put them, it was down the street from my momma's house. There was a hotel on the corner to where my momma lived and that was where the pimping was gonna on in that area. I put my girls down, two days later my momma calls me, I didn't even know that my momma knew I was back in town, she said " you need to come over here". So I went over there " you have done embarrassed me, you have disgraced me" when I walked in the house I saw all these posters and picket signs, you know when they march, in the hallway, " I go out there and I be protesting about these pimps and my friends call me and ask me how I am gonna be protesting pimps when my son is a pimp?" I had been down there for three days but the church people knew me and my momma dropped outta church Holly, man that hurts me. She was so embarrassed, you have to excuse me… certain stuff….. I mean she actually stopped going to church. I had embarrassed my momma that that much. She said "what did I do wrong?" and I said "momma it ain't your fault it was a decision I made" she thought it was something that she had did in her raising me but I had to let her know it wasn't nothing she did, my momma she raised me right, I ain't one of those guys that is going to sit here and say it was because of the way that I was raised. I ain't gonna say that, it was me, it was me."*

This experience was clearly painful for Michael to recall, but at the time, as he asserts, it was his decision to pimp and therefore this experience did not sway his determination to pimp. How situations like this one related to Michael's downfall is in the means by which he chose to cope with emotional pain: excessive drug use. Recall the response of James when I asked him how he coped with the death of prostitutes *"You don't, you pretend, that's where the drugs come in babe."*

Drug Use and Addiction

Recreational drug use is tied closely to the glamour and party lifestyle of pimps, but more often than not, casual and recreational use over the years starts to turn to addiction. Drug use is commonplace and quite normal in the pimping lifestyle: *"That was a part of it, sex drugs and rock n'roll. It's the nature of addiction it started to progress slowly over a period of time subtly, and the more failures the more drugs, the more success the more drugs" James.* For many of the respondents, being around a regular and bountiful supply of drugs and alcohol was normal, understood as acceptable, and even encouraged means of recreation and coping.

Prostitution literature regularly suggests that prostitutes often develop substance abuse issues *after* entering prostitution in order to cope with stress, fear, violence and emotional and physical trauma (Dalla, 2002: Hodgson, 1997); it is likely that pimps may develop addiction within The Game for similar reasons though it seems they experience far less of the traumas and stresses above described. As explained by several of the respondents, one of their means of coping with trauma and loss was to rely on the numbing nature of drug and alcohol consumption. This coupled with the normality of drug use in this criminal career made addiction and interference with work likely.

Some pimps also seem to move into drug dealing to make more money and/or to control the drug habits of those who work for them, but end up being their best customer in the end. As noted in previous chapters, the use of addiction as a method of control of prostitutes is strongly frowned upon in The Game because pimping is supposed to be all about mental manipulation and control; it is therefore a 'weak' pimp who provides his prostitute's with drugs as a means of control. Respondents therefore claim that 'real pimps' discourage this .

Be it a coping mechanism or a means of recreation/entertainment, drug use became a normal behavior in the lives of most of the respondents. Michael describes the various events that eventually accumulated to his exit with drug use acting as the final tipping point:

> *"Chris is dead and Bob got two natural lives, I have done survived two three crews. I done survived, you know, I wind up going to the penitentiary, I am at the end of the road, but there weren't no more pimping cause now I am using drugs."*

Of all the variables listed above, the main factor which Michael kept reflecting back on was his drug use and dealing which he felt had not only ruined his pimping abilities, but placed him at risk for losing respect within in The Game and therefore his title. James had a similar experience:

> *"I blew my money , became a drug addict, but we will get to that, that is closer to when the ugly side of the lifestyle shows up, this is just my story*

and I am not saying that all guys turn out like that, I had a lot of unresolved issues, maybe if I would have addressed them or knew how, I might have become one of the most successful pimps on the face of this planet"

James explicitly indicates that there is a 'ugly side' to The Game and that this is what caused his demise in pimping. If it had not been for drugs and 'going broke', James asserts that he may have "*become one of the most successful pimps on the face of the planet."* When James explains we'll get to 'that' because it is 'closer to when' the ugly side shows, he is referring to the motives for his exit from The Game. As noted previously, respondents avoided explorations of the underbelly of pimping until they described their exit. This is clearly demonstrated by James in the above quote through his articulation of the need to control the revelation of information at specific points within his narrative.

I asked James what type of drugs he was regularly using to which he replied "drugs". He then went on to describe his preference for speedballs, cocaine and heroine, all or a variety of which he had started to use on a daily basis. I asked if he believe it was the drug use that lead to his exit from the Game to which he responded *"Absolutely, it lead to my demise. Do you know that drugs have the ability to get past five thousand bodyguards to a king and make him a subject in his own land. So why wouldn't they destroy a pimp. No education, no resources…."* Searching for a more specific exploration of the relationship between his drug abuse and retirement, I probed even further asking how drugs lead to his demise:

> *"Because it became more important to get high than it did to be successful as a pimp. That's when I knew my time was near, starting becoming a problem and I know that my parents didn't create that, they did instill some values in me but still I was having fleeting moments of reality, the illusion was starting to shattered and it started with a crack, I am on my way out, I am getting older, my catch hand is getting badder, I am not catching as fast as I can, cause the pimps game is for the young, that handsome young man that can stay up all night, school all day, all of that, I was getting older, my body was breaking down, my mind was starting to settle, I had no one, if I died today, no one to mourn me, I didn't have a wife nothing, all of the things that I actually really wanted."*

James ultimately lost control in his profession due to extensive drug use and abuse. He expresses that he was forced out of The Game due to his addictions and in doing so, stresses that an external factor, drugs, was what forced him out of control. He laments about maybe having been 'the greatest pimp that ever lived' had it not been for drugs, and in doing so he relieves himself of responsibility for failure in The Game by explicitly detailing his helplessness to his drug addiction. It was drugs and not him that failed in pimping. In the end, James checked himself into intensive drug rehab and 'never looked back'.

Richard suggested that drug use, dealing and pimping have become interlinked in The Game today: *"Yeah cause once heroin and cocaine got around, it changed pimpin. Those*

guys now are dealing too". But even as far back as the 1970's when some respondents were pimping, there seem to be problematic overlaps between the world of drug use and dealing and the world of pimping. Research suggests that there have been immense changes and threats to the pimp-prostitute relationship as a result of the 1980's crack cocaine boom in the United States (Miller, 1995; Ratner, 1993). Ultimately, this has impacted the criminal career of pimping as well. Regular drug use and abuse by the prostitutes that work for them is a great threat to a pimp's income as prostitutes are likely to pay drug dealers before the pimp, thus there is a loss of income for the pimps. In order to avoid this and maintain control of the consumption levels, some pimps got involved in drug dealing to circumvent the inclusion of third party supplier. But this situation can get out of hand and as James explained, he had become his best drug customer, an experience that resonated throughout respondents' narratives. And when these addictions become severe and debilitating, ultimately the drug has become the pimp and the respect, status and reputation of the pimp has been greatly tarnished. Because of this, the likelihood of surviving and staying in The Game is minimal after drug use and/or abuse takes hold of pimps.

As with issues such as trauma, family, and loss, pimps rarely explicitly spoke of drugs or alcohol as a problem until they began to disclose their exit narratives. Ken had a daily drinking habit and a taste for the street drug ecstasy, but was pretty adamant that this did not impact his ability to pimp, most of the time. Ken had not made any mention of his drinking or drug problem until we spoke about his exit. Ken finally acknowledged his addictions were interfering with his daily functioning and his money and admitted that was when he knew he needed to get out.

> Ken: *"And then I had to quit drinking too. I was drinking the whole time I was pimpin' and I was a mean drunk too. So when I mixed that with the X, ohhhh. I was a fool. So I quit both of them, drinking and X so now I am sober."*
>
> Holly: *"Were you drinking daily when you were pimping?"*
>
> Ken: *"Daily, I used to drink daily and then on the weekends, I would get drunk. And then people really got outta my way."*
>
> Holly: *"Did you find it difficult to be at that mental state of intoxication and still keep everything together in terms of your pimping?"*
>
> Ken: *"No not really cause I already have the girls at the club when I am gettin' drunk and waitin' on them at the club and that is when I start over drinking. You got the club owner sending me drinks and I be buying drinks, but if I hit my limit I would let my main girl know, hey , I am at my limit, I will catch y'all later. ..... But then I would over sleep the next day and not take someone to a hair appointment or something I was supposed to do, I ran into issues like that a lot."*

Towards the end of his career, Ken acknowledges that his drinking did start to interfere with his pimping by ruining his time management abilities and his diligence to daily activities. Because he was steadfast to his claim that he was only in pimping to make a lot of money quickly, and then get out, when his behaviors started to interfere with that plan he moved towards retirement.

Drug addiction physically and mentally wore down a handful of this projects' respondents, like James, and was a sufficient cause for exit. For other respondents, involvement with drugs triggered another experience that was a far more convincing incentive to leave: prison. Eric explains that he has started to deal and pimp simultaneously which lead to incarceration: "*I became a dope dealer, I was sellin' dope, I still had hos, I became my best customer. The penitentiary turned my life around. I went to the joint.*" Curious about the fact that only one of the pimps I had interviewed had been prosecuted for pimping I inquired about drugs and legal trouble:

> Holly: "*So you are more likely to get busted for drugs than for pandering?*"
>
> Eric: "*A lot! A lot faster and more often. You don't have to say nothin' the street is going to tell it. The streets tell on prostitutes, the streets tell on police, the streets tell on dope dealers, see the streets talk, you understand what I am sayin? It talks.*"

Eric's circumstance may be unique as he was trained and apprenticed into the world of prostitution in Vietnam where the two practices of pimping and drug dealing ran in tandem. Thus, Eric had been taught to pimp and deal simultaneously. He explained there was benefit in doing this because if one of the underground markets slowed down the other could compensate, but it put him at much greater risk of drug abuse issues and conflicts with law enforcement. Eric eventually abandoned drug dealing and drug use while in pimping because of its impact on the women. He saw positive results from this switch but experienced a lot contact with the police while engaged in drug dealing. Pimps generally do experience multiple run-ins with law enforcement in their careers, but since prosecuting pimps for pimping is incredibly difficult, law enforcement focuses on issues such as drugs and weapons offenses. Hence, drugs are a double edged sword for pimps; abuse of them means their Game suffers and they fail as pimps, or they get arrested regularly, and spend time incarcerated for drug related offenses.

Run-Ins with the Law and Prison

In addition to denial of victim, victim blaming and appeal to higher loyalties, pimps relish the opportunity to condemn the condemners for their activities (Scott & Lyman, 1968). To pimps, police, the courts, the public, basically everyone outside of the criminal

underground world of prostitution, which frowns upon, attacks or seeks to stop their activities is hypocritical, ideologically misinformed, and 'ignorant' of the realities of the world. When they justify their pimping as self-defense, punishment for their actions strikes them are unjust and undeserved. This is especially the case when dealing with law enforcement and the criminal justice system. Most pimps assert it is the law and law enforcement systems that are corrupt and wrong, not pimps or their activities. Thus, respondents had plenty to say when it came to explaining and/or exploring their interactions with the law.

When I expressed to Eric that I did not understand how that was possible that drug possession and dealing was more likely to get the attention of law enforcement than pimping he replied:

> "I know why it's possible. The Game goes both ways, you got two drug dealers, one needs to get over the other, pimping will never get you the time that dope does. They would rather have a pimp on the street than a dope dealer"

Eric is like many of the others involved in this career who know that what they do is illegal and that many people find it morally objectionable, but they do not feel it should be illegal or that it is immoral. Denial of injury in these accounts acts to deny that what they do causes harm to the community and deny that prostitution can cause harm to prostitutes, so in both situations, they are not doing anything morally questionable or problematic (Scott & Lyman, 1968); therefore, they feel any legal action taken against them by the police is both for show and hypocritical.

Respondents regularly asserted that the police do not care what they do, and that in the grand scheme of illegal activities, pimping is a minimal concern because it is not 'violent', a direct threat to the public, or morally problematic. Furthermore, considering the regular patronage police provide prostitutes' services, pimps express great distain for the police who choose 'at will' when they think prostitution and pimping is wrong. By telling stories of police corruption and regularly attempting to highlight the breadth of their clientele, pimps protest what they see as a mainstream hypocrisy. That is, the same individuals who utilize the services of their prostitutes also arrest, prosecute and sentence them. Thus by condemning the condemners, pimps minimize the focus on their own activities by stressing the behavior of others.

Because of America's 'War on Drugs', it is likely that law enforcement focus and prosecution is more common for drug offenses than pandering. But within the United States currently, there is a growing trend towards prosecuting pimps under human trafficking laws and heavily increasing the jail terms associated with the crime. Meant to act a deterrent to pimping, these changes in legal prosecution and the length of sentences did impact the decision of multiple respondents to leave The Game. Respondents regularly suggest that they

are not 'penitentiary material' and prison is not a badge of honor for those in this criminal career.

As described in the entries chapter, pimps weigh pimping as a 'safer' illegal activity than drug dealing partly because of that lack of threat of prison. Changing climates in law enforcement and prosecution reflects serious threat of incarceration for pimping now; therefore, the appeal of the career is lessened when the risk or cost, is potentially very high. For some respondents, several prison sentences acted as the motivation for their exit whereas others merely required the threat of long-term incarceration to leave. Eric expressed his frustration with recent changes to the laws that now only require one individual to testify against a pimp in court for prosecution to be possible:

> "If and it doesn't have to be any more than once, it just takes one woman, and see here, this is where that fear is instilled at, cause if that woman tells something like that, when she comes outta that court room, right the pimp is outside, cause from this point here (inaudible) when she would come out in the morning the pimp would be there to pick her up and take her home. It used to be when a ho prostituted, (inaudible) and now they say your ho said such and such. Pandering is funny, it's real funny, now they call it pandering then they called it white slavery, shit like that, when you had a broad selling her body for your use, it's like you're using her pussy, now they say you only need one, you can have five in the household but if one steps up and 'I am a ho, I sell my body for him, he takes my money' you've got a case. One it don't have to be the whole house, it only has to be one in the household that says this."

Eric is also playing off of mainstream cultural vilification of prostitutes and relied on their status as 'undeserving' victims to support his shock at the ability for one to be able to take a pimp down. These laws also shift the power balance, meaning that prostitutes are always possible witnesses granting them a significant amount of bargaining chips when dealing with pimps. This represents a possible shift in power dynamics, even though it would not likely have immediate changes in pimp/prostitute relationships because of loyalty issues, emotional bonds, adherence to the code, prostitutes' lack of trust of police and the law, and ignorance of rights/protection under the law. The ability for one prostitute to provoke a legal trial that could result in a 'life' prison sentence term acted as incentive for some to leave. Pimps do not trust those that they work with, especially not prostitutes, so if it only takes one to testify against them and the risk is life in prison if the prosecution is successful, the risk is immense. Thus for some respondents, changes in prosecution of pimping and the incarceration of people that they knew was enough to convince them to exit.

> "I used to get caught up[32], nothin' serious but um, some people that I know got life sentences. People I know personally got life sentences, but

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[32] caught up: slang term for arrested or put in prison. Usually refers to brief interactions with law enforcement and jail terms.

*they got caught with underage females, and uh, but they got life
sentences. Recently, some got 75 years, some more people that I know
got 50 years, you know what I am sayin'? I am lookin' at it and it ain't
worth it, cause I am like an enterprise myself. So I could just take that
same philosophy to make money and apply it to anything, the same
way." Ken*

Sean also explained that this trend in law enforcement influenced his perspective
on The Game:

*"I know one guy he got 99 years, they tried to give him 22 years, he had
a underage white girl, took her across state lines, he should have known
better anyway, we've all been through it, but he had an underage girl
and they hit him with kidnapping charges and all kind of stuff and he
didn't take it, he went to trial and they gave him 99 years. Another guy
he sixty years old, he just got outta prison, last time I talked to him they
got him again, he was out on bond, and he was approached by this
woman who was the law, and all he said what well you gotta pay to
take, you know, and he was getting handcuffed, they told him he was
getting a felony, he already did time in about five or six different states"*

In addition to personal turmoil in coping with prison, as noted above, many
respondents seemed to experience great stress when observing the fate of their peers. Sean
stressed the difficulty in explaining the reality of prison to someone (meaning me) who had
not experienced it and the toil it takes on an individual. With the additional stress of
watching friends face incarceration, Sean describes the legal fates many pimps face:

*"Well I gotta say all that stuff is behind me so, I ain't trippin' on none
of that, but you know it's hard to tell your testimony when someone has
no knowledge of it cause they have never been through it, I got a
homeboy right now who's got two life sentences who just put his first
book out, he tries to write books and look at what he's facin' cause a lot
of people when they get in that kind of a situation they lose faith and
everything, and just become a slave to the system. But he is actually
trying to use his dilemma to help others to deter them. Cause not
everybody is not going to make it out and true enough you got a couple
of life sentences, but at the same time, at least at the same time you are
able to make a difference, about me sometimes I've got to look at a lot
of things that I wanted out of the game, ... One of the main things I can
say is that, that a lot of other pimps can't, I got out of the game by
choice, and not by force. And that's a real big thang cause uh, I got old
school pimp, from Dallas (name omitted) they stabbed him, killed him,
cut him up, set him on fire, you might end up being behind bars
eventually, a lot do, and you lose your ability, you lose your limbs,
anything…"*

In the quote above, Sean is invoking a strong avoidance technique by asserting that
*"it's hard to tell your testimony when someone has no knowledge of it cause they have never
been through it."* By proclaiming that outsiders just would not understand these experiences
is a way of deflecting focus as to not actually explain the experience. This creates a situation

where the listener, in this case me, is lead to feel that they should stop questioning the experience because as someone who has not experienced it, I would never understand it. This did not stop the questioning as it was meant to, but this technique was used by respondents who seemingly lacked the ability or desire, to express and explain their choices and decisions particularly in relation to the law.

Also deflecting from their own experiences, respondents relied heavily on the stories of others. Many of the respondents addressed their fear of legal or other consequences by using the stories of others to explore the potential outcomes they could have faced in The Game. Ranging from life sentences to homicide, some respondents 'chose' to leave The Game before The Game caught up to them. Even short prison sentences provided some with the insight of what they might expect if they remain active. Sean was in and out of prison regularly and was often targeted by local law enforcement trying to charge him with pandering. He explained the lead up to his choice to leave:

> *"I got shot ..... then I ended up going to jail again, I went back to prison for a little while and then I just, I had to try and change some things in my life cause I felt like my life was just going in circles, and then I said you know maybe its time I take some time and remove some stuff outta my life that I really don't need to be involved with anyway"*

Sean got tired of cycling in and out of prison and eventually reached a point where he was ready to retire. After evaluation of his career, prison trips and future prospects in pimping, Sean focused on religious growth as motivation to leave. Sean's decision to 'strengthen his relationship with god' was his main motivator to exit though it is relevant to place within context: this was decided while he was incarcerated for at least the fifth time. Thus it is likely that prison also played a hand in encouraging his change of heart.

Ultimately pimps are exceptionally calculated criminals who carefully weigh their options, opportunities and potential as well as the risks. Thus when the risk factors begin to increase, they are inclined to re-evaluate benefits. Like Sean, Ken explains that increases in prison time and prosecution was what 'got him':

> *Ken: "I got out of it cause things got chaotic, the government been cracking down trying to give you time, I ain't tryin' to get no time, so to me know, when I was young I was watching these guys these dope dealers go back and forth from jail, now I am watching pimps go back and forth from jail. I gotta do something different cause I ain't that type to go back and forth, I ain't built like that."*

> *Holly: "Was there something that happened that made you suddenly realize that the atmosphere was changing?"*

> *Ken: "I seen it on TV that they are cracking down. They had been gettin' massage parlors and pimps gettin' life sentences and people that you know gettin' life sentences and if you dumb you are going to keep doing it*

but if you are smart you will start doin' something else. I never did it for the title, I never did it to say that I was a pimp, I did it for the money as a business. Some guys keep at it cause that is what they want to do but they believe that they are supposed to do it until they die. All I got to say is 'hey that's you' for me, I am a chameleon, I can change with my environment."

Holly: "So the media exposure of this crackdown is what got you to leave then?"

Ken: "Yeah that's what got me, they were talking about jail time and life sentences, that got my attention."

Holly: "Well were a lot of people you knew getting thrown behind bars?"

Ken: "I used to get caught up, nothin' serious but um, some people that I know got life sentences. People I know personally got life sentences, but they got caught with underage females, and uh, but they got life sentences. Recently, some got 75 years, some more people that I know got 50 years, you know what I am sayin'? I am lookin' at it and it ain't worth it, cause I am like an enterprise myself. So I could just take that same philosophy to make money and apply it to anything, the same way. Make money six days a week, spend it one day a week, you gonna grow your money."

Specifically referring to the choice respondents expressed feeling at a young age between drug dealing and pimping as criminal careers, Ken above states: *"when I was young I was watching these guys these dope dealers go back and forth from jail, now I am watching pimps go back and forth from jail. I gotta do something different cause I ain't that type to go back and forth, I ain't built like that."* Now that pimps as well as drug dealers are doing 'hard time', the benefit of pimping as a 'law enforcement free criminal career' has been undermined. Ken's assessment of "it ain't worth it" provides insight into his understanding that he could apply his skills in business in ways that would not run the risk of jail time. So rather than risk a fifty or seventy five year prison sentence, he retired.

Not all pimps left before dealing with the legal ramifications of their career choice. For Richard, among others, it took a long-term prison sentence to provide the motivation he needed to leave The Game; so the possibility of a prison sentence was not sufficient until experienced:

Holly: "So when did you finally decide to leave?"

Richard: "In 1998, I said I got fourteen years and I can't stand to come back and what I probably need to do is find a way to get me some money that doesn't involve me coming to jail."

Holly: "So you did 14 years?"

Richard: "Yeah 14 years the first time and then 14 years five times running together and paid $14,000 to get it."

Holly: "So you were facing a lot?"

Richard: "Yeah I was in trouble and I was 41 and thinking now I gotta go cause I don't think I've got another one of these in me and I had some money hid away so that if I made the proper investments, I may be alright. You know you have got to know when to get out of the Game, if not you gonna be like Mohammed Ali, when you're game ain't good. See the money ain't gonna do you no good if you ain't got no sense."

Holly: "So did you end up fighting that case or did you do the time?"

Richard: "I did the time. I had a lot of cases cause I was doin' a lot of stuff cause I thought I needed a lot of money. As you've been doing wrong for so long you've forgot, see that the thing, you've been doin' illegal shit for so long that you have forgotten that it is illegal cause you keep gettin' away with it, but they will remind you when they catch you."

Richard's explanation of 'forgetting' that pimping was illegal undermines previous explorations in this chapter of the emotion distress caused by the illegal nature of their career. If the 'players norm' (Milner & Milner, 1972) is a significant factor in the emotional well being of pimps, it would be difficult to then suggest that pimps can and do forget that what they do is illegal. It is likely that what Richard is reflecting on is the strong sense of invincibility pimps explained feeling when they are active in The Game. They may not necessarily forget it is illegal, but is likely they just do not think they will ever get caught.

Michael also underwent a life changing experience while incarcerated. Major changes in his circumstances prior to his prison sentence acted to further facilitate a shift in perception on The Game:

Michael: "I ended up going to the penitentiary, I am going to show you how the life changes Holly. When I first was pimping in 1974, I had four girls and a brand new Cadillac, I wouldn't allow my girls to get high, I am trying to show you the transition, now listen to me very carefully, I went from having four girls and a Cadillac, to having one girl, being a dope fiend and sleeping in that same Cadillac. I am showing you that gap. In 1974 I had four girls and a brand new white 74' coup de'ville and then in 1985, are you listening to me, then in 1985, I was sleeping in an abandoned car with one girl left, she was a dope fiend and I was a dope fiend. Then I ended up going to the penitentiary and I surrendered and that was it. ... I wanna thank god for allowing me to have the vision to know that it was over. It was over"

Holly: "When did you realize that?"

Michael: "It was when I went to the penitentiary the last time. And they wound up trying to give me life while I was in and that meant that I had a sentence and then I wound up getting involved on a murder in the penitentiary"

Holly: "What exactly do you mean?"

Michael: "I wound up getting involved in a murder in the penitentiary. And they were talking about giving me life for it and the same girl, the one I told you I had since high school, we was still together and I still had a little money, so she brought me $5,000 and got me a lawyer but I didn't need to lawyer cause by the grace of god they let me out, cause I wasn't really involved it was just that they was trying to mess with me cause I was close to going home. And what really hurt me Holly was that my mother was still living at the time, she came down to the visiting room to see me, and they had to pad her down, and she looked at me "boy you don't love me" I said "what you mean?" "you see how that man just put his hands on me all over because of you" I wanted to melt again and go down the sewer drain."

Ken was a bit unique within this sample as he had not experienced a significant amount of 'run-ins' with the law. I asked him "how do you think you pulled through pimping without a serious criminal record or a serious addiction like most others do?" to which he replied:

"You've got to take it easy, take warning, look at the signs around you. I have been to jail a few times but nothing serious. I make sure I don't get no felonies, you got look after yourself, felonies, 50 plus years, I ain't tryin' to do that. When you living a crocked life you goin' to go to jail. I don't fuck with no underage females, I know they carry a bunch of time so I always conscious of what carried what. I didn't rob with no machine guns, I know that carries a lot of time."

Short prison stints generally did not seem to deter pimping as respondents reported remaining active while in prison. Respondents shifted control and responsibility for everyday activities to the their main prostitute, or 'bottom bitch', who maintains the stable in their absence. Many respondents described having pimped from prison and Ken was able to describe how this is possible.

Holly: "So how did you keep pimping while you were doing time then, did you just keep pimping as normal, did someone step in...?"

Ken: "I would go there get my thirty days, you say how do I do it? There is a routine, everybody knows what to do. Purposefully I stay away, sometimes I stay away for like two or three weeks at a time, just to see what everybody is going to do, if they put the money where it's supposed to go. And then they would go back to the leader of the house, each person they knew what to do. The main female, she knew what the deal was, but she would tell everyone I was outta town, all the while she knows where I am at. Keep the people that need to know in the know and keep the people that don't need to know, outta the know."

In anticipation of jail sentences or out of town trips, Ken had trained the women who worked for him to be capable of managing themselves in his absence. The loyalty of prostitutes is often tested in these situations and often, in acts of devotion and dedication to their pimp, prostitutes will still carry on their normal activities until the pimp returns. Ken stressed the importance of a pimps' absence being kept quiet because when pimps are not

physically present as the prostitutes and their allegiance is vulnerable to competitors. As explained to me by respondents, when it is known that a pimp is in prison, there is a collective targeting of the incarcerated pimp's prostitutes for recruitment. Knowing this a strong possibility, respondents suggested that pimps keep incarceration a secret and instead inform people that they are out of town on business or taking a break. Because pimping is a 'mind game', there is space for pimping to still occur for a time without the physical presence of the pimp with prison time demonstrating a clear example of this.

Though short prison terms did not seem to have a direct influence on desistance, repeated incarcerations and/or long terms ones did. Prison is not an environment that respondents seemed to appreciate much and again, they regularly asserted that they were in fact 'not penitentiary material.' The total loss of control that prison inflicts on individuals clearly impacted respondents and their assessment of their career trajectories. Acting as a major incentive to desistance, repeated prison trips and long term sentences proved to undermine individuals' loyalty to The Game. Thus is seems that changes in the prosecution of pimps is likely to have a major impact on The Game. Pimps may lose the ability to be highly visible and flamboyant characters who publicly flaunt their loyalty to the criminal career as connection with the underground subculture is likely to attract police and federal attention under the new direction of human trafficking, rather than pimping laws. Pimps may shift to invisibility and move further underground to circumvent legal interruption and intervention.

Conclusion

Shifts in narratives occur when discussing retirement as individuals' struggle to explain why they left. Respondents enter a new territory when talking about their exit. Until they reach questions about their retirement, pimps glorify The Game. When they start to discuss their exit, they begin to expose very different experiences and perspectives than those previously offered. By exposing the underbelly of The Game, respondents draw attention to events and circumstances that caused them distress/stress. Though individuals stressed emotional demands and exhaustion as a major cause of their exit, there were several reoccurring themes within the usage of these 'sad tales' which call into question their legitimacy.

A repeated theme when discussing exit became the performative elements of pimping that laid heavy emotional burden on respondents. They claim the inability to express any emotion outside of anger stifled them and further exacerbated trauma, loss and pain within The Game. If and when we assume that over the course of their careers, pimps have been completely socialized into The Game, then the lack of remorse, regret or 'guilt' is to be expected. It is likely that what starting as 'surface acting' of 'feeling rules early in their careers translated into deep acting and eventually became their felt reality (Goffman, 1959;

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Hochschild, 1979). Though emotional and mental burn out weighed on respondents and influenced their decisions, it served as a complimentary factor in reasons for desistance rather than as a core motivator.

Even though many of the respondents have desisted from pimping for years, the still active and present 'pimping mindframe' solidifies the deeply entrenched socialization they have experiences in the underground (Matza, 1957). Perceptions of social injustice, pimping as self-defense and their presentation of pimping as unjustly illegal all support Matza's Drift Theory (1957). Though the respondents likely did experience emotional distress and pain, the extent to which this influenced their exit or even themselves is questionable. Their strong sense of vindication in their actions due to the structural violence they have experienced undermines their ability to claim emotional vulnerability and tribulations as an incentive for desistance.

Eric professed when I asked him about leaving pimping that *"You never leave, this is, pimpin' is forever. Understand, if you a true pimp, you there."* Thus these individuals may be out of The Game as in they are no longer pimping, but their mindframe is still very much there. Most of the respondents are still in very close contact with their old underground networks, they still associate with active pimps and explain that they still view the world as a pimp. As will be examined in the next chapter, pimps can and do defy the 'pimp or die' mythology, but their strong loyalty and affection for pimping keeps them connected and peripherally immersed in the lifestyle. Most of the respondents left pimping as a vocation and now experience it as worldview. The variety of incentives for exit and the combination of factors leading to desistance would suggest that there is no definitive formula to describe a pimp's exit. But then again, a pimp never really retires.

Chapter 8- Life After Pimping: The End Game

The 'pimping is for life' mantra became particularly curious when utilized in reference to life *after exiting* pimping. These former pimps described that they may not be actively pimping, but they still think, walk, talk and act like pimps. According to them, pimping is not just an activity, but also a way of life and a mind frame; thus they never *really* left The Game because for them pimping genuinely is for life.

Though 'squaring up' was more appealing then addiction, more prison time or continued mental and emotional stresses, it was far from the excitement, glamour and leisure to which the respondents were accustom to. Their desistance from pimping meant abandoning their former glorified lives for the mundane and monotonous. The tones of defeat and downfall that resonated in their words were unmistakable, mostly because, as mentioned in the previous chapter, respondents were still attempting to reconcile the pieces of their past with their current situations and they were clearly embittered about the 'necessity' of squaring up.

As youth, respondents committed themselves to the 'code of the street' and ultimately The Game, and in doing so they essentially reversed the alienation and contempt they received from mainstream American culture by developing a deep sense of contempt towards mainstream culture (Anderson, 1999; Matza, 1964). This tendency to condemn the condemner left respondents dispirited yet defiant when facing the circumstance of reintegrating themselves and their lives into the mainstream. (Scott & Lyman,1968). These exit narratives demonstrate the potential for desistance, re-entry into mainstream society and ultimately for some change.

Attention has been granted to sex workers leaving the Life (Sanders, 2007; Mansson & Hedin, 1999; Vanwesenbeeck, 1994) but there is lack of literature on pimps leaving and their lives after. This chapter will draw on the concepts and themes identified in the transitions out of The Game by sex workers and other criminal careers to frame the issues relevant to resisting re-entry to this specific deviant lifestyle. This is done with the acknowledgement that there are poignant differences between pimps and prostitutes and other criminals, but there are sufficient similarities in shared experiences of stigma, lifestyle and criminal subcultural socialization to justify use of the aforementioned literature for support.

Discussing the exit of sex workers, Sanders (2007) suggests that "knowledge of transitions out of lifestyles that are considered deviant can build on and inform the desistance literature, particularly understanding of the complexity of the gendered process of change or desistance." (Sanders, 2007:2) I would argue this is applicable to pimps as well in terms of the strong need for understanding in the literature of how and why they leave in order to assist

those aiming to do so and to help identify the means of assisting those still involved. Gender may be especially pertinent to any discussion of exit as the female respondents in this research seemed to have the most difficulty in exiting The Game.

In this chapter, the dominant themes in the narratives of respondents' lives after exit will be explored to shed more light on desistance from pimping. Firstly, obstacles to reintegrating into the mainstream will be explored along with the impact this has on future prospects for former pimps. Then the continued connections, social and business, that individuals maintain with those involved in pimping will be examined to underline the reoccurring theme of pimps leaving The Game while still remaining connected to it. Individuals leaving The Game face various practical issues that make transitioning to the mainstream difficult. When squaring up, pimps maintain their former connections and peer networks which impacts their current life in desistance. Beyond social interactions and business arrangements, many former pimps assert they are not pimping but that in their minds, they have never left The Game. Thus again pimpology moves to the front of the discussion because even after exiting, pimps proclaim that their loyalty to the ideologies of pimping remain resolute. Finally, spoken as if written by Goffman himself, respondents reflected on the stigma they feel condemned to after their exit. Stigma has been previously discussed in relation to their experiences while pimping but there is a shift in the perception and feelings about it when they are not longer pimping.

'Squaring Up'

Transitioning from a deviant, criminal lifestyle and/or prison to mainstream society is not necessarily a smooth process. Barriers and basic, but critical, practicalities must be obtained in order to successfully merge into the mainstream. Furthermore, the lack of life skills and employment history/experience of the respondents worked against them after desistance as well. Pimps originally get involved in pimping to make a lot of money very quickly and then aim to get out. But more often than not, pimps end up staying in The Game for long periods of time and fail to obtain their original goal; they do make a lot of money but they have spent it as soon as they have earned it. Thus at when facing retirement, most pimps are left with nothing to show for their years in pimping. Michael described this reality indicating that *"one out of hundred pimps will be successful in life and what I mean about being successful, I mean retire, and be able to do something with your profits, with your gains. Because being a pimp you don't have no retirement fund, no 401k, now you do have pimps that were smart enough to invest. You do have some pimps that were buying property and were able to make some investments in securities and bonds"*. So pimps have to build themselves up from almost scratch in the legitimate economy.

Firstly, a lack of documents such as identification, driving licenses and social security cards meant that establishing themselves in the 'legitimate' economy was difficult. Secondly, many of the respondents had left pimping with records that worked against them. Most left pimping with a broad repertoire of criminal records often including felonies. Felony charges in the United States greatly reduce the opportunities available to individuals and restrict their access to various resources. Furthermore, a lack of legitimate, legal credit history makes obtaining resources (insurance, credit cards, etc…) and needs (housing, transportation, etc…) arduous. When in The Game, pimps paid cash for new cars, houses and other lifestyle requirements that were supplied by those who ran businesses in the illicit, underground economy. Thus once out of the Game and in the mainstream they lack the basic credentials to secure even basic living needs. These barriers make establishing themselves within the legitimate economy and society difficult as they lack the basic means to access goods, needs and services.

Additionally, because many of the respondents had dedicated over ten years, some as much as twenty five years, to pimping they had little, if any, formal employment training or skills outside of the underground. With a solid portion of their working years spent in The Game, most had limited educational achievement, minimal job training, and no 'legal employments skills'. Formal support was needed from agencies that assist individuals who had recently left prison, and government social services in order to help individuals legitimately re-establish. Many of the respondents indicated needing the assistance of former/retired prostitutes and other pimps to secure themselves post- pimping.

More often than not though, it would seem from this research that a fair number of former pimps remain active within the underground involved in illegal activities though not necessarily any related to sex work. Sue, as mentioned later in this chapter, has certainly not severed most ties to her former pimping life, but others tended to get involved in other forms of hustling. Running off the books moving companies, promotional business, and involvement in pornography distribution were some of the new careers individuals were engaged with after The Life.

Furthermore, the activities that former pimps chose to partake in for employment following 'exit' highlights two main reoccurring themes: 1) a complete departure from illegal employment and 2) a shift in they type of illegal activity engaged in for employment. Richard left illegal employment but insisted he still held on to key pimp traits, in his case manicures: *"I went to school, and got me a CAB. I am going to position myself so I ain't got to work hard, I still go out and get my nails done and all that."* Michael explained that *"I got out and it changed my life, I went back to school and now I am a medical housing case manager for the city."* Eric went back to school as well to achieve a degree to work, *"I went back to school, at an old age, I went back at an old age, I received my degree and I became a*

counselor." These respondents mostly went to college or took training courses to get qualifications to work in their current fields. They were able and willing to pool resources to completely break into legal, mainstream employment. They worked through the barriers and were able to establish regardless of the odds working against their integration.

Other respondents work in-between mainstream, legal employment and underground, 'off the books' work. Sean explained that though he had done some writing, he was still hustling a bit and his company was not likely licensed or paying taxes: *"My game is much broader than street level pimpin', I gotta take it to another level.*" Sean is currently writing and owns a small hauling company. This reoccurring theme introduces several complications. As noted in the exit chapter, occasionally pimps experience multiple exit and re-entry cycles with pimping and it is therefore the case that 'successful' and 'permanent' exit is hard to identify (Sanders, 2007). This, in addition to the tendency for some to never really remove themselves from the underground economy, makes desistance difficult to mark and/or identify. It is possible that some of the respondents have returned to The Life since the interviews, but for some, it was clear that they were still pretty active in pimping only in more covert ways. It is questionable whether both Sue and Sarah have left pimping as they both indicated they were occasionally involved in pandering activities. Sue was still occasionally pandering for a wealthy judge:

> *"And I guess in a sense I still am dabblin' in his business cause he's giving me three hundred dollars off of what he is getting from the judge. this judge actually pays $1,500 for 8 hours but ..... everything, everything goes, it is a no limit affair"*

Unknown to anyone other than myself, Sue is now working full time as a caretaker for an elderly woman. This job requires her to help her eat, get dressed, and bathed as most caretaking positions of a 90 year old woman might, but Sue's role also includes sexual services. Sue has gone back to prostitution to maintain her sense of connection to her old life. She explained to me that:

> *"they can call me whatever they want, but being on the streets pimpin' women, I found there was another way to pimp and not be on the streets and not be dealing with these women. See because I had a heart and it was bothering me, being with these women, and now it's one lady, and I am okay. And sometimes I find myself being up, withdrawn, daydreamin', thinkin' damn this could've been my grandmomma, and I am doing this here, fuck, but I am here thinking about it and if it were my grandmother, I wish someone was taking care of her like this…."*

> *"….that's why I guess I am holding onto I am messing with the lady cause it makes me feel like I am the man, I'm still the man. I'm still getting paid, I'm not putting in as many hours but I am still getting paid. I don't have to deal with the riffraff or the getting gang rapped by a bunch of men, I'm okay, its not about being on the streets anymore, and when you know that you are going to come up out of the game, you should be so lucky as to find you somebody like a judge who has a friend that wants to be masturbated*

at 90 years old. I've been doing this act with this lady here for a little while and its okay, she wasn't always bedridden, she used to send fucking limousines to my house to pick me up, we are going where? Okay, San Francisco, Mexico, uh okay, but I am okay because that word will always be in the background: pimp, pimp, pimp or female escort"

For Sue, her involvement with this elderly woman means she can maintain the sense of power and esteem she felt as a pimp. Ultimately, she feels like she "is still the man." Therefore, for Sue, desistance has not been achieved and she is still very much dependent on pimpology for her sense of identity. Sue has been unable to achieve an identity outside of The Game and has not yet integrated into mainstream legal employment.

Sarah still relies on ad hoc pimping and intervenes to help prostitutes 'for pay' when money gets tight. She also, like Sue, does not allow her partner to know what she does on the side and keeps her activities with sex workers a secret from those around her. She explained that she did not want her boyfriend to know because he would likely encourage her to do it full time because the money is so good and she was not interested in working full time as a pimp. Sarah's negative experiences within prostitution means she is unwilling to return to The Game within that role but again, she is still willing to work as a 'sessional pimp' for women who find themselves in a bind or require her services for short periods of time.

It is unclear whether this was by chance that the two women in this study were still involved or if this could indicate a reoccurring theme in female pimping exit. This could also be due to age differences as most of the male respondents were at or over retirement age while the women respondents were in their 40's. The male respondents due to age were more likely burned out and unable to still partake in pimping in the same way. None of the male respondents were still involved in pimping directly but several remained active in illegal work (i.e. other forms of 'hustling'). A few of the respondents had married and/or settled down with women they were involved with in The Game, thus the still had people around them from their time in pimping.

Pimps 'square up' as much as they feel they can. Their identities are linked directly to The Game still and for them, they all maintain some aspect of The Life. Re-immersion into mainstream employment and society proves a struggle with the many barriers but often it is the skills they have learned in pimping that they rely on to survive afterwards, either through involvement with those still in The Game or just borrowing tactics from pimpology. While functionally existing in the mainstream and 'squaring up' to varying degrees, pimps still maintain their roots in pimping regardless of their desistance. Because of this, *the pull* of their 'former' social circles keeps them strongly linked to pimping and furthermore, these social circles never really become 'former' for respondents.

Leaving the Profession, Not the Community

It is difficult when to establish one has really left because often pimps retain ties, engage in activities, and still spend time, with active pimps and prostitutes. When individuals quit pimping they tend to maintain their connections to The Game. As Sue indicates she struggled after her first attempt at exit, *"three years ago, after that I was still dibblin' and dabblin'. Do I want to do this? Do I want to do that?"*; For Sue, dibblin' and dabblin' meant 'on and off' again pimping and prostituting before her now three year 'absence' from pimping. It would seem that this is a trend with the exit of sex workers as well (Mansson & Hedin,1999; Vas beeck, 1994) ; supported further by the fact the this research project's gatekeeper was ten years out of prostitution but still in contact with dozens of individuals from it. As noted in the exit chapter, occasionally pimps experience multiple exit and re-entry cycles with pimping and it is therefore the case that 'successful' and 'permanent' exit is hard to identify (Sanders, 2007). It is possible that some of the respondents have returned to The Life since the interviews, but for some, it was clear that they were still pretty active in pimping only in more covert ways.

Role exit is necessary for desistance. The process of role exit is defined as "The process of disengagement from a role that is central to one's self-identity and the reestablishment of an identity in a new role that takes into account one's ex-role." (Fuchs Ebaugh, 1988: 1) Thus in the process of being an ex-pimp, individuals must undergo role exit which includes two core elements; disengagement and disidentification. Disengagement is conceptualized as,

> "the process of withdrawing from the normative expectations associated with a role, the process whereby an individual no longer accepts appropriate the socially defined rights and obligations that accompany a given role in society. "(Fuchs Ebaugh, 1988: 3)

Disidentification involves role movement away from the previous identity and is defined as " the process of ceasing to think of oneself in the former role." (Fuchs Ebaugh, 1988:4) Disidentification necessitates the unlearning of "normative expectations of previous roles at the same time that they are learning new ones". (Fuchs Ebaugh, 1988: 4) For pimps, the movement from a mack to a square involves the simultaneous rejection of old identity and the adoption of new ones. Like other exes, pimps struggle with disidentification and actively maintain elements of their old roles and identities. The stronghold pimpology maintains over former pimps is a critical element as for these exes, as "Being an ex is unique sociologically in that the expectations, norms, and identity of an ex-role relate not to what ones is currently doing but rather to social expectations associated with the previous role." (Fuchs Ebaugh, 1988: 3) Thus pimps still strongly cling to their former expectations and roles in an attempt to negotiate the rejection of the old and usher in the new. But this process is not smooth or easy

for individuals to negotiate as pimps retain what Fuchs Ebaugh refers to as 'hangover identities'.

'Hangover identity' is explained by Fuchs Ebaugh (1988) as an internal struggle to reassign identity with new roles. She explains this experience as follows:

> "Past identification with a social category or role lingers in one form or another throughout the lives of role exiters as they struggle to incorporate past identities into present conceptions of self. Exes tend to maintain role residual or some kind of 'hangover identity' from a previous role as they move into new social roles. This role residual is part of self-identity and must be incorporated into current ideas of self (Fuchs Ebaugh, 1988: 5)

Other works on marginalization and 'middle of the road' groups also become relevant here. The experience of pimps and the role of the marginal man are similar because pimps' existence between the illegal underground and legitimate mainstream society mimic that of the immigrant in Park's (1928) work. Park's (1928) *marginal man* exists in a world between two very different cultural contexts and realities. Pimps never really fuse with one identity or the other after exit and are caught in a 'social middle' essentially (Parks, 1928). Hence they keep one foot in The Game in terms of activities and connections, and the other outside of it engaging in mainstream behaviors and employment. So they may still give advice to up and coming pimps and occasionally arrange a session for an old client, but they are married now and work as counselors or for the city. They maintain a connection and identity within both cultures and exist on the boundaries of both groups without fully immersing in either one of them. One way that they maintain a connection to pimping is through their peers from when they were active in The Game.

While in The Game and outside of it, peers provide invaluable support for pimps. Goffman (1968) explains that within stigmatized populations it is common for strong bonds between those who share stigmas to exist

> *"Knowing from their own experience what it is like to this particular stigma, some of them can provide the individual with instruction in the tricks of the trade and with a circle of lament to which he can withdraw for moral support and for the comfort of feeling at home, at ease, accepted as a person who really is like any other normal person"* (31-32)

Pimps can view each other as competition while pimping, but it is more often likely interact as comrades. They therefore tend to develop close communities that provide strong social bonds and interpersonal connections. As noted in the pimpology chapter, the relationships and networks between pimps benefit them greatly in terms of communications and information sharing. This unusual cooperation in underground criminal organization outside of an 'acknowledged, formal' organization is striking. But it benefits pimps greatly to

stick close to other pimps and remain in close contact with them even after retirement. Beyond tactical and financial matters, when pimping, pimps rely on one another for emotional, mental and sometimes physical support/backing. They are one of the few individuals who understand the lifestyle and pimps continue to depend on one another after they leave pimping as well. Richard reflects on the camaraderie between pimps:

> *"they are the ones that you are going to go to talk to cause if this is my woman and this is my best friend you can't talk to him, you can't even look him in the eye. You know but that is really who you talk to cause who else is going to understand what trouble you've got? Because if he ain't have it happen to him, he don't have the answers cause he ain't never dealt with it before.. but with this it just comes with the territory. That's where you go, that's who you talk to."*

The above does not change once pimps exit therefore they continue to keep contact with their peers and friends from within The Game after. Since no one else is going to understand 'what trouble they have', they depend on each other for support and assistance throughout and after exit. These connections make the push and pull of leaving difficult, but pimps who are still active provide necessary support to those who have left as well as temptation. Richard explained to me why former pimps stayed in contact with live pimps by drawing parallels between possible scenarios in my life and those in his:

> *"Yeah cause the Game kind of messes up your thinking. You know what I am sayin'? So you have got to have some people that kind of think like you, it's just like, you tryin' to get a PhD, you've probably got some friends that didn't finish high school, but you know that you don't have much to talk about cause you've got different goals and friends, that don't make yours better than hers, it just makes it different. Yeah so you kind of stick with your element. You know they call it snobby or whatever but roses go in the rose garden and weeds go in the weed garden, and that's just kind of how that is. It's like once you've done made your bonds in the Game, you know who to talk to and y'all talk to each other and you stay in close contact because now you done gotten older and changed so you be tryin' to see if they be havin' the same problems you havin'. "*

Michael explained the influence of the phenomena of 'The Player's Norm' (Milner & Milner, 1977) on him while in The Game while emphasizing its influence on feelings of loneliness and isolation and for him and others; this directly influenced his desire to stay in contact with peers from his time in pimping:

> *"I think a pimp is lonely cause you know in your soul that you can wake up any day and it will be over all it takes is for one girl to get killed or one of your girls to decide to cross you or run off and take all the other girls, or another pimp to get into your business without you knowing, you got trust issues cause people frown on pimps"*

So for Michael, and most of the other respondents, the social networks and support provided by other pimps proves/d invaluable during and after The Game. Because of the uniqueness of the perspectives, mentality and experiences a pimp undergoes, they feel strongly

that it requires another pimp to truly understand. This shared identity and lifestyle also allows them to speak the same language and mitigates the need to explain details and experiences.

These remaining ties to people involved in the 'hustlers' criminal group makes determining the timing of 'complete' exit difficult if at all possible. Remaining in connection still keeps former pimps engaged in the community and therefore they have not severed ties. This is important as it means that even though they have left, they are still peripherally connected to illicit underground activities and the individuals who engage in them. Beyond the necessity of a community who understands their histories, pimps remain connected so that can retain their identities as pimps. Thus they forgo the activity, but they are in their minds still pimpin'. They contest that their long term socialization into the world of pimping means that they will never fully acclimate to square life and that they remain 'pimps for life'.

Pimpology After The Game: "You never leave, this is, pimpin' is forever. Understand, if you a true pimp, you there:"

In the above quote, Eric challenged my assumption that he was a no longer a pimp even though he was not pimping. He was a pimp 'forever' which was a bit confusing to me as he was no longer involved in The Game. But his identity was still very much linked to that of a pimp. So I questioned this idea even further in search of a more in-depth explanation by changing the wording of the question to include his mental allegiance to pimping.

> Holly: "Do you think you have mentally left it?"
> Eric: "Mentally! left The Game? why you ask me that?" (he laughs)
> Holly: "It's a reasonable question…."
> Eric: "Okay, No. (about ten sec. pause and a sigh) You know why? Cause pimpin' is more than just selling a woman's body. It's just like dope, pimpin' affects every area of your life. Some things you are going to overcome when you are in The Game, some things you not. Popularity is something that you going miss, 'there go such and such' you know you like people lookin' up to you, so you not ever going to just leave this game until you dead. That's the game of pimpin', that's the game of pimpin'."

For him, the assertion that you can never leave and that pimpin' is forever is a reality as contradictory as it may seem. But this sentiment was echoed throughout the other interviews as well. Interviewees again struggled to explain their current relationship to The Game because in their minds, they were still pimps. After hearing similar themes in the responses to support the presence of 'pimpology' after exit, I prompted Sean asking

> Holly: "am I correct in understanding that pimping is more a philosophy and a mindframe? It's a way a viewing the world so even if you leave the game, you haven't really left The Game? "
>
> Sean: "Hahahah Well…. Yeah yeah yeah I'm gonna tell you like this, **I'm not in the game, but the game is in me**, even though I might have squared up so to speak, got married and all this and that"

Thus this Game that is inside of him is something beyond the physical community of individuals, and the activities of performing as a pimp. Pimpology retains its influence on pimps after desistance because it is so deeply entrenched in their thinking, actions and perspectives. Pimping, it would seem, is for life. Ultimately, Sean further claimed that *"it's a whole lot that goes with being a pimp, it's not just a title, it's a mind frame, it's a lifestyle you know. "* Therefore, to assume a pimp in this sense is restricted to a title and role would be to under-rate the depth of socialization individuals experience in The Life and their loyalty to it. Because former pimps' identities never fully shifts away from pimping which is perceived to be required for becoming an ex (Fuchs Ebaugh, 1988), they gravitate towards conceptualizing themselves and their lives in relation to pimping even after retirement; in other words they maintain hangover identities in The Game (Fuchs Ebaugh, 1988). Sue highlights this tendency when she proclaims that no matter what she does she thinks pimp *" because that word will always be in the background… pimp, pimp, pimp or female escort."* Some of the respondents referred to themselves as former pimps, some as both pimps and former pimps, some as 'graduated' pimps and other as just pimps. The variety in self-identification of role further draws attention to the heterogeneity of experiences of pimps and to their continued compromise and negotiation of identity after retirement.

The positive sentiments held by respondents towards pimping and their praise of the experiences further supports their resistance to give up their allegiance to The Game and that lifestyle. Richard told me *"The Game been alright to me and it is kind of hard to not like something that has been good to you. If it has been good to you it is easy to like"* therefore, he had a hard time critiquing and criticizing an experience he found positive. This positive thinking about pimping affected other respondents regularly as well. Sue explained that she regularly has to 'check' herself as her mind tends to go into pimp mode if when she lets it: *"You know an idle mind is the devils playground, when I sit around I think shit, I could be out here pimpin some of these bitches right now, and I think oh, that was so gross what I just said, and I have to check myself " come on come on, that ain't you, what you just said, that ain't cool" and I am trying to convince myself that what I said was not right."* James also highlights the active work that individuals need to do within themselves to prevent from sliding into 'pimp mode' by explaining *"Two years, but I am still a work in progress, sure I have flashbacks of the good times, I still possess some charm, but I still remember, you know what a vicious cycle is? See addiction involves much more than the use of drugs see I was addicted to drugs but to a lifestyle and I had to break the cycle, and I preserved."* But ultimately, James is still hooked on the lifestyle, as were all the other respondents. Their loyalty to The Game may have waned a bit through their inactivity in pimping, but they remain steadfast to the rules and to pimpology long after exit.

James then further offered examples of his addiction to pimpology and explained how it impact him on a daily basis still:

> *"Some days are better than others, but my best days, being married and all that, I screw the fuck up Holly, I do, I still do, I still womanize, I am learning, I am a lot better than I used to be. I am a husband, I am a father that steps up to the plate, I am a son at your beckon call, my parents are elderly and I am the only child, my responsibilities have grown enormously, and through the process of changing my thinking I have been able to address each one (inaudible). My wife told me one time, early on, slow down, I made a lot of money cause I can talk, she said baby you spend your money like a pimp."*

James identified his thinking as a problem as did Sue, but the rest of the respondents suggested that their pimp outlook on the world and life in general was unproblematic as it just was their reality. Richard described this well when he answered my question, is it true that pimpin' ain't easy? *"It ain't, it ain't a job that everyone could do cause we all prostitute or pimp in one way or another, if you just get down right to it.*" I somewhat regrettably pushed further on this issue and received another hypothetical that I was placed into.

> *Holly: "Is that kind of your perspective on things in general?"*
>
> *Richard: "Well if I took you to the show, and we went back to a hotel and we ended up sleeping together, it might have just cost me less to just ask you 'ok, how much do you want to have sex?' But I can't do that right, I've gotta play this dating game, get some flowers, some candy, take you to the movies, right? But at the end of the day you know exactly what you are going to do and when you are going to do it."*
>
> *Holly: "So you don't view human relationships at all in terms of emotion, attachment, affection, you think it boils down to..."*
>
> *Richard: "I think it boils down to security. You not funna let me drag you down, cause I love you and you love me, that's what kids do."*

Thus for Richard, everything could be broken down into similar terms and trade offs if viewed through The Game and essentially feels that everything is The Game. When talking with him, he offered more insight into this mindset:

> *Richard: "I know but you probably didn't think we did stuff like (inaudible) but it be like it just change your whole outlook on people pimpin'. Once you get introduced to it, it's hard, it's just like opening Pandora's box. It's just really hard to close, cause you don't really want to close it, and then close it for what?"*
>
> *Holly: "I am getting the impression that it is also a mindset that you never really leave it"*
>
> *Richard: "It is and no you never"*
>
> *Holly: "It how you view things and experience the world..?"*

Richard: "Just like you goin' to college, you gonna always remember, you are always going to know what 1+1 is all my life. And you really don't want to cause you like the way that it makes you think cause I don't personalize stuff as much you know what I am sayin'. I don't get jealous about my women, I don't get into none of that cause I ain't really that emotionally involved. I don't look at life the way that I used to, now I look at everything from the corrupt aspect"

Likewise, Richard supported the idea that his thinking had been permanently shifted by The Game:

"But it kind of changes your outlook on life. See cause you don't never think the same no more, see and you ain't even participating in it you have been talkin' about it and it kind of gives you another view of it so you will never be able to forget it and you will look at it from a whole different perspective."

Not only have these individuals experienced shifts in their identity (the extent of which is questionable) but in the end they also experiences a *role shift* which is dramatically different from their prior 'pimp treatment.' So another part of the struggle to adapt to mainstream living has to do with the dramatic *role shift* pimps experience. The rules of The Game are no longer in effect for them and they are placed in unfamiliar territory to fend for themselves. James explained how dramatic the role shift has been for him:

"It totally is a different world, it's like how you would go from being the president of the United States, to selling newspapers, it takes a lot of discipline, acceptance, humility, we are talking about a man who had everything I didn't have to wash my own ass baby, not if I didn't want, I didn't have to wipe it. My lady would go to the store and I would be like "oh shit, who is going to turn the TV now" " don't take too long, daddy don't know what to do without you" "

From not having to reach for the remote control while earning close to half a million dollars a year, to working a nine to five at close to minimum wage and completely taking care of oneself, has proven a shock to James. He acknowledges that his adjustment is an on-going process.

Pimping is an all-encompassing lifestyle and as such, complete desistance after a long tenure is difficult. The sway that pimpology still holds over respondents is evident and continues to impact on their lives after exit. Pimping was a central identity to these individuals and therefore, this centrality makes reform and change after The Game a struggle. They do not experience the dramatic shift and transformation outlined by Fuchs Ebaugh (1988) with a central role but they seem to battle reconciliation between their pasts and present identities consistently and without radical reform. Possibly more than a hangover identity, they strongly maintain their allegiance to pimping and claim their loyalty to The

Game and the rules it offers. Their role shifts are yet to be completed as they still experience *voluntary* hangover identities. Letting go of The Game and removing themselves completely not only seems difficult for respondents, but it is not ideal for them. They want to maintain a foothold in that life and identity and therefore, grapple to maintain it even in the face of retirement. To them, they are pimps for life and mentally, they will never graduate from The Game because as Sean put it, they are not in The Game, but The Game is in them.

Stigma

The word 'stigma' began to dominate much of the narratives of respondents when they were disclosing their lives after pimping. This is significant as stigma relates directly to the felt and realized perceptions of marginalization and judgment by mainstream society, which they are now trying to be active members of. But Ex-pimps, like other exes from deviant and stigmatized groups, create marginal cultures "to support one another and cope with the labels and stereotypes of the broader society" (Fuchs Ebaugh, 1988: 6) Thus, as earlier mentioned, they maintain close ties to former networks to help alleviate this pressure and stigma, especially once they have entered the mainstream. Pimps have to face a harsh reality once they step out of The Game: what was a glorious lifestyle to them, is abhorrent to most (Pheterson, 1993). They now carry the stigma of 'pimp' that serves to marginalize them within mainstream culture. Often pimps face verbal attacks and judgmental glares from the public while they are involved in pimping, but they simply brush this off as jealousy or poorly reflected admiration. But once out of pimping, they have little to cling to in order to offer defense and become vulnerable to the sting of stigma.

The pimps in this research have two specific factors contributing to their experience of stigma: Firstly, their identities as Black Americans, and secondly, their role and histories as pimps (Fuchs Ebaugh, 1988). So when Goffman (1963) explains, "A stigma, then, is really a special kind of relationship between attribute and stereotype" (14) he supports the exceptional social disadvantage of the respondents in this research. Black males have a pre-existing stereotype as hypersexual, deviant, criminal, predatory and dangerous individuals; all characteristics which encapsulate the image and reality of the pimp. So pimps, black male pimps especially, become extreme caricatures of the perilous, criminal and devious Black male and his threat to American society (Pheterson, 1993; Bernstein, 2007). Thus their experience of stigma is intense even after desistance.

Pimping represents immorality, brutality and manipulation to many (Pheterson, 1993) thus the stigma felt is caused in part by these "Blemishes of individual characters perceived as weak will, domineering or unnatural passions, treacherous and rigid beliefs, and dishonesty, these being inferred from a known record." (Goffman, 1963:14) The high visibility of pimps through their public displays allegiance to The Game through fashion, material goods and the

company they keep, ensures that their business and record is blatant and obvious to most. But it is possible that if one does not view pimps with the earlier stated perspective, that the stigma attached to the pimp, if at all, would likely be attached to issues of sexuality and the sex industry itself. They are tainted as a result of engaging within criminal and 'dirty' women (Pheterson, 1993).

Furthermore, pimps face stigma from those in 'square society' due to being 'unworthiness of maleness' (Pheterson, 1993). Because pimps are dependent on women mostly for their incomes, they are in effect defying hegemonic masculine mainstream norms. As a result of this lack of 'financial autonomy', male pimps experience a loss of mainstream, square status as 'male' (Pheterson, 1993). In order to partially compensate for this loss of status, after exiting pimps must negotiate ways of presenting their past identities as more 'masculine' to avoid stigma. This perspective is of course challenged by the reality of female pimps. But as discussed, the transgression of gender through this role means that women could be judged by the same but reverse standard: of not being sufficiently feminine through the performance of a 'man's' position.

While they are involved in pimping though, pimps ignore and negate stigma and reject feeling judged or marginalized as pimps. This allows them to present as if they are completely apathetic to any attempt to judge or condemn their activities. They explain that the public is simply jealous and wants to either be them, or be around them. Eric highlights this when he explains that:

> *"When you are in the Game you don't care about what another person says, people are going to talk regardless but you can't let that stigma knock down what you have presented to your hos, that's about they is better than those people even though they know they are not but they look good, you look good, you gettin' money."*

Accounts began to once again dominate the respondents' explanations of involvement in pimping when talking about stigma and pimping and these appeals include both excuses and justifications (Scott &Lyman, 1968). Most of the respondents relied on either condemnation of the condemner or scapegoating to explain their stigma (Scott & Lyman, 1968).

A crucial shift takes place when they leave pimping; once a pimp exits: the prior mentioned reasons or excuses that allowed them to withstand public judgment are no longer in place. When trying to re-acclimate to mainstream society, they become vulnerable to its assessments of their character and history. And thus stigma becomes very real and felt. So this same public that was ignored before is now responsible for the continuous labeling of pimps and their stigma. Eric turns now to condemnation of the condemner to explain his experience of disenfranchizement in square society (Scott &Lyman, 1968).

> *"you are going to be in that circle, cause society ain't going let you outta of it. You gonna be there whether you are working a legal job now or you have a title or you have became a respectable member of society, in society's eye you past says you a pimp and a drug dealer so you are going to be that. You are going to be like that in society's eye and in the street's eyes. I go down the pimp stroll today and wrap hands and wouldn't you know hos won't get in my car cause they still think I am pimpin'. They fear if they get in the car they have to choose. See you not going to be able to get outta the title cause it was a lifestyle that you chose"*

I was quite struck when Richard nonchalantly asserted that *"you probably didn't even think we was human."* How and why would Richard be under the impression that I had dehumanized him? The answer becomes clear when we assess Goffman's explain of this phenomena in relation to stigma. He stated that "By definition, of course, we believe that the person with a stigma is not quite human" (Goffman, 1963:15) Goffman (1963) further suggests that with individuals who select stigma and deviancy from wider norms that: "He feels that he is a full- fledged normal human, and that we are the ones who are not quite human. He bears stigma but does not seem to be impressed or repentant about doing so" (Goffman, 1963: 17) Thus, Richard was not far off from theoretical impressions of his experiences of stigma.

Richard attempts to normalize pimping and shifts to justification for his actions through condemnation to the condemner. He does so by asserting that society is ultimately responsible for his lifestyle (Scott & Lyman, 1968).

> *"And then society is also shows it as a normal thing, now they will always try to make it look like the man is the problem but if you don't think you've got a lot of options, and I come up with something that makes sense, Wall Street calls it an investment right, we call it pimpin'. And it's amazingly that had nobody ever thought about it, about the other side of it, and it's like you said, there has got to be another side to it, but the other side is didn't think they had no other options."*

He then echoes this condemnation and normalization through his perspective on mainstream society: *"it ain't a job that everyone could do but cause we all prostitute or pimp in one way or another, if you just get down right to it"*. In these quotes, they again try to place pimping in a larger context by asserting that society is the same as the underground sex work economy. Eric described the reasons why he felt that pimps experienced stigma and it was not because of what all pimps do:

> *"It gets a bad name from bulldog pimps, you got guys that come into the pimpin' game, that don't know nothin' about it and they mess it up for a pimp that has been in it for a long time. That's where that bulldog image I told you about comes from, or you might get it from a parent whose says my daughter is a pawn to you, but no, your daughter choose this way of life, all I did was open the door for her. She choose this life and yeah I choose to take her money."*

Michael appealed to a similar account:

"Because I was what you call a gentleman pimp; I ain't gonna say I didn't rough my girls up sometimes, I was a gentleman pimp. Matter of fact I didn't even like girls that was with guys you call gorilla pimps, you know why? Once they done been with a gorilla pimp, and then they with a gentleman pimp, and you don't rough em' up enough, they think you soft. And they ain't gonna do right."

According to the respondents, they are/were not guilty of doing anything wrong nor are they deserving of stigma; they merely suffer stigma because of what <u>other</u> pimps do. Therefore, according to Eric, his stigma is undeserved because of the kind of pimp he was. He mitigates responsibility for his past by pushing the blame on others, or by scapegoating (Scott & Lyman, 1968). But there were other appeals made as well. Eric and Sean both relied on religious/spiritual judgment as supreme in order to undermine any human stigma and/or condemnation. For example, Eric explained how he copes with stigma he feels he undeservingly suffers and in turn suggests that only a higher power can judge him, he escapes having to explain or justify his behavior to anyone.

"don't get me wrong, I loved pimpin', I loved pimpin', I accomplished a lot of things and I lost a lot of things. I had only a fantasy lifestyle, you understand what I am sayin' that only pimp can, I travelled cross country, I got all the luxuries of life that a pimp can expect. But there is just one thing now, which is what you have done, you have done. And the only judge for that is Him. I don't walk out of here worried about anyone else judging me."

Michael also appealed to scapegoating but he chose to identify other pimps as the source of guilt and additionally played off of appeal to loyalties, essentially asserting that The Game itself if responsible and in control of what pimps and prostitutes do.

"It actually is a lifestyle, I don't care what you hear, I don't care nothing about the myths, you do not run around her kidnapping girls and beating them up and making them prostitute, nah, now I am not saying that don't happen Holly, I want you to listen to what I am saying, I am not saying that don't happen, but overall, the lifestyle is this here"

Conclusion

Having stayed in The Game for much longer than intended, most respondents spent at least ten years in pimping and many invested the majority of their working careers in The Life. This not only immediately impacted their lives but after desistance, they faced numerous obstacles to securing themselves within the mainstream. Lacking legitimate records, identification, employment skills and/or history, and limited education meant many respondents had to significantly adjust their lifestyles and life skills to survive outside of The Game. Beyond the practical issues of squaring up and the problems with accessibility

discussed, pimps struggle in the life after exit because of the push and pulls that they experience when leaving (Bjorio, 2002; Pyrooz & Decker, 2011). These various elements influence various levels of remaining interaction with those still in The Game and can encourage engagement in other illegal, off the books hustling. Like leaving gangs, it is likely pimps need to experience "both cognitive or identity shifts *and* restructured routine activities" to succeed in desistance (Pyrooz & Decker, 2011). An integral variable in the pull is related to the social connections and bonds they forged over their years in pimping. Respondents' connections to The Game go beyond the mental as all of the respondents still maintained close and regular contact with former 'colleagues' and individuals involved in The Game.

Their continued reliance on live pimps for support and encouragement through their transition out blurs their ability to completely disconnect from The Game. Thus, they are not pimping anymore, but their peer circles and support networks have remained the same. Their shared languages and experiences, understanding and camaraderie, make active pimps invaluable resources to the 'former' pimp. Therefore, it would seem that a pimps' exit from pimping means a desistance from the action of pimping but does not mean a removal from the community nor the connection to peers. Furthermore, a deep connection still exists between the former pimp and pimping and that is pimpology.

Pimping, as highlighted by the respondents, is much more than a title or a role, it is an entire way of life. Thus pimps can leave pimping but in their minds, they are always in The Game. The depth of their socialization into the subculture is extraordinary and as a result, they maintain hangover identities when attempting to disidentifiy with pimping (Fuch Ebaugh, 1988). Over time, as suggested by respondents, vestiges of their old life begins to fade and they slowly immerse more and more into the mainstream, but both disengagement and disidentification challenge pimps in the attempts to shift roles (Fuch Ebaugh, 1988).

Because 'pimping is for life', these ex-pimps often struggle to negotiate new identities while clinging to their past ones. Pimpology continues to dominate their perspectives and experiences regardless of their participation in the mainstream. Because roles differ in their importance to self-identity, there are different experiences of those who exit this lifestyle. Sarah and Ken did not hold this identity as central and thus were able to reject it easier than others and managed to escape pimpology. The remaining respondents cling strongly to their identities as pimps because these identities were central and all-encompassing in their lives and to their senses of self (Fuch Ebaugh, 1988). As pimping was a 'master role' for most of the respondents, major changes and adaptations are now required of them to adjust to their new roles. The centrality of this role challenges their ability to move onto new roles as many of the respondents are still locked in pimpology and seemed determined to do so for the rest of their natural lives.

Stigma, as a theme, dominated the 'life after pimping' narratives and respondents felt very restricted and confined by it. As they are now interested in merging into the mainstream, they are particularly sensitive to public opinions and people responses to them. These ex-pimps encounter judgmental and adverse treatment as a result of their involvement in pimping that in turn encourages them to keep ties to those pimping for support. None of the respondents were willing to confront these stigmas head on but instead scapegoated, condemned the condemner and offered appeals to loyalty (Scott & Lyman, 1968). As 'undeserving' of stigma and marginalization, pimps felt they were disenfranchized because of misunderstanding and lack of knowledge about their work. As previously noted in this thesis, it is pimps mostly that control the output of information on their activities in literature and media, therefore, it is their own peers then that are partly to blame for this 'misrepresentation.'

Becoming an ex-pimp is a continuous and on-going process that respondents were still in the midst of settling. They have left The Game but were struggling to completely severe all ties to their past lives. Interviewees insisted that the 'pimping is for life' and 'pimp or die' mantras still stood firm; they might not be pimping but they are still pimps. The centrality of this lifestyle makes pimping a career that is hard to retire from and ultimately, the respondents did not want to completely exit. Their motivations and incentives for retirement kept them out of active pimping but these 'pimps for life' are essentially just that.

Conclusion

In-depth exploration of the term 'pimp' was necessary in this thesis in order to establish a core component of this research and to build a framework around the history context and use of the word. Ambiguous use of the word pimp across prostitution research impedes comparability, and clarity and thus makes causes inconsistencies within the existing body of literature. In an attempt to draw attention to the oversight of defining 'pimp', the chapter on 'Defining Pimp' proposes criteria and processes for a more robust definition and offers a carefully authored, more comprehensive definition of 'pimp'. The definitional processes suggested for 'pimp' were reviewed through exploration of the history, cultural context, mainstream usage, academic applications and feedback from pimps. This chapter drew attention to problematic definitional trends in research, and proposed new foundations for defining 'pimp' within social research. Once the word itself had been identified, and defined this thesis then transitioned into discussions about the various career phases of pimping and the wide breadth of insights and perspectives respondents offered in relation to their life experiences.

The first core data chapter explored the social and spatial environment of American ghettos as the backdrop and context in which the respondents grew up. Great variety and heterogeneity was expressed in the childhood narratives of respondents, but meaningful reoccurring themes did emerge that highlighted elements of similarity that could indicate some semblance of shared histories among illegal street pimps. The data did not suggest a strong background typology for pimps, which is often offered by research on prostitutes (Hodgson, 1997; Farley, 2004; Kempf-Leonard & Johnasson, 2007; Raphael, 2004a); instead this chapter laid the groundwork for understanding respondents' future trajectories as within their childhoods, various experiences of familial dysfunction, economic hardship, and apathy towards education would eventually lead to circumstances, environments and social groups that would expose them to pimping. These elements also may have influenced a pre-disposition to involvement in illegal activities as many of the respondents formed an aversion to mainstream culture, education, legitimate employment and law enforcement (Matza, 1967; Hodgson, 1997). 'The jungle' also calls for careful focus as it then served as the location and site of exposure and introduction to pimping for respondents.

In 'Becoming a Pimp' the various entries and getaways into pimping were explored providing insight into the processes of 'becoming' involved in this illegal career. An examination of exposure to pimps by respondents when they were younger, detailed the interactions, environments, and circumstances that lead respondents to become aware of this illicit activity as a career option. Often involvement in other illegal activities led respondents to locations and sites that proved to attract hustlers involved in various underground

economies. Most frequently cited as a location for engagement in gambling for respondents were quasi-legal establishments known as pool halls where a variety of hustlers meet to socialize, drink, play pool, gamble and carry out multiple illicit activities. In these locations, respondents either worked or hustled, and when in these locations, individuals became familiar with pimps who frequented these sites. In their youth respondents found themselves disinterested in education, frustrated with poverty, and determined to 'get rich or die trying' when this exposure to pimps happened. This along with repeated exposure led many of the respondents to have favorable impressions of pimps and pimping, and planted a seed of interest in the criminal career.

Beginning in their teens, respondents often found themselves in social environments within The Jungle, where criminal activity led to regular interactions with law enforcement. Arrest, prosecutions and jail sentences became expected occurrences within their social circles, families and surrounding communities. As result of their engagement in a range of illegal activities, many of the respondents had frequent run-ins with the law, multiples arrests and some had even collected felony charges on their records. Lengthy criminal records, especially those marked by felonies, meant a significant reduction in opportunities for education and legitimate employment for respondents. Thus respondents saw entry into an illegal career 'in the streets' as their only option to access the status, respect and income they hoped to accomplish (Hodgson, 1997). Options for the type of success they sought in the underground economy limited individuals to a choice between drug dealing or pimping. Interviewees favored pimping as it was more glamorous, less dangerous, and used to carry significantly minimal risk of arrest when compared to involvement with illegal drugs (Milner & Milner, 1972).

Once determined to enter the career of pimping, learning The Game and becoming familiar with those locally involved became crucial for respondents. This following section of this chapter described the ways in which pimps undergo apprenticeships and training in pimping from older, more experienced pimps, or OGs. This process of training is explored as a characteristic of this subculture that values the passing on of information on The Game from one generation to the next (Milner & Milner, 1972). Following discussions related to learning how to pimp, this thesis turned its focus to describing, explaining and presenting the main trends within methods of pimping, or pimpology.

The following two chapters revolve around exploration of narratives on how pimps pimp. Referred to as Pimpology, or methods of pimping, this substantive subject area covered the role of money, the need for pimps, the recruitment of prostitutes, locations and movement, professional underground networks, the rules of The Game, management, personal presentation, and performativity. Broken down into two chapters, examination of Pimpology offered nuanced explorations of the subculture, the pimp-prostitute relationship and highlights

trends within pimping that are currently not found in the literature: training, women recruiters, professional networks, female pimps, and residential patterns.

'Pimpology Part 1' begins by examining the influence and meaning of money to this population and calls into question the functionality and significance it plays. As described, money often was motivating factor for involvement in The Game but was among various other incentives such as respect, status and success. This section also draws focus to the arguably highly exploitative trend within this subcultural that regulates that pimps claim and control one hundred percent of a prostitute's earnings. Attention was then shifted to the 'need' for pimps and explored the factors that perpetuate and create the 'need' for this role. This research among other projects (Hodgson, 1997; Milner & Milner, 1972) supports the perspective that pimps create the demand for their services by regulating and controlling street prostitution locations, harassing 'renegades' and perpetuating myths about their ability to provide services such as protection when in fact, pimps only provide protection from *other pimps*. Thus contrary to mainstream expectations, pimps' roles do not extend to cover, the tasks of protection from clients or the public, or solicitation of clients.

The nomadic trends of this population were then assessed by reviewing data offered on multiple residential patterns, cross country pimping, and frequent travel to locations where the services of prostitutes were likely to be in high demand. These trends are often influenced by law enforcement operations, major local events, and what appears to be a subcultural appreciation for travel and diverse living environments. These nomadic patterns and frequent travel are important as they suggest that this population is highly transitory, adaptive, and has the means to obtain pertinent information rapidly through networks. These networks, which are well maintained and strongly relied upon, are crucial to the make up of these subcultural communities of street pimps. Socially and professionally, these connections and networks act to provide pimps with social and professional support. It is possible for pimps to function independent of these networks, as was the case with Ken, but the remaining respondents suggest that these connections were imperative to their survival in The Game. The existence of, and reliance on, these networks has yet to be addressed in the literature therefore placing this data in position to offer new information about the work environs and cooperation amongst street pimps. Various patterns in the modality, tactics, motivations and behaviors of pimps emerge through the exploration of money, services, demand, geographically movement and networks within this chapter. Pimpology Part 1 lays the groundwork for several overarching issues and themes that further identify the roles, behaviors, experiences, and identifies of pimps; these are then explored in detail within 'Pimpology Part 2.'

'Pimpology Part 2' begins with an exploration of performativity and pimping. Covering issues of intersectionality, masculinity and emotional management, this section aims to explore the various social expectations experiences by these individuals within their

identities as pimps. Because of the critical feminist approaches and analysis utilized in this research, 'Pimpology Part 2' offers an explorations of inequalities and gender dynamics that became central to understanding many of the attitudes, behaviors and roles that allow pimps to function, persist and succeed. Once pimpology has been explored, placing it within the frameworks of multiple structural violences and experiences of inequalities grants the complex context needed to sufficiently address the various surrounding issues that create and maintain pimps in their roles. The social landscapes, personal choices, and structural oppressions influencing pimps become more vivid when placed within structures of patriarchal white heteronormativity in The USA. Additionally, the inclusion of female pimps in this sample also necessitated an exploration of gender issues and experiences. The general absence of female pimps and male prostitutes within current literature leaves major gaps within gendered understandings and analysis of current sex work environments, experiences and economies. Thus, the data provided that specifically tackles issues of gender, along with the inclusion of female pimps, contributes to the existing literature on this topic by proposing nuanced understandings of how gender and inequalities interplay within the experiences of pimps.

This project would strongly suggest that illegal street pimping as it stands, seems to be masculine and a male dominated career. It is a man's world that is women are clearly infiltrating but again, they are replicating and reaffirming male domination rather than challenging it. Overall, this research and the respondents within this sample supported describing pimping as masculine and male dominated. The inclusion of female pimps does pose some challenges to this status quo, but again, in many ways these lady macks did not undermine the masculine identity of pimping but rather reinforced it. As mentioned above, much more research is needed on this topic in general but especially in relation to gender and power within sex work experiences and various tiers.

A brief exploration of The Rules of The Game is then engaged and examines their transference, adaptations and meanings for this subculture. Rather than remaining stagnant, these ever-changing rules act as indicators of changes in The Game through time and in approaches to pimping. Often these rules help to shape and inform the management styles and tactics of pimps. Respondents presented an understanding and construction of the concept of 'management' within pimping as far more complex and all encompassing than simply managing money, directing the work of prostitutes or overseeing prostitution exchanges. This chapter demonstrated how pimps understood the core of management resting in their ability to maintain control and power within the pimp-prostitute relationship. Often, the means of establishing and maintaining this power was through violence, coercion, manipulation and exploitation. Once this dominion is established, respondents then offered insights into the means by which they negotiated their relationships with prostitutes, between prostitutes and

between themselves and other hustlers. Exploration of the relationships of pimps between themselves and others draws attention to dynamic and complex interactions that are often unaccounted for within discourse; thus taking a nuanced approach to these interactions granted insight into the grey areas outside of the 'black and white'.

The 'Exit Chapter' presented the collimation of various circumstances that were presented by respondents as the incentive for a pimp's retirement. Seldom in the narratives of respondents did one issue stand alone in encouraging exit from The Game instead multiple factors informed the decision and though there are trends in similar exit motives, again the experiences of this population differ from one another. Major shifts occurred in the narratives of the respondents when they reached a point in their stories when they had to explain desistance. As highlighted by this chapter 'Becoming an Ex-Pimp', tones shifted and the focus of the narratives took a dramatic turn towards traumas, grief, exhaustion, and tribulations as former pimps tried to describe their abandonment of The Life. Control is central to pimping and loyalty to The Game is essential; when these are compromised, an individual's place in The Game is threatened. External conditions that change the state of an individual's pimping unravels their internal stability and shake the foundation of their career. The intervention of external factors that threatened that control forced most of the respondents to reassess their position and future prospects within their underground careers. Themes such as older age, mental and emotional exhaustion, family responsibilities and deteriorating health often lead to desistance from this criminal career but additional elements including drug addiction, trauma, imprisonment, law enforcement crackdowns and social betrayal all also act as further incentives for pimps to 'hang up their pimp hat.'

The final chapter examines respondents' experiences of life after pimping by discussing their role shifts, disidentification and attempts to re-acclimate to mainstream, square life. In first addressing the many obstacles respondents faced in their desistance, this chapter highlighted the potential needs of this population for support in exit and success outside of The Game. This chapter then draws attention to a specific mindframe that respondents regularly referred to as having strong grasp on their lives, perspectives and relationships: the pimpology mindframe. This mindframe, as presented by the respondents, suggests that respondents also interpret pimpology a as philosophy and outlook as much as a career, role or activity. So while the respondents who were former pimps were not longer pimping, they asserted that they still thought and perceived their worlds thought the lens of pimpology. Additionally, many of the now OGs still maintain strong connections and networks with The Game. Therefore, even though they have retired, they have not completely severed ties with the world of pimping nor do they suggest having any intention to.

Concluding Notes

This thesis is founded on ten months of research based on gaining access to and conducting in-depth, unstructured interviews with nine individuals who were or are pimps involved in illegal prostitution. It explored the experiences of pimps and investigates their role within the world of illegal prostitution. Since the 1930s, only a handful of studies have been undertaken on this topic (Reitman, 1932; Milner & Milner, 1972; Hodgson, 1997), illustrating a serious vacuum in research on pimping that accounts for the contemporary political and sociological underpinnings of the sex work industry as it is presently constructed. By investigating an under-researched population, this thesis offers descriptions, explanations, and data that is currently unavailable within the existing body of literature on sex work and prostitution (Weitzer, 2000a). By focusing specifically on pimps involved in illegal prostitution, this research was able to collect rich and detailed data from a social actor that has been largely spoken *of* and *for,* rather than *with*. Without intention to glamorize or sensationalize the lifestyle nor the intention to demonize or vilify it, this research navigated a tightrope walk between critical analysis and allowing the data to speak for itself. This empirical research is in a position to offer a number of original contributions to various discourses in sociology, criminology, and gender studies related to sex work and prostitution.

This thesis addressed key questions about this population by offering crucial insights into the activities, identities, roles and behaviors of pimps. This research explored the experiences of pimps from before their entry into The Game through to desistance offering a unique view of the criminal career cycle of pimps. Through the examination of these various phases and experiences in the lives of pimps, themes emerged that highlighted the unexplored first hand accounts of the roles, identities and cultures of those within this criminal career. Organized and presented to follow the career cycles and lived experiences of pimps, this project offers a chronological exploration of respondents' narratives and in doing so, develops 'story-lines' and progressions to respondents'' experiences within this role to highlight various processes of 'becoming.' This research offers clarifications and new insights on the realities of pimping versus mainstream understandings of it, as it is clear that often what is assumed to be the role and/or behaviors of pimps are inconsistent with the lived realities. Furthermore, motivations for entry such as deprivation and monetary incentives have an impact but as this project highlights, there are far more complex and multi-faceted enticements for involvement in The Game. This thesis produced a nuanced approach to the presentation of the pimp through their histories, social environments, interpersonal relationships and careers. I also highlight the heterogeneity and diversity within these populations both in terms of the social identities of pimps and of their experiences within pimping. This research was sensitive to variations in pimping populations, and also

recognized the complex hierarchies, and often-fluid roles, within the world of illegal prostitution (Bernstein, 2007; Weitzer, 2004a). Additionally, I was able to include two female pimps within the research sample, allowing me to produce a richer and deeper analysis of the meanings and expressions of gender within the world of prostitution.

The combination of feminist approaches, methodologies, and analysis in this thesis stand to offer unique and original contributions to the current discourse on sex work and prostitution. This thesis currently stands as the first significant sociological study of pimps in the USA to attempt to apply feminist methodologies in its examination of this population. The value of feminist research on topics of violence against women through working with offenders/perpetrators cannot be overstated as it is through this work that gender power in structures, interactions and inequalities can be indentified and assessed (Scully, 1990). It is only through understanding the realities and experiences of offenders and perpetrators that the motivations and driving forces behind these problematic trends of violence, exploitation and abuse can be realized. Thus, I believe that further work in uncovering trends within pimping that shed light on recruitment, movement, roles, relationships and identities that are the products of direct work with pimps could go a long way in informing and contributing to current sex work, prostitution and human trafficking discourses and in turn impact rehabilitation, outreach policy and policing.

There are several ways in which this research could have beneficial applications to legal and social programs, policies, and rehabilitation of those negatively impacted by The Game. In borrowing for Bjorgo's (2002) work on violent crime and gang desistance, I would suggest that this research could have similar impacts and outcomes that research beyond the scope of academia. Because of the harmful, exploitative nature of pimp-controlled prostitution, it is necessary to undertake steps and action in an attempt to prevent pimps from continuing to practice these problematic behaviors that inflict harm on prostitutes, the public and communities (Harocopos, et.al., 2000; Hodgson, 1997).

The data disclosed in this project could inform suppressive measures that would include laws, legal interventions, police action and more effective prosecutions aimed at curbing the aforementioned actions of pimps. It could also be used to inform more effective outreach services and rehabilitation efforts of those seeking to exit either prostitution or pimping (Harocopos, et.al., 2000). A clearer understanding of the relationships, working habits, behaviors and management styles of pimps would grant insight into how to apply more appropriate assistance to those seeking to exit The Game. This research, along with other upcoming research projects on pimps, will act to fill the knowledge and literature gap on this population which will go a long way to inform academic, professional and public bodies alike about the lives and roles of pimps. Furthermore, public awareness of the exploitative, violent, and harmful actions of pimps could help sway mainstream cultural tendencies towards

viewing pimps as cool, heroic and iconic (Hodgson, 1997)

Additionally, research such as this project help to draw attention to overarching structures of violence, oppressions and marginalization that need to be addressed within American politics, polices, law enforcement and very broadly, American society (hooks, 2004; Kleinman, 2007). Through examination of various inequalities in education, and access to resources (transportation, job training, medical, etc…) combined with class, race and gender discriminations that exist within the United States, it is clear that these structural oppressions and violence have a profound impact on the life and career choices of individuals who are marginalized by them (Harocopos, et.al., 2000; Hodgson, 1997).

Overall more research on this population is needed in various socio-cultural environs, within varying forms of sex work, and within differing national contexts (Weizter, 2000a; Chapkis, 1997). Within Criminology, Sociology, Psychology and Women's Studies, prostitutes and sex workers have been researched and analyzed from a plethora of disciplinary perspectives, but bulk of this research focuses on the experiences of the prostitute, generally on heterosexual, female prostitutes, while neglecting to offer similar focus on the clients, male or transgendered prostitutes, and/or the pimp (Bernstein, 2007). Questions driven by etiology have pushed researchers to explore the 'how' and 'why' of women's experiences as prostitutes, but this has yet to be applied to pimps or clients (Bernstein, 2007). As Harocopos, et. al, (2000) point out, pimps are no less a product of their experiences than prostitutes, therefore, it is essential to invest time in exploring their backgrounds to appropriately explain and understand their criminal careers. There is indication that this trend is beginning to change, as many researchers have started to direct their energies at understanding the clients (Sanders, 2004; Monto, 2004; Monto & Hotaling, 2001) and with this shift in attention, new data and insight is being offer that is crucial to understanding the perpetuation of the demand for prostitution, but still, there is nominal pursuit of knowledge and perspective of/from the pimp. Again, pimps are under-researched (Weizter, 2004a; Bernstein, 2007) but there exists sufficient information to inform future research on this population and aide in creating frameworks in which this population can be researched and analyzed. Playing a decisive role in the recruitment of women into prostitution (Raphael & Ashley, 2008; Norton- Hawk, 2004; Williamson & Baker, 2009) as well as holding them in it (Harocopos, et al, 2000; Hodgson, 1997) pimps play a major role in the illegal sex trade and because of this, research solely concentrated on pimps could go a long way in informing broader comprehensions of prostitution and attempts to curb trend in illegal sex markets.

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Appendix1- Glossary

Bottom Bitch (or Main Lady or Wife in Law): A prostitute who has been with the pimp for the longest or is the most trusted; often responsibilities and specific tasks are relegated to this individual.

Choosin': The process of a prostitute deciding to prostitute, and/or deciding which pimp to work for; this also refers to the process of selecting a new pimp and leaving the current pimp.

Ho, Hoe, or whore: prostitutes or individual active in sex work

Hot: street slang for a marked increase in police presence, arrests and prosecutions generally targeted at a specific illegal activity.

John, trick: a prostitute's customer

Mack: an alternative slang term for a pimp

Out of pocket: a slang term that is used to describe a circumstance in which a prostitute does not surrendered their complete earnings for an evening/shift.

Pimp stick: made infamous by Iceberg Slim's 'Pimp: The Story of My Life" (1969) and continuously reference in other literature and research, a pimp stick is a weapon used by pimps to 'discipline' and abuse prostitutes. A pimp stick is essentially two wire-clothing hangers braided or twisted together, and then used to strike an individual.

Prostitution: the exchange of sexual acts, sexual activity or sexual performances (physical) for money, clothing, food, shelter, drugs or any other material product/service.

Reckless eyeballing: within the world of underground, illegal street prostitution, there is a rule in which prostitutes who already have a pimp are not 'allowed' to make eye contact with any pimp other than their own unless they are looking to change pimps. When and if a prostitute with a pimp makes eye contact with another pimps without the intention of 'choosin', they are engaging in reckless eyeballing.

Stable: "a collective term for a pimp's women" (Milner & Milner, 1972: 278) or more generally, a collective term for those prostitutes that work for a pimp

Street Prostitution: an activity where an individual prostituting seeks customers by self-advertising on the street. The sexual exchange between the prostitute and client can take place in a wide variety of locations, but essentially, the client is procured from a public (or street) location.

Square: " one who is not in The Life"… "Implies restricted sexual experience of sex, naïve honesty in money matters, and misguided belief in the efficacy of the standard American social and economic system" (Milner &Milner, 1978:278). This term is used to describe jobs, people, activities and behaviors which are categorized by those within the underground sex economy and 'mainstream', normative, and outside of The Game.

Trap: the money a prostitute earns in a night and/or work shift

Turn out/turned out: "preparing and training a woman to become a prostitute" (Hodgson, 1997: 144); this term represents the process of a prostitute's initial experiences of acts of prostitution. A new turn out is a prostitute that has just entered the role of a prostitute.

Appendix 2 – SPSS Ethics Committee Application

Though the triggering of psychological distress is something I seek to avoid, it is only realistic to anticipate that the potential for it exists. Overall, based on the methodologies and support networks I plan on utilizing, it is my hope that the chances of harm will be significantly minimized. I feel comfortable in my ability to appropriately respond, based on past experiences[33], with various de-escalation techniques and within intense situations of emotional discomfort during interviews.

Section 2: Potential Risks to Participants

2.1 Could the research induce any psychological stress or discomfort?

It is necessary to consider the potential negative impact of these interviews on respondents, but it also pertinent to discuss the possible benefits of these interviews for participants. The interview context could prove therapeutic and cathartic for the respondents in offering them an opportunity to reflect and discuss their experiences and emotions. Many will not have regular access to the opportunity to discuss their lives and feelings (especially those in prison), therefore, these interviews may provide a rare chance for them to express themselves (Scully,1994). Within the context on the prison interviews, the interview interaction may be a welcomed break from the mundane and isolating experiences of prison life. Therefore, the respondents may greatly benefit from the chance to talk to someone from outside the prison and to be able to talk about themselves and their lives with someone who is genuinely interested in what they have to say. Additionally, from the literature I have been reviewing, it seems that the pimping subculture is relatively cut off from interaction with the public and/or individuals outside of the culture, therefore, this exchange may grant them a chance to gain insights on their experiences by having to explain them to an 'outsider.' Discussion with an outsider will also encourage them to reflect on philosophies, definitions and interactions which may be taken for granted if and when talking with person from within the subculture. As has been mentioned, the interviews will be constructed in a way which seeks to minimize the risk of any negative impact and strives to maximize respondent control over the flow, pace, topic and direction of the interview.   Overall, the many possible benefits to the respondents outweigh the potential negative effects; therefore, it is foreseeable that these interviews may prove therapeutic and at least interesting for the respondents.

The psychological well being of the respondents is one of the foremost concerns in this project, thus great care will be taken to minimize any risk of harm. The interviews will take place in two very different contexts: some interviews will be conducted in person and in prisons while the others will take place over the telephone. Discussed below are the potential situations and possibilities of psychological distress/discomfort to the respondents as a result of the interview process.

What could be disclosed?

There is a risk in any in-depth interview setting that respondents may disclose information or experiences which are traumatic or stress inducing. Based on the sources I have been able to access on this population, there are various experiences that are common within this group that may be disclosed in the interviews and thus, could cause mental discomfort or stress. This includes but is not limited to: physical attacks, abusive childhood homes, drug abuse, near death experiences, neglect and abandonment issues, violent tendencies, extensive jail time, criminal activity, loss of parents and friends.

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[33] I do have experience in conducting interviews with vulnerable populations and on topics that are extremely sensitive though this population (pimps) is new to me. In the past I have worked with juvenile sex offenders who often disclosed confidential and emotionally heavy information involving sexual offenses and last year, I conducted interviews with survivors of forced prostitution in the United States.

All respondents will be given a list of resources available to them so that if they feel they could use support for emotional or mental distress, they could make use of those resources (see appendix 2). Throughout the interviews, I will need to be careful to monitor the tone and content of the interviews for any hints of emotional distress. Because some interviews will be taking place over the telephone, I will need to pay special attention to the tone and responses of the interviewee in order to detect any emotional distress in the respondent though this may prove easier in the prison interview setting as facial expressions and body language could offer more insight into the emotional state of the respondent. Because the well being of the respondents will be a crucial component of all the interviews, attention will be closely given to any indication of distress regardless of the content of the interview.

Prison Interviews:

Interviewees who are in prison may be particularly vulnerable to psychological stress as prison environments tend to be psychologically stressing places to live. Due to restrictions and montiroing placed on individuals within the context, consent and vulnerability become a key concern: "Any environment in which prospective participants do not function in a fully autonomous manner necessitates careful attention to ensure voluntary participation (Kalmbach & Lyons, 2003, 671)." Thus, participants in this research who are in prison during the interviews, will be in an environment that could potentially be causing psychological anxiety prior to the interviews. In prison, stress could be caused by any number of circumstances: drug addiction, overcrowding, prison violence, social isolation and/or health conditions. This research will take care to make sure that the interviews themselves do not trigger discomfort or stress in respondents. Informed consent prior to the interviews will include a discussion to ensure that respondents were not pressured[34] into the interview and that respondents are able to self assess their mental state as stable; respondents who indicate feelings of discomfort, stress or any major psychological states, of which participation in the interview could negatively impact their mental health further, will not be interviewed for this research.

I will review the interview process with respondents following the completion of the interviews and any respondents who express that the interview and/or the topics discussed within the interview had a negative impact on their mental health/state will be referred to three sources which they can gain convenient access to : 1) Therapist/ counselors available at the prison, 2) religious leaders at the prison and 3) national hotlines (see appendix 2) that offer support to individuals who are struggling with mental health problems. This information will be left with all respondents at the end of interviews, but should circumstances arise which indicate distress in the respondent, the interview will be terminated and the use of resources encouraged. Also, when interviewing in this setting, I will have the support and help of staff at the facilities should the individual need immediate assistance with any of these issues and such action would be based on the appropriateness of such a response at the time.

If it is known what population I am interviewing, it may identify individuals' crimes to other inmates who before may have not known. It may also identify individuals to prison authorities. Those who call themselves pimps or former pimps, may not be in prison for that crime and therefore, would 'out' themselves to authorities and other inmates which could have negative consequences.

I am still in the process of trying to access information regarding the legal ramifications of individuals in prison admitting participation in pimping if and when their current conviction is not for that crime. Pimps are often not in prison for pimping, thus there are significant concerns regarding their legal rights if they admit to such an offense, or whether or not this admission could adversely affect the status within the prison population. This aspect will

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[34] There is a small possibility that prison officials or staff may offer non-monetary compensation (or punishment for lack of participation) for participation and/or pressure inmates to participate. Thus, before interviews respondents will be asked if they have had any such experience or pressure in order to ensure full voluntary consent.

need to be closely examined prior to embarking on recruiting prison interview respondents, and furthermore, when information comes to light regarding this aspect, I will disclose full details of the regulations and their impact on my approach to the ethics committee.

The location of a hidden population within prison may cause some difficulties in recruitment and the means by which is this accomplished will be informed by advice offered by prison officials. If it is apparent that there would be social consequences within the prison inmate hierarchy for individuals admitting to pimping, then people who have not been involved in this activity will also be interviewed to conceal the target population of the research and thus, protect the past activities of respondents from public disclosure. This could prove to be beneficial to the research design overall as it will allow for comparison within the research.

Additionally, if talking about pimping activities is likely to lead to legal trouble within the prison, I will instead solely focus on gaining the biographical narratives of individuals who have experiences in pimping; thus the focus will be on their life story and not their activities in pimping.

Telephone Interviews:

There is also a possibility that individuals interviewed over the telephone could experience psychological distress or discomfort. These interviews will begin like the prison ones in that it will be explained to interviewees the purpose, use and potential content of the interviews so that they can make an informed decision about their participation as well as what they are willing to discuss. It will be explained that they are not under any requirement or pressure to answer questions or disclose experiences that they are not comfortable discussing. Therefore, respondents will have the opportunity to indicate topics they chose to not discuss, which will be respected, and if it is suggested that the respondent is having difficulty talking about certain experiences, the topic will either be changed or the interview terminated. Again, these decisions will be based on the behavior of the respondent and the most appropriate action to take at the time.

Note on both settings:
Steps will be taken to not intentionally breach topics which may cause distress or to continue probing with questions that may led to psychological discomfort. The interviews will be structured to ensure that respondents are not pressured to disclose information they are not at ease with and to maximize interviewer/interviewee trust and rapport.

De-escalation:
Demeanor and rapport are important in this context as the interviews will be covering sensitive, illegal and potentially emotional topics and it is because of this that it is necessary that I am alert to any changes in the behavior of the respondents. I will need to watch for changes or hints in tone, body language or speech patterns for indicators of stress or aggravation. But with that said, the expression of emotions, even strong expressions, such as yelling, exaggerated hand movements, rapid speech, crying and/or posturing (broadening of shoulders, pacing, stomping, etc) are to be expected in the interview setting, especially when discussing topics that individuals are likely to be emotional about; but the role of the interviewer is to correctly identify when these gestures are indicating problematic levels of distress.

Skills in de-escalation play a crucial role in handling situations in which individuals who present a physical or emotional threat are unintentionally provoked or irritated. Basic responses, on my part, such as the adoption of monotone speech, slowed paced, lower volume, change in topic, appropriate body language and empathetic verbal engagement are all reactions to escalating situations which can have a calming effect and/or appropriately assist in re-focusing individuals emotions. If attempts at adjusting the mood or reactions of the respondent fail, it may also be necessary to remove myself from the situation temporarily or permanently in an effort to calm the situation.

I am currently seeking programs to get re-trained in de-escalation techniques and crisis management, especially for application over the telephone, for the purposes of this research. In the past I have received extensive training in this area, but it would be beneficial at this time to re-visit the techniques and also to learn various methods for coping with emotional responses over the phone. I will keep the ethics committee updated as to when I find and secure a placement in training for crisis management prior to beginning fieldwork.

2.3 Does the research involve the investigation of any illegal behavior?
The activity this research seeks to understand, that is pimping, is an illegal activity which also is often complimented by a plethora of other illegal activities (Harcopos,et al 2000). Pandering, or pimping, is illegal in forty nine states in the United States; Nevada being the only exception. Interviews will focus only on pimp populations in the Midwest and therefore, the respondents' involvement in pandering will be illegal. Additionally, research has shown that pimps have an extensive criminal history and a wide range of criminal activities outside of pandering.

The repertoire of criminal activities that pimps have been found to be involved in other than pandering include but are not limited to: burglary, armed burglary, weapons trafficking, illegal weapon possession, parole or probation violations, assault, aggravated assault, assault and battery, various domestic violence charges, illegal drug possession, drug dealing and various sexual offenses (Harcopos,et al 2000; Hogdson, 1997; Ken & Hunter, 2008; Gholson, 2001; Funches & Marriot, 2002; Kramer,2006; Pimp, 1999;Slim (Beck),1987).

The telephone interviews will be anonymous and confidential, therefore any illegal activity that is disclosed cannot be reported because the identity of the respondent is not known and the respondent has been given full confidentiality. In an effort to not gag the responses and data offered by respondents, I am granting them confidentiality though this will likely include data on past or current illegal activities. As described below, care will be taken with any tainted data that I receive which could led to either identification or incrimination. Prior to the start of the interview, I will explain to respondents that the information they share with me is confidential and anonymous while also requesting that they for example use fictional names to further protect their identity.

As researcher, I have no legal responsibility to report any information on prostitution, illegal drug or weapon activities, or any other criminal activity that does not include children. The only exception would be if this information was court subpoenaed and even in this circumstance, all identifying information will have been disposed of, therefore the anonymity and confidentially given to respondents will still be upheld.

Data
In order to preserve my commitment to anonymity and confidentiality, I will remove all tainted information from the transcripts. I will also remove information such as locations, names, and/or publicized events for example to keep the identity of the respondents, along with others they may discuss, concealed. I will not be asking for names or other information that could led to identification and as mentioned above, I will encourage respondents to censor names and other information which could jeopardize their anonymity.

The digital recordings on the interviews will be stored on a computer without network connections and backed up on an external hard-drive. Interviews will be encrypted through security solutions hardware, which will require a password to access and a security token, thus requiring two forms of authentication prior to accessing; this would creating minimize the risk of data being access if the computer or hard-drive the interviews are stored on are lost or stolen. Also, a data erasure program will be used to erase all electronic traces of the original interview files. This technique is also significantly less time consuming than the use of encryption, which will be helpful considering I will likely obtain a significant amount of qualitative data throughout the project. Data erasure programs allow for remote deletion of files, which would also prove helpful if the computers storing the data was lost or stolen. Between these two options, three passwords would be required to access the original data files, the data could be deleted remotely if the computer was lost/stolen therefore, providing a

high level of security of the potentially highly sensitive/tainted information disclosed in interviews.

Special Considerations for Prison Interviews:
It is my intention to keep the data received from respondents in prisons confidential and anonymous. The parameters and requirements of disclosure to prison staff of any admissions to crimes will vary according to the facility. If it is required of me to disclose information on any topic to prison employees, this will be clearly indicated prior to the start of the interview so that respondents would understand the necessity for me to disclose information. Respondents could therefore choose to withhold information that they do not wish to be shared with the authorities. It will be mandatory in this setting to report any disclosures of child abuse, which will be discussed in further detail below (section 2. 4). This will also be discussed prior to the start of the interview.

There is also a possibility that interviews will be recorded by the prison facility via closed circuit television (CCTV) which may include sound recording. I will be sure to ask prison staff if whether or not they will be monitoring the content of the interview and if so that will be disclosed to the respondent. The respondent will informed either way as to whether or not the prison is monitoring the interview.

Access to prisons will have to be negotiated with the state correctional departments, individual prison wardens and possibly specific employees within those prisons. Gaining access will require several steps to secure interviews, including negotiation and explanation of research process, terms of access, prison rules and regulations, clear notification to the prisons that information will not be offered about specific individuals or what they disclose. Established research friendly goals will be used to ultimately highlight that the data produced by this research will hopefully result in actionable data which could inform rehabilitation, policing, policy, prosecution and prevention.

The information and insight offered by prison officials and facilitators will play a crucial role in guiding how the research is conducted within the prison setting. Great sensitivity will be applied when considering the power, respect and criminal ranking hierarchies within the prison among inmates in order to not 'out', or threaten the well being of, individuals who participate in this research. As suggested by my supervisors, if there is a problem in the identification of individuals as pimps within the prison setting, then I will interview those who do not identify as such in order to conceal the target population of the research (Scully, 1994).

2.4 Is it possible that this research will lead to the disclosure of information about child abuse or neglect?
There is a possibility that information about cases of child abuse or neglect would be disclosed in the interviews. Pimps often recruit or manage women who are under the age of eighteen, and therefore, they are often involved in activities such as statutory rape, assault against a minor (or child abuse) and child neglect. Every state has different laws regarding the 'age of consent' for sexual intercourse which greatly impacts charges of sexual abuse but all states do not recognize an individual as a legal adult until the age of eighteen. All states in the United States range between sixteen and eighteen years old as the legal ages of consent for sexual intercourse. Sexual intercourse is being stressed here because pimps are the managers of women in prostitution which includes those below the age of consent, and are thus violating multiple laws in the sexual exploitation of children and if they are engaged in sexual relationships with a minor, they are engaged in the sexual assault of a minor. Ultimately, it would be fair to assume that most experienced pimps will have been in some way or another been involved in some form of child abuse or neglect within in their criminal careers because it is common for them to work with teenage girls[35],therefore, this issue will likely arise in the interviews.

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[35] Research suggests that pimps often recruit and manage women under the age of eighteen into prostitution Silbert & Pines, 1982; Raphael &Ashley, 2008; Nixon,et al 2002) and have sexual relations

In the prisons I will be required to report any such cases and in the telephone interviews, the identity of the respondents will not be known, therefore there would be little I could do with such information. I will explain to respondents in the prison setting what I am required to report, thus giving them the option to refrain from disclosing particular information. Prior to the prison interviews, respondents will receive a letter indicating the purpose of the interview, possible content, and my obligation to report certain criminal behaviors such as child abuse or neglect. They will be informed through this letter and verbally before the start of the interview that I am legally obligated to report such situations. Also, if individuals begin to disclose what sounds like it might indicate child abuse that would require reporting, I will stop them from continuing, so that in the interview, I can actively stop them disclosing information that could led to significant legal repercussions for them.

Over the telephone however, the respondents will not receive the same notification since I will be unable to report cases. In these interviews, I will have no means to report the cases since I do will not know the identity of the respondents.

2.5 Is there any purpose to which the research findings could be put that could adversely affect participants? Combined response with 2.7

2.7 Could this research adversely affect members of particular groups of people?

This research aims to investigate and understand an illegal, underground subculture which has not yet been formally assessed from an outsider's perspective. Thus, there is a chance that the analysis of the data would shed a negative light on this population and that information offered by this research, could be used to implement policies of prosecution and criminal justice action against this population. That being said, the aim of this research is not to vilify this population, but to offer them a voice and to critically examine and analyze the subculture in which they live while presenting their perspectives, opinions and actions.

It is my hope that from this research I will be able to speak at conferences specifically aimed at rehabilitation workers or law enforcement employees regarding this population to inform more effective means of prevention and intervention. I think it would also be appropriate to engage with the communities of prostitution researchers as well to offer ideas, perspectives and information from this major player in the game whose role in prostitution has not yet been fully addressed or considered. I am also eager to get involved with non-profit organizations that do outreach work with individuals seeking to exit prostitution and hopefully, some of the data from this research can inform new methods and/or approaches to helping and reaching prostitute women. But with that said, it is hoped that the research findings will inform and shape progression, positive change in criminal justice and policy approaches to tackling illegal prostitution in general, rather than specifically targeting pimps.

3.3 Are any of the respondents likely to:

Known to have special education needs and/or have difficulty in reading and/or comprehending any printed material distributed as part of the study:

There is a possibility for literacy problems or other learning disabilities within this population. In the prison setting, respondents will receive a written explanation of the research, but will also be engaged in a detailed discussion about the information contained in that letter prior to the start of the interviews. Prior to my visit to the prison, I will speak with the respondents via telephone to confirm their willingness to participate and to ensure they understand what the research entails.

For the telephone interviews, the same discussion will place also to ensure informed consent and a discussion about the research. The letter that is sent to individuals in prisons will also be offered to those interviewed over the phone as well, either by email or post. If they should choose not to receive this letter, it will instead be read to them prior to starting the interview. Every effort will be made to ensure that respondents are fully aware of the aims and purpose

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with the minors which they prostitute (Raphael &Ashley, 2008; Dalla, et al, 2003; Giobbe 1993). This is also supported by the writings of pimps themselves (Ken & Hunter, 2008; Gholson, 2001; Funches & Marriot, 2002; Kramer,2006; Pimp, 1999;Slim (Beck),1987)

of the research, any existing anonymity and confidentiality issues, and their rights to withdraw from participation. Interviews will not take place if there is any question about the respondents' ability to understand what they are consenting to.

Physically or Mentally Ill:
Though respondent may have physical illnesses, this should not have an impact on the interview setting unless it would also impact their mental well being or ability to consent. As noted above, any respondents that are deemed incapable of giving full consent will not be interviewed for this research. Also, if any respondents are emotionally or mentally distressed as a result of physical illness, the interview would not take place; this would vary depending on this physical condition in question.
Mental illness could have a major impact on the interview process and the well being of the respondent. Therefore, respondents who suffer from mental illnesses which would limit their ability to give consent and/or psychologically handle the interview setting, will not be interviewed. Instances of physical or mental illness would be judged on a case by case basis with the health of the respondent being the foremost concern.

Vulnerable in other ways:
Those who are in prison are a vulnerable population due to the restrictions placed on them, possible psychological distress and the overall experience of being incarcerated. Participants who are in prison are a vulnerable population, especially in relation to issues of consent as Scully (1994) asserts that " it can be argued that inmate status, combined with the need to appear cooperative to prison officials and parole boards, limits the exercise of judgment and free choice (p.21)."
This research will take all aspects of this situation into consideration in order to minimize the risk of exploiting those in a vulnerable situation, such as prison. I cannot foresee any situations of vulnerability in the individuals who will be interviewed over the telephone, but if they do arise, they will be dealt with on a case to case basis depending on the circumstances.

4.2 Will any part of the research involving participants be audio/film/video taped or recorded using any other electronic media?
The telephone and prison interviews will be audio recorded with the consent of the participant. It is likely that the prison interviews will be video recorded as all activities within the prison facilities are recorded on closed circuit television (CCTV). The respondents in this context will be told that this interview is being recorded via CCTV and if it is also being audio recorded by the prison facility that will be disclosed as well.
Permission will be sought from respondents to keep the audio recording for up to five years so that the material can be revisited or re-analyzed in the future if need be. If a respondent does not agree to this , I will ask permission to only record the interview for transcription purposes; after which the audio recording will be deleted and destroyed.

4.3   Who will have access to the raw data?
I will be the only person with access to the audio recordings and if I ever chose to use the recordings for any purpose other than for transcription, permission will be sought from the respondent.

4.7   Will the datafiles/audio/video tapes, etc. be disposed of after the study?
Audio files will be deleted immediately after transcription. With the use of the data erasure, the data will be strongly protected and should not pose a security or confidentiality threat to respondents. Transcriptions of the interviews will be kept in the same security systems as the audio recordings to ensure that the original transcriptions are not accessible to anyone other than me during the length of the study. Following the completion of the research, all transcriptions files will be permanently deleted as well.

4.11   Will feedback of findings be given to participants?

Yes. I will offer them access a summarized version. I will also offer them the opportunity to review the transcription of the interview to check for accuracy or add/remove any information. I anticipate this feedback could offer some crucial insight into the population therefore, this will be a important element in the overall conclusions or findings. I am strongly encouraging feedback from the respondents, whether it be about the interview, the findings or any elements of their participation in this process of this research they would offer.

In order to gain feedback from respondents, I have set up an alternative email address, I will use a pay as you go mobile with no contract or personal information attached to it (or to the phone number) and will get a P.O box so that respondents can get in contact with me if need be. Respondents can then access me by phone, email or post, which should leave them sufficient options for reaching me if they want to offer feedback, or add/ remove information from the project. They can also request feedback of the findings through these mediums and based on individual arrangements, I will provide them with the findings they request.

5.1   Will written consent be obtained from respondents?

I will not seek obtain written consent from respondents, only verbal consent. There are two reasons I am foregoing written consent:1) to protect the anonymity of respondents and 2) the difficulty in obtaining written consent in the circumstance of telephone interviews. I am attempting to ensure the respondents have full confidentiality and anonymity, therefore, I feel it would be counterproductive of this goal to ask them to sign a form that could identify them. There will be letters sent to those in prison which will also be read to respondents prior to the telephone interviews. This letter, which will differ from the recruitment letter, will explain the format of the interview, the possible content of the interview and issues of consent and voluntary participation. After discussing the content of the letter, I will ask respondents if they understand how the interview will proceed and ask if they consent to be interviewed, to be recorded and to the use of the data.

5.6   In the case of participants with special education needs will arrangements be made to ensure informed consent? Please see section 3.3

My Safety

Due to the emotionally laden subject, illegal activities and documented violent and misogynistic behaviors of the population (Hogdson,1997; Harcopos, et al, 2000; Raphael &Ashley, 2008; Williamson & Cluse-Tolar 2002; Giobbe 1993; Dalla, et al, 2003; Nixon, et al, 2002), my own safety is an issue which requires great consideration in this project. The design of this research has been largely influenced around concerns for my safety; but even so, there are elements which need to be considered in relation to my welling being throughout this research. In this section, I will review the various issues which may arise and the steps I intend to take in order to diminish the potential for problematic situations. Understanding and identifying the various risks is imperative prior to undertaking emotionally laden research because as Rager (2005) points out, "I believe I would have benefited from increased awareness and better preparation regarding the emotional toll of conducting research of this type (p. 26)." Identification of the potential threats is the first step in avoiding circumstances which may be threatening (Patterson, et al, 1999) therefore, this section will address the various circumstances and elements which may result in challenges to my safety and concluding with the protocol I intend on utilizing for my safety.

In the past, I have worked with criminal populations in one on one settings and conducted in depth interviews with trafficking survivors, but the interviews I will be conducting will be the first ever contact I have with this population. Though I am confident based on past similar experiences, Patterson, et al, (1999) suggest that "Researchers who are strangers to the field and those with little previous field experience are more at risk than those who know the field well because they are unable to anticipate many of the dangers that might confront them (p.261)"; thus a thorough review of the literature has been essential to developing a protocol and identifying potential problems for myself in the field due to my novice experience with this population.

In addition to reviewing literature, I am conducting multiple professional interviews before I embark on my fieldwork with researchers who have engaged with this population and are aware of the behaviors, tendencies and environments that could prove problematic. I will be engaging in detailed discussions with these professionals about not only their methodologies in researching this subculture and prostitution, but I will also engage in dialogue regarding the emotional impact of the research and the steps they took in order to cope with the emotional demands of the topics. Therefore, seeking the advice of researchers who have engaged in similar topics will be extremely helpful in not only allowing me to prepare for the interview process but also in anticipating and coping with the personal emotional impact of the research process. Following the discussions with various experts in the field, I will meet with my supervisors to discuss the implications of the information I have received related to my fieldwork and to make any modifications necessary based on the insight obtained.

I will also seek advice from former prostitutes about what can be expected and what to avoid throughout the interviews as their insight could prove invaluable as their interactions with pimps have existed outside of an interviewer-interviewee relationship allowing them a more comprehensive understanding of pimps and their behavior.

There are four threats to myself within this research which need to be carefully addressed:1) emotional/ psychological impact, 2) Violence, 3) Sexual Harassment and 4) Verbal insults, attacks or threats.

Emotional Impact Section

The emotional impact of topics that cover distressing experiences and less than admirable attitudes on the researchers are sometimes intentionally inflicted and/or pushed onto the researcher by respondents. In other words, sometimes the emotional toll is not from the simple act of working with the material, it is inflicted by the respondents themselves. Peng (2007) explains that being female and interviewing men who bought sex from prostitutes, meant that aggressive messages and sexual harassment were inevitable (p. 317-318); thus not only were these elements anticipated, but they occurred frequently throughout her fieldwork. She suggests that internet interactions where much easier to handle than the face to face interviews which she found "more intimidating"; Peng (2007) explains further:

> "Although meeting the respondents enabled me to experience, firsthand, the power and domination that different clients might impose on prostitutes during their sexual encounters, the relationship between respondents and me might easily get too personal, so that I, as a female researcher, would find managing of such interviews uncomfortable (p. 318)"

Peng (2007) experienced regular enquiries about her marital status, age, figure, body measurements, and had occasions of men reporting sexual arousal during interviews, and an instance where respondent left in the middle of an interview to go masturbate (who afterwards returned to the interview). Similarly, Scully (1994) reports a situation in which an inmate, convicted of rape and murder, got aggravated during an interview and asked her whether she would prefer he rape her or murder her. Instances such as these are bound to shake researcher and thus have an emotional impact; researchers report everything from anger to embarrassment when dealing with these types of situations. It is difficult to anticipate whether similar experiences are likely in my own research, but to review the reflections of other researchers in similar fields, is helpful to me in preparing for my fieldwork.

When researching emotionally charged topics, it is likely that fieldwork process will have an impact on the researcher (Grinyer, 2005; Rager, 2005). The self is present in fieldwork and with that presence, comes emotions; "no research is free of the biases, assumptions, and personality of the researcher. We cannot separate self from those activities in which we are intimately involved (Sword,1999, p. 277)." I have in the past spent many nights sitting in the car crying after a shift at the residential treatment center for sex offenders, or driven back to hotels in a disheartened and almost catatonic state after interviews with sex trafficking survivors for my MSc research. To deny the impact working with these topics can

have on researchers would be disingenuous, but there are various ways to cope with the inevitable costs and consequences of investigating disturbing issues. Throughout my past experiences, the support of friends, family and co-workers proved invaluable and I adopted many strategies to cope with immediate emotional distress; for example, yoga or meditation to relax, boxing or contact sports to relieve anger and aggression. Ultimately, I am anticipating a fair deal of emotional impact from this research, but after having dealt with similar emotions and circumstances in the past, I am not only better at identifying and acknowledging such feelings but also at preparing for and coping with them when they do arise. Overall, I wholly agree with Rager's (2005) statement that: "I knew the topic would engage me both personally and professionally and I thought that the benefits of the study would outweigh any reservations I had in regard to the emotional costs to me (p. 23) ."

Work within these emotionally laden topics has the ability to disrupt relationships and one's social life (Wolf, 1997) which makes the threat of isolation even more intensified for lone researchers. Wolf (1997) highlights this cross over impact explaining that "I failed entirely, during my time at the rape crisis center, to draw a workable line between my work and my personal life. Besides, the dark lessons I was learning there were so real that I felt it would be craven of me even to draw that line. But that austere position was not without its price (p. 213)." Additionally the emotional impact of such work can have long lasting effects on individuals perspective's and emotional states, thus much of the steps discussed in the procedure section become imperative to minimize the emotional toll of this topic on me.

Violence

Pimps have a history of violence against women (Beck, 1987; Kramer,2006; Pimp, 1999; Harcopos,et al 2000; Hogdson, 1997; Raphael &Ashley, 2008; Williamson & Cluse-Tolar 2002; Giobbe 1993; Dalla, et al, 2003; Nixon, et al, 2002), though this is often in relation to their positions as pimps and towards women that they prostitute. Even though their histories of violence are linked to specific contexts, that does not eliminate the risk of such behavior towards women outside of that relationship. I would stress that the likelihood of violence towards me would be minimal, but in saying that, the possibility exists. Pimps express embracing an ideology in which women are inferior and subordinate to men, they seem to not have tolerance for women questioning their logic or ideas, and they demand respect at all times (Ken & Hunter, 2008; Gholson, 2001; Funches & Marriot, 2002; Kramer,2006; Pimp, 1999;Slim (Beck),1987). Violence towards woman by this population is often justified as punishment or 'putting one in their place', thus if they do not interpret the interview setting as one where such action would be called for, the will likely refrain from such actions. The attitudes may be different when interviewing former pimps or pimps in prison, but they are likely to be present in interviews with those who are still actively involved in the lifestyle. Regardless, it is important to recognize that my gender may place me in a specific position of vulnerability in relation to this population. Paterson, et al, cite Arnedall (1997) to address the relationship between vulnerability and the characteristics of the researcher: "This vulnerability is accentuated if the researcher is perceived by the participant to represent the subordinate other. For example, female researchers who are interviewing men who have abused their female partners face such a risk (Arendell, 1997, cited in Paterson, et all, 1999, p.262)."

The background and histories of pimps suggest that they may be at higher risk than the general population for acts of aggression. Paterson, et al, (1999) cite the Greater Vancouver Mental Health Service (1996) for their assessment of the risk factors related to aggression, including " a history of aggressive or abusive behavior, legal charges and/or convictions related to aggression, psychotic mental illness and non-compliance with antipsychotic medications, trauma by war or persecution, affiliation with aggressive groups (e.g., gang membership), use of additive substances, evidence of paranoia, extreme stress related to loss of employment or relationships, and borderline intellectual functioning (262-263)." Reviews of the literature thus far indicate that pimps have several of the above listed

histories or characteristics (Ken & Hunter, 2008; Gholson, 2001; Funches & Marriot, 2002; Kramer,2006; Pimp, 1999;Slim (Beck),1987).

Violence risks and context

Violence would be a risk in the face to face interviews: in public and those in prison. In both contexts, others will be present to interject should there be instances of physical assault. For example, in the prisons, if a situation were to arise which led to a respondent becoming physically intimidating or aggressive, I would strongly anticipate that prison staff would interject on my behalf. Though these interviews are private and in a separate room, there are guards around and the interview is likely to be monitored on CCTV therefore, staff would know immediately if there was a situation in which I was in physical danger and needed assistance.

In my past experiences, physical aggression is usually predictable in that individuals often show signs of aggravation and elevated anger prior to engaging in violence; thus it will be key for me to closely monitor respondents for any signs that they may be on the verge of acting out physically. Patterson, et al (1999) support this indicating that "Persons who might pose a threat to the researcher's safety may give cues before or during an actual interview (p. 267)." The harm inflicted from a physical attack by a respondent would include physical harm to myself as well as emotional harm, therefore, as discussed in the procedure section, many steps will be taken to ensure my safety from such circumstances.

Generally speaking, pimps as a population do not present a great physical threat. As a criminal subculture, they rarely engage in violent actions towards each other or towards members of the public. Their relationships and actions towards the women they prostitute tell a different story, indicating that they do have violent and abusive tendencies, but overall, the likelihood of them acting violently towards a researcher is minimal.

Sexual Harassment

Gender may be a particular cause for concern for my safety with this project due to the activities of the population. It is suggested that "race, gender, sexual orientation, and disability status are just some of the factors that may lead a researcher to be endangered in a situation that may not pose a risk to others (Sharp & Kremer, 2006, 318)". As a lone female researcher interviewing mostly men whom have, as suggested by research and literature (Hogdson,1997; Harcopos, et al, 2000; Raphael &Ashley, 2008; Williamson & Cluse-Tolar 2002; Giobbe 1993; Dalla, et al, 2003; Nixon, et al, 2002), expressed various forms of violence against women (especially girlfriends and women they prostitute) and overall, have criminal behavioral tendencies, I have reason to be on high alert. As mentioned above, the risk of physical harm is minimal, but there is risk for sexual harassment, verbal aggression, threats and degrading/ abusive verbal attacks.

It is difficult to 'expect' sexual advancements or harassment (Sharp & Kremer, 2006) but as Patterson, et al (1999) express, "Individuals are often able to sense a potential or actual violation of their safety zones before they have concrete evidence to support their intuitions about danger (p. 266)" Kovats-Bernat (2002) explain, "Even exposure to low-intensity repression or harassment over the course of research threatens to adversely affect the ways in which we approach the field and interpret social phenomena within it (Kovats- Bernat, p.208)." Thus the impact of such circumstances should not be underrated, therefore, I will set clear boundaries prior to the start of the interview explaining the language and behaviors that are not acceptable within the interview, and if inappropriate comments occur within the interview, they will be confronted and gently dealt within in order to discourage similar instances. Though some advise ignoring sexually suggestive or inappropriate comments (Patterson, et al, 1999), this may only act to further encourage such behavior therefore I need to appropriately respond to ensure both my level of comfort and maintain rapport within the interview.

Furthermore, Sharp and Kremer (2006) suggest that in many cases of female researchers and male respondents, women are subordinate in the power hierarchy, challenging the feminist assumption that interviewees are by default the powerless individual in the interview setting. Due to the population that I am studying, their attitudes about women, and past behaviors towards women, it is realistic to anticipate attempts by the respondents to place me in a subordinate position within the interview process. These attempts may include the use of sexually charged comments in order to throw the line of discussion or in an attempt to make me uncomfortable, but the better prepared I am for handling such situations and responding appropriately to them , the less likely they are to impact myself or the interviews themselves.

Sexual harassment cannot be overlooked or ignored as silence could be interpreted as compliance, thus allowing the situation to escalate. My personal space and comfort need to be maintained within the interview context, therefore, any situations that arise relating to sexual harassment will be confronted immediately, even if it means termination of the interview, in order to reduce risk to myself physically and/ or emotionally. Care needs to be taken that my responses to such instances do not damage the interview process or provoke aggressive responses (Sharp & Kremer, 2006). If it should occur that this arises in an interview and the respondent refuses to refrain from such comments, the interview will be stopped so that the situation does not escalate.

Verbal Attack or Abuse

Verbal attacks or abuse could take place in any of the interview settings and pose two main threats: 1) emotional harm to me and 2) act as precursor to physical violence. Thus, instances of verbal attacks cannot be taken lightly, especially not in the face to face interviews. There is reason to expect verbal aggression could take place if respondents' felt challenged as they greatly pride themselves in the ability to verbally assault individuals; this skill, also referred to as 'rapping' in pimp culture, is very common and most pimps have impressive verbal skills which can turn extremely caustic and abusive.

In the subculture of pimping and prostitution, it is commonplace to call women hos, whores, bitches and skanks. It is foreseeable that such language would be used regularly in interviews and possibly could be directed as me; either intentionally to be insulting or unintentionally as it is normal within their verbal interactions. If it is being directed at me, it will be addressed and dealt with as it is meant to be degrading/insulting, but context and tone will play a large role in determining my response to these situations. Gagging respondents may prove disadvantageous to the research but allowing them to speak in such a way may also have a negative impact on myself. Judgment will play a crucial role in deciphering whether or not such language should be censored.

Aside from the obvious problematic aspects of harm to myself in the field, there are various other elements of the research that would be negatively impacted by such experiences. Any instances of physical or mental harm over the course of the research would likely impact future interviews, analysis and biased interpretation/ reporting. Additionally, situations which invoke discomfort or uneasiness could easily disrupt the interview process and content thus having a negative influence on methodology. It is also possible that distressing experiences could slow down or temporarily halt the fieldwork process. For all these reasons, it is imperative, that the above discussed issues and below procedures are adhered to and acknowledged throughout the research process in order to ensure my personal safety and the validity and rigor of the data.

Procedure

A code a practice for safety does not concretely exist for social scientist embarking on fieldwork but several attempts have been made to offer protocols, debates and suggestions on the various issues that can arise in the field (Slako, 1990; Patterson, et al, 1999; Kenyon &

Hawker, 1999). This section includes procedural methods and techniques suggested by multiple researchers that I will employ thought this research in order to ensure my physical and mental safety.

- I will be in **regular contact with my supervisors** and I will notify them as soon as I am experiencing any difficulties so that they can be both aware of my situation and offer assistance. This is a crucial element as communication with my supervisors is vital so that I can make adaptations if needed and receive the support necessary for methodology and my well being (Johnson & Clark 2003).

- **Counselling** will be an excellent resource for this project and highly recommended for emotional support in emotionally demanding research (Rager, 2005). Prior to beginning fieldwork, I will locate a therapist who I will see at least once a month for emotional support. Additionally, I will contact this professional if anything comes up which requires immediate assistance.

- When I return to Edinburgh following the completion of the fieldwork, I will seek evaluation and **on going support from Student Counseling Services** in order to ensure my emotional well being in the long run. It is possible that the interviews do not have an immediate impact, but instead have a delayed one. Thus, this step will ensure that I have the ongoing support that I need to deal with residual emotional toll from the fieldwork.

- **Peer briefing** – Being based in Milwaukee, WI will allow me a large support network of family and friends that I can rely on to reflect on my experiences and discuss any emotional stress or anxiety I am experiencing regarding the fieldwork. This network was invaluable to me during MSc research, and I am sure that it will grant me the same support throughout my future fieldwork.

- **Counselling, peer briefing and regular contact with supervisors will help to minimize feelings of isolation** that are common when conducting fieldwork in emotionally laden research (Rager, 2005; Kenyon & Hawker, 1999; Patterson et al, 1999; Johnson & Clark 2003).

- At all times during interviews, I will have a **mobile phone** on me, it will be on silent, but having this piece of equipment will allow me to call for assistance if I should need it. This will only be relevant for face to face interviews (prison and others).

- Before going to interviews, I will make sure **someone knows where I am**. Kenyon & Hawker (1999) suggest that when researchers go on fieldwork/interviews that they leave a list with the name and exact location of where they go and who they are with, in a sealed envelope instructing a designated person to call the police and open the envelope if you have not contacted them by a set time. I plan on utilizing this method when conducting face to face interviews.

- In prison, I will make sure prior to starting the interviews, that there are means to quickly **communicate with staff** if there is a problem.

- When traveling in areas of high crime or where there may be an elevated threat, I will be **accompanied/ traveling with someone** so that I am not alone(Slako,1990)

- **Careful selection of interview setting**- aside from the telephone and prison interviews, face to face interviews will be conducted in visible public places (Patterson, et al, 1999). I will also be accompanied in these interviews by another person who can see me at all times. Respondents will be informed that I will be bringing someone with me to the interview, who will not sit in on the exchange but will be there with me to ensure my safety.

- **Location and time** are crucial elements to consider for safety and these elements will be carefully considered and planned out (Kenyon & Hawker, 1999). I will select the interview settings, which I will visit prior to suggesting, in order to make sure the location environment

is adequate for the interview and that it is secure. Ideals locations for interviews will include places such as restaurants in malls (which have security guards) or at cafes in busy locations.

- I will **call respondents** who may be unstable prior to the interview to check their status (Patterson et al 1999)

- I will shortly be contacting professional peers who are also prostitution survivors, Dr. Cecilia Williamson (pimp controlled prostitution researcher), and Dr. Jeffery Taxman (psychoanalytic psychiatrist) to request their professional and personal assistance/support during my fieldwork. In the following weeks, I will put Angus in touch with the above mentioned individuals to confirm their willingness to offer support as needed throughout my fieldwork. In addition to the above mentioned, I have a strong social support network in Milwaukee (where I will be based during fieldwork) of family and friends who I can rely on for emotional and academic support as well.

- I have been advised by Dr. Cecilia Williamson, one of the most prominent pimp controlled prostitution researchers in the USA, during a telephone interview that it would be in my best interest to protect my name and other information. She suggested that I make sure I use a pay as you go phone, set up separate email accounts, make sure my name is not listed in the phone directory, etc… Dr. Williamson informed me that this is not because pimps under normal circumstances would have a vendetta, but if by chance, they were to find themselves in legal trouble shortly after contact with you, which did happen to one of her respondents, they are likely to assume you had something to do with it; this could provoke retaliation, therefore it is better they not know my name or any other information that could led to my whereabouts. I will ensure that my information is not publicly available and that respondents do not know my full name to protect myself from such situations. As mentioned earlier, I have set up a separate email account, skype account, I will set up a P.O. Box on the USA and I will be using a pay as you go mobile phone with which I have no linked information to-additionally, I have removed my name, address and phone numbers from phone books and other public listings to protect my personal information.

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