

Sliding down the pole:

Lived experiences of sexuality and ageing in the lap dancing industry.

Sophie Hales

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Essex Business School

University of Essex

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Declaration

This thesis is a presentation of my own original research. Wherever contributions of others are included, every effort has been made to indicate this clearly by making reference to the literature.

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Summary

This PhD thesis focuses on women's lived, embodied experiences of working in the lap dancing industry. It has been established within the literature on this industry that dancers portray heightened depictions of femininity (Mavin & Grandy, 2013) and engage in work on their bodies and aesthetic labour (Colosi, 2008; Colosi, 2010; Mavin & Grandy, 2013; Sanders et al, 2013) as part of their role, however little attention has been paid to how and why specific modes of sexuality become valued in this working role and how the portrayal of sexuality in the lap dancing industry is experienced and negotiated as dancers age. This study aims to build on previous research by considering the context and space in which dancers perform, embody and negotiate the role of a lap dancer in order to enrich our understanding of their lived experiences. The research takes the form of a retrospective auto-ethnography and incorporates three phases of data collection: website analysis, participant observation and semi-structured interviews. These phases of data collection have been selected to focus, respectively, on understanding how the lap dancing industry is encoded, embedded and embodied. Ultimately, this aims to provide an in-depth understanding of the industry and how it is encoded and landscaped through its online presence, how it is embedded in its situated context and finally, how this is reflected in, understood, and embodied by, women working in the lap dancing industry. The findings suggest that the landscape of the lap dancing industry and material setting in which the work is performed both encourages an ambiguous exchange relationship between dancers and customers and compels dancers to perform and embody heteronormatively prescriptive images of youthful sexuality.

Introduction

Within the sex industry two categories can be identified (Bindman & Doezema, 1997; Elmer, 2010). First, the category of sexualized labour, by which it is meant that although the act of sex is not exchanged for money, the work involves the use of sexuality as a tool for selling. For example, certain forms of waitressing or the work of flight attendants would arguably fall into this category (Taylor & Tyler, 2000). Mike Filby's study of the sexualisation of female cashiers in a betting shop is a notable example of sexualized labour in this respect (Filby, 1992). The second category can be described as sex work. Sex work can be defined as labour in which the act of sex is exchanged for money, commonly known as prostitution (Brewis & Linstead, 2000; Sanders, 2004). However, little is known about the extent to which this conceptual distinction is applicable across the sex industry, as the lines between sex work and sexualized labour are frequently blurred in certain forms of work, lap dancing being a notable example. Little is also known about the degree to which workers move between these two forms of work during their everyday working lives, and throughout their working life course.

Further, the blurring of these distinct forms of work is evidenced in the degree to which lap dancing is associated with sex work in public opinion, and particularly in mass media discourse. For instance, considerable stigma is attached lap dancing through its association with sex work, even though according to the categorisation outlined above, it is ostensibly a form of sexualized labour, suggesting a discursive collapsing of the conceptual boundaries between sex work and sexualized labour. This is illustrated by the public outcry which arises when a new lap dancing establishment is opened (for a discussion see Hubbard & Colosi, 2015). An example of which was the campaign to prevent the opening of the 'I Candy' lap dancing club in Accrington, as reported by the Lancashire Telegraph in February 2014, as well as the refusal to open a lap

dancing club in Wrexham in 2015 due to concerns surrounding closeness to prostitution and a potential for increased crime in the area. Furthermore, these campaigns have, on occasion, resulted in club closures. For example, 'Diamonds and Pearls' in Henley, Oxfordshire closed down in December 2011 after local outrage, as reported by the Telegraph newspaper. Crocker and Major (1989: 609) have defined this process of stigmatization as one involving the production of 'social categories about which others hold negative attitudes, stereotypes, and beliefs'. Goffman (1963: 5) dissects the notion of stigma, explaining negative social responses as a belief that those stigmatized are 'not quite human' by society's standards. Moreover, Goffman (1963) suggests that a 'stigma-theory' is constructed by the rest of society as a mechanism to explain the inferiority of a marginalised group based on a social ideal.

The stigma attached to the lap dancing industry therefore suggests that despite the distinction between sexualized labour and sex work outlined above, lap dancing forms a grey area which provokes a hostile reaction from communities in the UK. As it is well documented that prostitution also receives a hostile reception from local communities (discussed in Sanders, 2004), it highlights that lap dancing clubs have similar stigma attached to them because hostile reactions are common to both lap dancing clubs and sex work within communities. Therefore, this situates the lap dancing industry in a grey area between sexualized labour and sex work due to its closeness to prostitution in public opinion. In this respect the lap dancing industry can be considered to be a somewhat ambiguous industry. However, as yet there is a lack of research into how the lap dancing industry is perceived by those working in the industry, and how this ambiguous positioning manifests and is embodied by lap dancers.

The lap dancing industry has rapidly expanded since the late nineties within the western world despite there being a long history of women dancing for the sexual pleasure of men in many

cultures (Jeffreys, 2008). In the UK, lap dancing is a commission based sales role that involves the buying and selling of topless and nude dances within a club setting. In addition to the selling of dances, lap dancers may also sell 'sit downs' to customers. This involves the customer paying for a period of time to be spent with a particular dancer during which the dancer will drink, socialise and dance for the customer. While dancers are not earning money with customers they are expected to perform pole dances on stage and interact with customers for short periods of time before moving on to the next customer. Both of these provide opportunities for dancers to promote themselves, but none of the dancers interviewed for this study received a wage for this part of their work. Depending on the venue, some dancers are required to pay a house fee to the club in order to work there for the night and clubs tend to also take a percentage of the dancers' earnings as standard. For this reason dancers' earnings are extremely variable and there is no guarantee of taking any money home. If a house fee system is being used it is also possible for dancers to lose money in a night, however, dancers also have the potential to achieve relatively high earnings. Despite the large potential variation in earnings it has been suggested that on average dancers earn £300 a night (Davis, 2011).

Following the introduction of the *Policing and Crime Act 2009*, lap dancing clubs are licensed as sexual entertainment venues (SEV's). Prior to this, they were licensed as under the *Licensing Act 2003*, which meant that they had similar regulations to entertainment venues such as pubs restaurants and nightclubs (Colosi, 2013). In contrast, under the *Policing and Crime Act 2009*, lap dancing is grouped together with forms of entertainment that are widely considered to make up the sex industry, for example sex shops and sex cinemas, or any venue where there is a 'live display of nudity' (Section 27, schedule 2Ai, *Policing and Crime Act 2009*). The licensing and regulations of the lap dancing industry are discussed further in Chapter Three.

Previous literature has hinted at the ambiguity within the lap dancing industry despite it not forming a central focus of the research. For example, Wesely (2003) suggests that dancers' bodily boundaries become fluid and the work encourages dancers to go through previous physical boundaries they may have held. Similarly, Bindel (2004) emphasizes a closeness to prostitution in her report of the lap dancing industry in which she documents the ease of arranging to meet with dancers outside of work. However, neither of these studies explored the notion of boundaries from the perspective of the dancers, instead prioritizing the perspective of licensees and their own position as a researcher. Therefore, there is scope for a study to explore physical boundaries and ambiguity within the lap dancing industry from the perspective of the dancers themselves.

Previous research has also emphasized the performance of sexuality within the lap dancing industry. For instance, it has been acknowledged that to successfully perform the role dancers portray heightened depictions of femininity (Mavin & Grandy, 2013), engage in work on their bodies and aesthetic labour (Colosi, 2008; Colosi, 2010; Mavin & Grandy, 2013; Sanders, et al, 2013), and they must become skilled in performing intimacy (Barton, 2007), an aspect of which has been described as strategic flirting (Deshotels & Forsyth, 2006). However, previous literature has tended to focus on the performances of lap dancers and has lacked a consideration of the context within which these performances occur and how specific performances of sexuality come to be desirable and valued within this sector of work.

Underpinning the literature on performances of sexuality within the lap dancing industry, although rarely forming an empirical focus (with the notable exception of Ronai, 1992), is the assumption that youth is a desirable or valuable aspect of the performance within the lap dancing culture (e.g. Colosi, 2008). Therefore, this raises interesting questions about how lap

dancers age in an industry where youthfulness is desirable and valued. Particularly so because, as Mavin and Grandy (2013: 232) have suggested in their study of doing gender in the lap dancing industry (drawing on West and Zimmerman, and Butler) 'doing gender well' in the sex industry means an exaggerated performance of sexuality, which has implications for ageing because youthfulness is valued in this specific performance of sexuality. Sontag (1978) emphasizes the notion of gender inequality in the experience of ageing by claiming there exists a double standard of ageing. Sontag (1978) suggests that while both men and women express concern about ageing, it is only women who experience growing older with 'distaste and even shame' (Sontag, 1978: 73). One reason put forward by Sontag (1978) is the social construction of gender in terms of what it is to be feminine and masculine. Sontag (1978) suggests masculinity is identified by traits such as competence, autonomy and self-control, all of which are traits that do not become threatened by the ageing process. In contrast, femininity is associated with incompetence, passivity, helplessness and being nice, all of which Sontag (1978) argues become threatened by age as 'ageing does not improve these qualities' (Sontag, 1978: 74). Therefore in this respect, although both men and women aspire to certain gendered physical ideals, the expectations of each involve a 'very different moral relation to the self' (Sontag, 1978: 79). This raises the question of how women working in the lap dancing industry experience and reconcile ageing in this sexualized industry which places value on youthfulness? Given the issues highlighted above surrounding the complexity of the lap dancing industry, and the exchange relationship within it, performances of sexuality and the desirability of youthfulness associated with sexuality, this study set out to explore the following research questions: How do performances of youthful sexuality come to be valued within the lap dancing industry? How and why do boundaries come to be blurred and ambiguous within this

sexualized industry? How are sexuality, ageing and boundaries experienced by dancers working in the industry?

Overview of structure

Chapter One will explore what sexuality is and how it is experienced in the contemporary social world. It will highlight and emphasize the ontological shift from an essentialist perspective to social constructionism as the dominant perspective and evaluate the implications this has for how sexuality is perceived, negotiated and commodified. The chapter will go on to conduct a critical analysis of sexuality within work and organization studies, with a focus on interactive service work, and evaluate the processes through which sexuality is entwined with organizational life. In doing so, the chapter will emphasize that sexuality has become an intrinsic part of organizational life but that it is multifaceted in its performance. It will also highlight that particular forms of sexuality tend to be deemed more valuable than others such as heterosexuality and youthful sexuality. Ultimately, the chapter will raise questions about how sexuality in organizations is experienced within more explicitly sexualized occupations such as the lap dancing industry and how ageing is experienced in occupations which value youthful sexuality.

Chapter Two will go on to explore ageing within the organizational context, starting by addressing the question of what ageing is. To do so, the chapter will document key shifts in the dominant perspectives surrounding age and ageing, including bio-medical perspectives, social constructionist ontologies and socio-material accounts. Here and throughout subsequent chapters, socio-materiality is taken to refer to the inter-relationship between the social (perceptual, sense-making and subjectivity) and the material (physical matter, objectivity): Socio-material approaches draw on a post-Cartesian ontology that argues for the inseparability

of the subjective and objective realms (Dale, 2005). The chapter will then explore how social perceptions of the ageing process are reflected in organizational life and how this may manifest itself in the lived experience of, and perceptions surrounding, working life. Here, and throughout the thesis, lived experience is taken to refer to our situated, temporal, embodied and relational way of being in, and perceiving, ourselves, others and the social world. Finally, the chapter will discuss important gender differences in how people age, suggesting that people age differently according to heteronormative gender ideology. The chapter suggests that youth is normalized and idealized in both the social and organizational contexts and as a consequence, ageing becomes a process to be transcended and managed.

The focus of Chapter Three will be on literature surrounding the contemporary sex industry and what it can tell us about how sexuality and ageing is experienced within sexualized occupations.

The chapter begins by providing an overview of the sex industry and a brief history of erotic dance before critically evaluating previous research surrounding the lap dancing industry and sex industry more broadly. Finally, the chapter will provide an analysis of previous literature that has focused on sexuality and ageing in the lap dancing industry and suggests that this has been a relatively neglected area of interest.

In Chapter Four, the methodological approach taken to address the research questions is outlined and explained. The chapter will provide an evaluation of the methodological framework for the study which incorporated three phases of data collection: website analysis, participant observation and semi-structured interviews. These phases of data collection were selected in order to enrich our understanding of the lived experiences of lap dancers and, as our perceptions and experiences don't happen in a vacuum, it is important to understand the physical and social space in which it's occurring. With that in mind, each phase of analysis was

selected to focus, respectively, on understanding how the lap dancing industry is encoded, embedded and embodied. Ultimately, this aimed to provide an in-depth understanding of the industry and how sexuality and ageing are encoded into, and landscaped through, its online presence, how the industry is embedded in its situated context and finally, how this is reflected in, understood, and embodied by, women working in the lap dancing industry.

Chapter Five consists of the data analysis of lap dancing club websites which were used to focus on, and understand, how youthful sexuality is encoded into the semiotic landscape of the lap dancing industry. The chapter will provide an overview of key findings as well as highlighting the themes that emerged from the semiotic analysis that was conducted. The themes discussed within Chapter Five will be the presence and repetition of heteronormatively prescriptive images of heightened youthful sexuality, deliberate ambiguity which runs through the websites particularly in the use of language and images, and the theme of enticement. The theme of enticement focuses on how the websites use heteronormatively prescriptive images of youthful sexuality and enticement to condition the expectations surrounding the exchange relationship between dancers and customers, and of the lap dancing industry more generally.

Chapter Six consists of the analysis undertaken from the participant observation phase of data collection which focused on how lap dancing is embedded in the socio-materiality of the clubs. The chapter provides an overview of my findings and emphasizes key themes that emerged from the analysis. It will explore how the layout and division of the space within lap dancing clubs sexualized the atmosphere, suggesting that the staging, lighting and layout facilitates a space for watching women's bodies. Dancers' subjectivities within the space of a lap dancing club are also discussed and analyzed in this chapter and the way in which the space sexualizes the dancers but the dancers also sexualize the space in a dynamic relationship is also

highlighted. Finally, the processes through which the socio-materiality of the setting conditions the ambiguity of the exchange relationship are evaluated. In other words, how the space and context contribute to the way in which the exchange relationship is understood and performed, will be highlighted and explored.

Chapter Seven discusses the key themes to emerge from the interview analysis which focused on how the role of a lap dancer is embodied by those working in the industry. The themes that will be discussed include skills dancers accumulate in order to perform their work and negotiate ambiguity within the industry. How dancer's age within an industry that places value on heightened performances of youthful sexuality emerged as another theme and is discussed here. Finally, the theme of touch is introduced here as forming a significant aspect of the work of a lap dancer, particularly in terms of a negotiation of touch within the dancer-customer exchange relationship as the body becomes the site at which ambiguity within the industry is played out.

Chapter Eight will provide a theoretical discussion and analysis of the key findings across each of the three data sets, emphasizing the themes that emerged which were (i) the staging of sexuality and ageing, (ii) the setting of sexualized labour, and (iii) the situated, embodied performativity of sexuality and ageing. The final theme focuses on how this performativity is experienced and enacted through the negotiation of ambiguity particularly in relation to touch. The chapter will then draw from Merleau-Ponty's embodied phenomenology and Butler's performative theory of gender, and her critique of heteronormativity to develop an understanding of the processes through which the performativity of the role of a lap dancer are perceived, experienced and embodied. The theoretical analysis suggests that lap dancers' subjectivities are performative and embodied through their situated, perceptual field and the

bodily schemas shaping this field, negotiated through touch. The final section of Chapter Eight will integrate the findings with previous literature on the lap dancing industry, highlighting in particular that the staging, setting and deliberate ambiguity of the industry contributes to, shapes, and is shaped by, performances of sexuality and age. Moreover, the deliberate ambiguity that is staged, set and performed within the industry is played out through the negotiation of boundaries and touch during the exchange relationship between dancers and customers. Insights from Merleau-Ponty in particular are drawn on to make sense of this process, particularly how it is lived and experienced, as Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological analysis highlights the relationship between situated perception, materiality and lived experience. In this respect, the focus of phenomenology is on the process of bringing particular phenomena into being through sense-making and the perceptual attribution of meaning. The premise of this approach being that 'because we are in the world, we are *condemned to meaning*' (Merleau-Ponty, 2002: xxii, original emphasis).

The thesis will conclude by summarizing insights from all of the previous chapters and will emphasize the processes through which heteronormatively prescriptive images of youthful sexuality come to be valued, how and why the dancer/customer exchange relationship is ambiguous and how performances of sexuality, ageing and boundaries in the industry are embodied and negotiated by dancers themselves. The key insights provided by the thesis are highlighted and include how the staging and setting of the industry compel lap dancers to perform heteronormatively prescriptive images of sexuality and ageing, as well as promoting an ambiguous exchange relationship underpinned by an enticement to touch which characterises the industry and manifests through the negotiation of touch.

Chapter One

Sexuality and interactive service work

Introduction

The following chapter focuses on forms of interactive service work in which sexuality, to varying degrees and in a variety of different ways considered here, is commodified. Before undertaking this review, however, focusing on how (and indeed, why) sexuality is commodified within the context of contemporary, interactive forms of service work, it is important to begin by giving careful consideration to *what* is commodified. Therefore, this chapter will provide an examination of the social ontology of sexuality that has developed largely within sociology since the 1960's, and underpins the research as a whole. This is followed by the critical analysis of sexuality within work and organization studies more generally. This analysis will evaluate the many processes by which sexuality is intertwined with organisational life and, importantly, the implications of this complex relationship. The chapter will begin by addressing the question of what sexuality is and how it is positioned and experienced within the contemporary social world.

What is sexuality?

While the terms sex and sexuality occupy a space in everyday language, they are used in a number of varied contexts as well as interchangeably, so what is actually meant by the term sexuality and its connotations, as it stands, is somewhat ambiguous and notoriously difficult to define (Burrell & Hearn, 1989). Taking this into consideration, the following section of the chapter will explore how sexuality may be understood and importantly, the various processes by which sexuality shapes, and is shaped by, the construction of the social world and how these

processes impact upon the experience of day to day life. By evaluating how sexuality manifests itself in society, the question of what sexuality is and its implications will be considered.

When exploring what sexuality is and its relevance for academic research, it is necessary to note the ways in which it can be understood as socially ubiquitous. Arguably, it can no longer be perceived as a tangible entity but rather a series of processes so ingrained into the social world, it becomes increasingly difficult to tease out its manifestations.

The ubiquity of sexuality can be illustrated by its association with both the public and the private social spheres. On the one hand, sexuality may be perceived as a representation of what the individual or social group prefers to practice as their sexual activity, an intimate exchange considered to occur usually in the private sphere or at least as a private act. On the other hand, sexuality can manifest itself publicly, guiding the behaviour and consumerism of the individual or group (Hawkes, 1996), a topic which will be returned to later.

Similarly, within a bureaucratic workplace where productivity and rationality are prioritised, sexuality is not considered to enhance either of these priorities so is therefore contained to the private lives of workers. In doing so, sexuality is also highlighted within the public, and specifically working, environment as it becomes a site of sexual harassment, as well as allowing expressions of sexuality to become a method by which workers can communicate resistance to the organisation (Fleming, 2007).

Likewise, sexuality has the ability to shape both an individual identity and wider social identities and/or categories. As Fuss (1989: 3) notes the sexual 'provides the...starting point for the social.' In this sense, sexuality contributes to an individual's initial sense of self-identity and through the expression of individual identity, people become categorised into the wider social ordering. As Hubbard (2002: 365) emphasises, 'Categories of sexual identity are therefore

crucial in shaping a person's sense of self-worth, creating hierarchies of social inclusion/exclusion.' Therefore, sexuality is implicitly associated with both an individual sense of self-worth and the degree to which individuals experience a sense of belonging, and status, both internally and within the wider social world.

It may be suggested that each of these processes by which sexuality guides behaviour and perceptions are inter-related. Private activity becomes public by shaping consumer behaviour, self-identity, social-identity and workplace behaviour. Further, these processes are reciprocal, such that the workplace can influence identity, consumerism and ultimately, sexuality.

Having outlined the ubiquitous nature of sexuality, the question is raised as to why sexuality has become such an intrinsic element of the social world and how it is shaped, categorised, and experienced. Hawkes (1996) suggests that one reason for this is that sexuality has an existential significance. Like death, sex is intrinsically related to life and it therefore, becomes an inescapable aspect of living. As Hawkes puts it, 'Sex occupies a position parallel to death. Both are associated with life- its beginning and end...Sex...is an ever present factor in our lives whether we choose actively to associate with it or not' (ibid, 1996: 1). Therefore, expressions of sexuality (or lack of) can be said to signify beliefs about sex and ultimately, beliefs about the experience of life. It is understandable then, that sexuality has the ability to raise a 'combination of anxiety and fascination' (Hawkes, 1996: 5).

The existential significance of sex and sexuality highlights the 'specialness' of sex. Hawkes (1996: 4) suggests that the 'co-existence of contradictory notions about sex and sexuality suggest the retention of fears and anxieties about expressions of sexual desire'. Therefore, contributing to the 'specialness' of sex is a continual tension between the actual sexual desires of an individual and the expressions of sexual desire that will be socially acceptable. In sum, it

can be said that, 'there is sex and sex: On the one hand, a source of fear and embarrassment; on the other, a source of infinite happiness and fulfilment' (Hawkes, 1996: 6).

Given the existential significance of sexuality, it can be understood as a powerful entity within the contemporary social world. This is further illustrated by the many ways in which sexuality shapes, and is shaped by, the consumer industry. First, sexuality can be used to sell a variety of commodities, as Hawkes (1996: 1) notes, 'An ever expanding range of commodities is sold by invoking sexual imagery'. This is indicated by the aesthetic phenomenon of selling goods by making them appear 'sexy' to consumers, a technique that is particularly prevalent in industries selling items such as cars, perfume and fashion. While it has long been established that the use of imagery in advertising has the capacity to manipulate consumer attitudes towards products (e.g. Rossiter & Percy, 1980), the ways in which sexualized imagery has been utilised in marketing and advertising material has been the empirical focus in more recent studies. For example, imagery in advertising has been used to portray how gender 'should' be done according to organizations (Hancock & Tyler, 2007) and the sexualisation of products have been reinforced by campaigns such as those of Wonderbra, Puma and Dove (Gill, 2009).

Second, sexuality has become a leisure activity in so much as it influences how, and where, free time is spent, and it can be said that 'sexual desirability is increasingly presented as a leisure commodity to be acquired and utilised' (Hawkes, 1996: 1). This is apparent through the various ways physical appearance can be sculpted into a sexualized ideal, for example through exercise, cosmetic surgery, beauty therapy and hairdressing.

Third, sexuality is a commodity in itself as it has become commercially available through the sex industry in all its many guises. In this way, it is possible for a consumer to go out and buy sexuality. Sexuality may be bought in the strip industry (Sanders & Hardy, 2012) where sexual

entertainment venues (SEV) offer 'accessible sexual fantasy' (Sanders & Hardy, 2012: 515). Likewise, sexuality may be paid for in the form of buying the act of sex, an act implicitly connected with the performance of sexuality, through prostitution. The locations where sexuality itself becomes commodified are representative of 'where work and leisure, production and consumption, naturally intersect' (Brewis & Linstead, 2000: 84). In sum, the typology presented here conceptualises sexuality as a marketing tool, a leisure activity and lifestyle, and as a commodity. The lap dancing industry provides scope for exploring how these three dimensions inter-relate to shape the work experiences of women employed as lap dancers. Having presented three ways in which sexuality can both support sales of commodities and become a commodity, it is fair to say, "We live, in short, in a sexualized world' (Hawkes, 1996: 1).

However, the commodified forms of sexuality also guide the way in which sexuality is expressed by making certain forms of sexuality more accessible than others. It is an intrinsic element of the development of a political social identity and in turn, is used to form categories and place individuals or groups into these categories. Hubbard (2002:365) highlights this concept when he expresses, 'Sex, though only one facet of social life, is crucial in the construction of identity. A person's sexuality profoundly influenc[es] their place in society.'

Sexuality may be used by the individual so that the choices they make or the way they present themselves is conducive with a particular social group that they wish to be a part of. Hawkes (1996: 2) describes the political element of sexuality, 'For the most part, sexual desires, the erotic, have been left to those for whom such issues have a political significance which goes beyond what they do in bed.' This suggests that sexuality is an aspect of identity that may be

used and manipulated to put forward or support political statements and is itself embedded within power relations and identities.

In contrast, expressions of sexuality can also lead to others placing individuals into a category which may or may not relate to their own sense of self and lived experience. Hubbard's (2002) study into the sexuality of the 'self' shows that the geographical locations people occupy is one factor that contributes to their sexual identity, indicating that sexual identity is 'fractured, complex and always in process' (Hubbard, 2002: 379). Therefore, as individuals or groups move from place to place there may be continual tension between expressing their sexuality and what is deemed the 'appropriate' behaviour for the specific location they are occupying.

Sexuality as a political identity or category is consistent with Foucault's (1979) thesis that sexuality is used as a mechanism for the containment of social categories. Foucault (1979) argued that society is imbued with the legacy of the Victorian regime, emanating through in the form of strict social categories regarding what is considered to be licit and illicit sexual behaviours and expressions of sexuality. This is represented in society today by anxieties surrounding when and where are the appropriate times to express sexuality. In this sense, contexts constrain expressions of sexuality. For example, as outlined above, consumer behaviour is guided through sexualized imagery however, speaking openly about issues surrounding sexuality tends to be contained to the private or clinical context.

So far, some of the ways in which sexuality emerges within the social world have been outlined. This has demonstrated how sexuality can form an intrinsic element of day to day living and its existential significance has been found to be one reason why this may be the case. The focus will now turn to what constitutes sexuality from a social constructionist perspective and how it is organised in today's society, in order to understand how sexuality, as a social

construct, moulds and shapes lived experiences. As Marcuse states, the social construction of sexuality guides, manipulates and sculpts how it is experienced so that 'he desires what he is supposed to desire' (Marcuse, 1956: 46, *sic*).

Exploring what is meant by the term 'sexuality' is particularly relevant as it is so commonly used in everyday language in a way that suggests its meaning holds clarity and mutual understanding between those who use the term. However, as described above, sexuality can manifest itself in many different ways and guide the social context both overtly and by more subtle means.

Hawkes (1996: 7) claims this gives an inaccurate portrayal of the concept of sexuality, 'Look at the words 'sex' and 'sexuality'. These are used in a confusing variety of contexts and with an ease that suggests that their meaning is fixed, shared and unproblematic. But a moment's pause suggests otherwise.'

Rather, the term sexuality is surrounded by contradictions and tensions signifying its uniqueness and complexity. Adopting a social constructionist perspective, sexuality is considered to reside in, and be 'perpetuated through a collection of shared ideas' (Hawkes, 1996: 5). Tensions manifest within these shared ideas between social and individual ideals and identities, what is appropriate behaviour publicly and privately, social morality and immorality, and between the various locations we inhabit. These tensions are largely culturally defined, as Weeks (1998: 35) summarised, '[sexuality] is a contingent, culturally specific, often unstable linkage of related, but separable, elements: bodily potentials, desires, practices, concepts and beliefs, identities, institutional forms.'

When taking a social constructionist approach to sexuality, it is necessary to acknowledge the biological associations with sex in order to appreciate how physical sex organs influence the processes associated with the social construction of sexuality. The biological and the social both

contribute to the lived experience of sexuality, as it is 'neither something that can be detached from the body, nor cut off from the mind' (Weeks, 1998:35). Likewise, the biological sex assigned to an individual impacts on how their sexuality is categorised by wider social order and is therefore relevant to how they, and others, perceive their self, and social, identity.

While biological sex is considered here to be relevant to the social construction of sexuality, it remains that, 'sexuality is not some mystical given, the result of a biological script' (Hawkes, 1996: 8) and that there are wider social processes which mould and shape expressions of sexuality. Of particular interest to the social constructionist perspective is the element of sexuality that makes the act of sex more than a 'conjoining of genitals for a purpose' but an 'individual sensual experience, with a greater or lesser degree of affective involvement' (Hawkes, 1996: 9). It is this sensual and emotional experience of sexuality that is another factor which can drive and guide the processes by which expressions of sexuality manifest themselves.

The way in which sexuality is organised in the social world is another crucial element in understanding how it influences lived experiences. Two important features of the organisation of sexuality which have been highlighted in previous literature are the notion of heteronormativity and the more passive role of female sexuality, each of which will be evaluated below.

It can be argued that 'the 'normal citizen' has largely been constituted as heterosexual' (Richardson, 2004: 392). This normalization of heterosexuality has meant that any other category of sexuality becomes, by default, marginalized. Burrell and Hearn (1989) argue that heteronormativity is reinforced and reproduced within organisational settings because 'heterosexuality and heterosexual relations are the dominant forms in most organizations'

(ibid, 1989: 21). Burrell and Hearn (1989) suggest this normalization process is reinforced through sexual harassment and sexual relations regulations within the workplace that are focused predominantly toward monitoring heterosexual interactions and consequently categorising heterosexuality as the dominant discourse within the confines of the organization. Burrell and Hearn (1989) also emphasise the contextual relevance of the organization in terms of historical time and physical space. The time and space of the organization provide the context within which sexuality is performed. It is by this means that 'the production and reproduction of organization are part of the social organization of sexuality' (Burrell & Hearn, 1989: 18). Therefore, the heteronormative nature of organizational settings shapes, and is shaped, by the heteronormativity found in the wider social context.

Similarly, Judith Butler (1999) suggests that sexuality is socially organized through an ontological, epistemic schema that organizes sex, gender and sexuality as a hierarchical binary which maintains heteronormativity and a passive feminine sexuality. Butler (1999) conceptualizes the processes of sex, gender, and sexuality acquisition as a heterosexual matrix. Within the heterosexual matrix, the biological sex assigned to an individual determines the set of binary social categories within which normalized expressions of gender and sexuality lie. These categories are reinforced by both the cultural and linguistic distinction that is made between what it means to be male and what it means to be female. Butler (1999) argues that these processes form the heterosexual matrix which maintain female passivity and male domination because, when biologically determined as female, the binary category of a feminine gender and hetero-passive sexuality are culturally and linguistically normalised and subsequently become the mainstream sexuality adopted by those who are biologically female as a consequence of the social and cultural pressures to conform. Likewise, males are shaped to

exhibit masculine expressions of gender which in turn, contribute to a hetero-active mainstream portrayal of men. It is these binary categories that reproduce the passive role of the feminine but also marginalise any forms of sexuality that fall outside of heterosexuality. As Butler (1999) suggests, anything other than the sanctioned heterosexual form become 'abnormal' expressions of sexuality. The matrix represents the dominant culture which reinforces a fear of the 'abnormal' despite the obvious existence of a whole variety of sexual identities which stray from the confines of the matrix. Therefore, those who don't conform to the dominant discourse of the matrix 'lose one possible social identity, perhaps to gain one that is radically less sanctioned' (Butler, 1999: 99) because it falls outside of a highly structured and socially ingrained set of processes which signify what it is to display a 'socially acceptable' sexuality.

Butler (1990) also argues that the performance of masculine and feminine gender and sexuality is a 'performative accomplishment' (Butler, 1990: 192) and defines performative as a 'dramatic and contingent construction of meaning' (Butler, 1990: 190). Within the performance of gender and sexuality, Butler argues that the body plays a crucial role as it is 'a surface whose permeability is politically regulated, a signifying practice within a cultural field of gender hierarchy and compulsory heterosexuality' (Butler, 1990: 189). Therefore the body is the site at which meaningful performances of gender and sexuality are produced.

However, performances of gender and sexuality do not happen in a vacuum, rather as Butler (1990) argues, they are situated in a time and a space which compel and constrain the possibilities of the performance. As Butler has suggested, gendered bodies can be thought of as 'styles of the flesh' and Butler emphasizes the importance of time and space when suggesting

that 'these styles all never fully self-styled, for styles have a history, and those histories condition and limit the possibilities' (Butler, 1990: 190).

The body comes to bear meaning through, Butler argues, a stylized repetition of acts.

Repetition is a key element of Butler's theory of performativity because through repetition acts become social rituals and once an act is repeated it is a 'reenactment and re-experiencing of a set of meanings already socially established' (Butler, 1990: 191) and for this reason individual's performance of gender and sexuality take on collective meaning through mundane bodily gestures and enactments. Therefore, Butler provides a useful framework for exploring the performativity of sexuality in the workplace and in doing so helps us to understand how performances of sexuality become meaningful in different contexts.

This chapter has so far explored the many ways in which sexuality shapes our everyday lived experiences, from where we socialise and the products we buy to the degree to which we gain a sense of belonging within our surroundings. It has also examined the social construction of sexuality, its use as a political tool, and how sexuality is implicated in social organization. The focus of the chapter will now turn to the literature surrounding sexuality in the organisational settings, in order to assess the significance it holds in the workplace context.

Sexuality can arguably transcend, shape, and be shaped by, organizational contexts via a number of processes. The remainder of the chapter will focus on, and provide a critical analysis of, some of the key perspectives and debates surrounding organizational sexuality. The literature will be divided into three broad categories consisting of sexuality *in*, *of* and *as* organization. Sexuality *in* organization will focus on how sexuality has developed theoretically, sexuality *of* organization will explore how sexuality has been used as an organizational tool such that it is something that can be bought and/or experienced. Finally, sexuality *as* organization

will examine the processes through which certain forms of sexuality become valued and normalized within organizations. First, the focus turns to sexuality in organizations. This section will outline and evaluate how sexuality has been understood and developed theoretically within the field of organization studies.

Sexuality in organizations

As a critique of the co-optation of sexuality as an organizational resource, Burrell's (1984) analysis of sexuality in organizations was pivotal in translating the social constructionist ontology of sexuality into a theoretical basis relevant for organizational research. In Burrell's account of the organization of sexuality, he proposed that, following the industrial revolution, management had been highly pre-occupied with the desexualisation of organizations due to the widely spread belief that sexuality and the workplace were incompatible. This incompatibility was shaped by the bureaucratic notion of instrumental rationality, a fundamental focus on productivity and the belief that sexuality would always be harmful to productivity rates. Therefore, Burrell (1984) argued that labour was desexualized through an eradication of sexuality in the workplace and containment of sexuality to the private sphere. The widespread notion that sexuality and work are incompatible entities can be broadly attributed to two discourses, the modernist-masculinist and liberal modernist- feminist approaches (Brewis & Grey, 1994).

The modernist-masculinist perspective categorises sexuality as an irrational and archetypically feminine trait which contrasts with the masculine rationality of modernist organizational theories. Therefore, sexuality should have no place within rational organizational life. This way of thinking echoes the traditional bureaucratic organizational structure put forward by Max Weber. Weber was a founding figure in the bureaucratic movement (Grey, 2012) and suggested

an 'ideal type' thread of bureaucracy (Farazmand, 2010). Weber maintained that there exists one ideal managerial structure which, if adhered to, will produce an efficient, disciplined organization (Grey, 2012). This rational approach that values socio-economic objectives situates sexuality as incongruent with the organizational context. This approach however, has been criticised for both the social and economic dehumanising effects it has on workers (Grey, 2012; Höpfl & Matilal, 2007).

The second perspective forms the liberal modernist-feminist approach that also perceives sexuality as incompatible with organizational ideals. However in contrast, this perspective is concerned with organizational power relations and claims that the balance of power inherently disadvantages women in the workplace, therefore, sexuality in organizations reinforces the sexual exploitation of women. This is evidenced, according to this approach, by the sexual harassment of women, by men, in the workplace (Fitzgerald, 1993).

The hierarchical nature of the majority of organizations tends to empower men as they hold the balance of power both socially and organizationally according to the liberal modernist-feminist beliefs (Brewis & Grey, 1994). For this reason, sex and sexuality at work is unable to be separated from the taint of unbalanced power, according to this perspective. Hence, the desexualisation of organisations is necessary until power relations cease to disadvantage women through the stereotyping of masculine and feminine roles and underlying patriarchal domination.

Following Foucault, Burrell (1984) maintains that simultaneously sexuality remains the 'driving force behind human endeavour' (1984: 115) even when it is being repressed. As Foucault maintained, if sexuality is being constantly monitored, controlled and bounded, it is situated as an implicit element of the social world. Burrell (1984) proposes that when enforcing the

exclusion of sexuality in the workplace, as the desexualisation thesis does, a related process of the over inclusion of sexuality occurs. This emerges through the presence of worker resistance against power, in the form of sexual harassment which reinforces patriarchal control (Hancock & Tyler, 2005).

Burrell (1992b) later put forward a theory of re-eroticisation in the workplace promoting sexuality as a central feature of organizational life. Burrell's re-eroticisation theory was highly controversial as it involved the over-throwing of contemporary organizational life without identifying exactly how an eroticised organisation would function in the absence of any restrictions to sexual expression (Brewis and Grey, 1994). However, it did highlight an alternative approach to sexuality in the workplace and evoke academic interest in the ways sexuality infiltrates organizational life. Therefore, the importance of considering and assessing the role of sexuality was driven forward by this influential work.

Subsequently, the assumption behind current academic literature (e.g. Brewis & Linstead, 2000; Fleming, 2007) is that sexuality is a fundamental element underpinning organizational life and therefore workplace identity, reflecting Burrell's (1984) influence.

This section has placed sexuality in the organizational context by outlining and critiquing desexualisation and re-eroticisation theories. It has demonstrated that however sexuality is viewed by the organization, it arguably remains an underpinning aspect of organizational culture. The following section will turn its focus to how particular working roles become more sexualized than others through the use of both intentional and unintentional management techniques.

Sexuality of organizations

Having examined what sexuality is and how it has been understood theoretically, the following section will turn its focus to how labour becomes sexualized by examining literature that has conceptualized sexuality as something that can be bought and/or experienced. This section will evaluate the means by which organizations may become sexualized via avenues such as management and self-management strategies which are argued here to be implicit in the development of organizational sexuality. Specifically, Warhurst and Nickson's (2009) typology of sexualized labour will be used as a vehicle to evaluate the processes by which labour may become sexualized.

The study of emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983) has dominated the literature on interactive service work (Korczynski, 2003; Leidner, 1999; Warhurst & Nickson, 2009) and has in particular documented the emotional labour of waitresses and flight attendants (e.g. Bolton & Boyd, 2003; Hochschild, 1983; Riach & Wilson, 2014; Taylor & Tyler, 2000; Watkins et al, 2013) which may be considered sexualized roles. However, it does not explicitly address the notion of sexuality. Although Hochschild (1983) acknowledges that the body may be used in emotional labour and may feature sexiness, the key aspect of the theory is to examine how emotions are shaped and consequently sexualization is often overshadowed.

Another large body of research has been concerned with aesthetic labour. Building on emotional labour literature, aesthetic labour focuses on the organizational desire for workers to exhibit the 'right' look for the company that will in turn appeal favourably to the customer. Aesthetic labour is present from the early stages of hiring workers for their appropriate attributes (Huzell & Larsson, 2012) and is then reinforced, developed and commodified through training programmes and management until finally workers can be described as 'walking

billboards' (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003: 318) for the organization. Aesthetic labour then, highlights a focus on the commodification of the 'self' and the body as a package that research has shown can be used and exploited by both the worker and the organization in various ways. For example, discrimination has been found to occur according to levels of attractiveness with workers who are perceived to be attractive gaining increased pay and career prospects (Hamermesh & Biddle, 1994; Harper, 2000; Warhurst et al, 2012).

Although sexuality is not an inherent element of aesthetic labour, it can seamlessly become sexualized through the embodiment of what are deemed to be desirable attributes. Warhurst and Nickson (2009) draw upon the notions of both emotional and aesthetic labour to conceptualise sexualized labour as a typology which can form the basis of further empirical research into the area. Acknowledging that sexualized labour can be both internally and externally prescribed, Warhurst and Nickson (2009) propose three forms sexualized labour can take, 'that which is sanctioned by management, that which is subscribed to by management (both of which are employee-driven) and that which is a management strategy' (ibid, 2009: 393) and therefore organisationally/employer driven.

Warhurst and Nickson's (2009) first process of sexualizing labour, in which workers' interactions with customers sexualize the labour in a manner which is led by the employee but sanctioned by management can be demonstrated by the role of barmaids. Kirkby (1997) suggests barmaids become sexualized as they serve to entice customers into the establishment and have flirtatious interactions as part of the workplace experience. Likewise, within sales positions feminine charm has been suggested by some workers to be far more effective than more traditional selling techniques, by focusing 'the customer less upon her stock of goods than upon

herself' (Mills, 1951: 175) and consequently can enhance earnings in commission based roles through sexualized labour.

The second type of sexualized labour put forward by Warhurst and Nickson (2009) in which sexuality is subscribed to by management can be demonstrated in Mike Filby's (1992) study of betting shops. In this case Filby (1992) found workers were being selected for particular personality traits, however the overtly sexual nature of the service encounter that was studied was not officially prescribed by management, although it was appreciated by management as it kept the customers happy and ultimately in the shop for longer.

Third, sexualized labour can be the outcome of a controlled management strategy. In this instance, sexuality constitutes a tool for selling and consequently for commercial gain. Sexuality has become commodified in this way within roles such as flight attendants where there is an expectation to 'look feminine according to dominant occupational and organizational discourses' (Taylor & Tyler, 2000: 87) and they are instructed on how to use their physicality to produce a heightened feminine demeanour. Therefore, flight attendants are expected, as part of their working role, to embody an image of sexuality that has been organizationally commodified.

This particular process of sexualized labour can be further demonstrated by the more explicit example of the Hooters chain of restaurants. Golding (1998) found that waitresses are expected to embody the Florida beach girl look with skimpy uniforms and blonde hair and are the main attraction for prospective customers.

More recently, Riach and Wilson (2014) have highlighted the importance of considering the space in which labour takes place in order to understand how meaning manifests within particular workspaces and they argue that workers are compelled towards specific

performances of sexuality according to the space they occupy. This draws attention to an area of understanding that is not addressed in Warhurst and Nickson's (2009) typology, which is how the space, and broader social context in which labour takes place, condition desirable performances of sexuality in the workplace, or sexualize the labour itself.

Furthermore, Warhurst and Nickson's (2009) typology of sexualized labour raises the question of how each of the three processes translate into working roles where sexuality itself is the commodity, such as in the lap dancing industry. Of particular interest would be how dancers negotiate and move between each of the types of labour, from the more self-managed form of sexualized labour to management led interpretations of sexuality.

The various processes in which labour may be sexualized using Warhurst and Nickson's (2009) typology of sexualized labour have been explained and evaluated. In reviewing the literature, an insight has been given into the complexities of the processes and the inter-relatedness of a number of factors. However, it remains unclear to what extent elements such as use of the body, pleasure and emotional competence influence the lived experience of sexualized labour in relation to less mainstream sexualized occupations such as lap dancing where sexuality itself is the commodity.

Sexuality as organization

So far, sexuality *in* organization has evaluated how sexuality has emerged theoretically in the literature and sexuality *of* organization has used Warhurst and Nickson's (2009) typology of sexualized labour to critically evaluate sexuality as an organizational tool that may be bought, experienced and /or managed. The following section, sexuality *as* organization, seeks to understand sexuality as part of the epistemological foundations of organizational dynamics. It

does so by exploring how certain forms of sexuality become normalized and are deemed to be organizationally valuable.

As Goffman (1963) suggests in his dissection of the notion of stigma, marginalized individuals and social groups do not conform to a social ideology and are therefore perceived to be inferior by the rest of society. Considering this, the remainder of the chapter will be concerned with providing a critical analysis of how organizational culture and context contributes to the way in which the social ideologies of sexuality are constructed, made sense of, and managed. The chapter aims to demonstrate that organizations act as an influential component in the construction of sexuality. As Riach and Wilson (2014: 329) note, 'organizational spaces afford or mitigate possibilities for particular bodies, which simultaneously shape expectations and experiences of sexuality at work.'

As outlined above, Judith Butler (1999) suggests it is a heterosexual matrix which reinforces the notion of heteronormativity through an ontological, epistemic schema which organizes sexuality into binary and hierarchically organized categories. This concept manifests within organizational contexts, because in a number of ways, either explicitly or more subtle in nature, heterosexuality is reinforced into its dominant social position as a 'mainstream' form of sexuality. In Ward and Winstanley's (2004) study of minority sexual identities in a global investment bank, it was demonstrated that sexual identities of employees which did not conform to the heterosexual category were treated as 'something to be hidden and silenced' (ibid, 2004: 226). Moreover, the study claims that organizations can be complicit in the silencing process. Specifically, Ward and Winstanley (2004) found that the organization they examined actively concealed their award winning lesbian and gay network when they acknowledged the award as being for gender equality. Further, sexual orientation was isolated from diversity

groups in the organization by not providing support consistent with the protocol for other diversity groups such as gender and race. Both of these mechanisms act to maintain sexual identities as a categorized concept of which there is an acceptable heterosexual form and marginalizes other sexual identities by reinforcing the notion that they are incompatible or indeed not regarded as valuable to the organizational setting.

Rumens and Broomfield (2014) demonstrate that the heteronormativity of organizations is also reinforced in 'gay-friendly' work contexts. They argue that despite the context of the performing arts industry, a stereotypically 'gay-friendly' field of work, the heteronormativity of the social world continues to be apparent in two key ways. First, through the containment of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) people to stereotypically 'gay-friendly' industries, thus allowing 'LGBT sexualities to be folded into the fabric of organizational heteronormativity, narrowing alternative options for LGBT employees to perform sexuality at work' (Rumens & Broomfield, 2014). Second, even within 'gay-friendly' working environments, what is normative is still constructed around heterosexuality in the sense that it is apparent that their working environment is abnormal in terms of wider society. Rumens and Broomfield (2014) found that as a consequence of this, sexualities remained categorized and privileged. This emerged when actors would audition for roles and suppress any stereotypical signifiers of homosexuality as the majority of roles were cast to heteronormative standards and therefore casters were seeking actors to play heterosexual roles.

Studies such as these concerned with minority sexual identities in the organizational context serve to demonstrate relatively explicit dimensions of heteronormativity and the processes by which it marginalizes other broad categories of sexuality such as homosexuality. In addition to this, however, are more subtle mechanisms which reinforce stereotypical perceptions of

gender within a heterosexual context. For example, Jackson (2006) notes that in the organizational setting, 'divisions of labour and hierarchies of advantage and disadvantage, situate men and women in a hierarchical relationship and privilege heterosexuality' (ibid, 2006: 110). Jackson (2006) suggests that this notion is demonstrated and reproduced through a combination of 'gender segregated occupational structures and their associated wage differentials' (Jackson, 2006: 111). Therefore, from Jackson's (2006) perspective labour markets are manipulated and dictated by the historically deep-rooted institutions of patriarchal heterosexuality which maintain stereotypically heterosexual feminine working roles as lower paid than roles that are archetypally masculine. As a consequence of this heteronormative structuring of organizational roles, masculine and feminine working identities are maintained as separate, contained and bounded entities. As such, gendered working roles encourage employees to adopt heterosexual identities within organizations by taking on heterosexual gendered roles which simultaneously maintain masculine roles in a position of social dominance. Furthermore, the existence of archetypally feminine and masculine working roles also highlights and marginalizes those who do not conform. For example, a female in a stereotypically masculine role becomes conspicuous and therefore abnormal in the working context, a mechanism which reinforces the dominant social norm of patriarchal heterosexuality.

In their study of a chain of pubs, Riach and Wilson (2014) provide an insightful look at how the heteronormativity of organizational life becomes an embodied experience of sexuality for workers. Riach and Wilson (2014) suggest that specific expressions of sexuality that are deemed organizationally valuable may be shaped by organizational background and space which form key mechanisms in heteronormative, embodied interpretations of sexuality. A background of

narratives surrounding what it is and/or means to be desirable and therefore what type of sexualized relations become 'bodily possibilities' (Riach & Wilson, 2014) for workers. In the context of a pub, workers recognize that it is acceptable for interactions with customers to become sexualized as it contributes to the atmosphere of a social setting. In this case, employees drew from their own experiences of pubs to determine that sexualized encounters were an acceptable, and normalized, part of the work. This is indicative of the narrative developed through the construction of the organizational setting as somewhere to meet people and interact with the staff in a sexualized fashion.

Likewise, use of space and in particular, bodyspace was found by Riach and Wilson (2014) to be an orientation device capable of steering the use of bodies to benefit the heterosexual ideals of the organization. This is evidenced by the 'overlapping consensus informing how they behaved with customers that not only shaped body choreography and space, but also fed into how they should 'be' at work' (Riach & Wilson, 2014: 342). This demonstrates the way in which organizational management can guide employees to an embodied heteronormative experience of workplace sexuality. Therefore, this study indicates that workers embody the sexualized expectations of an organization through narratives and spatial signposting and, crucially, a consideration of spatial signposting and sexualized expectations is notably absent from Warhurst and Nickson's (2009) typology (above) of sexualized labour.

So far the various ways in which organizations shape, and are shaped by, reinforce and reproduce, the social concept of heteronormativity have been examined. A further way in which organizations influence the employee experience of sexuality and therefore organizational sexuality is through the over inclusion of aspects of sexuality that are

organizationally valuable and the over exclusion of traits deemed not valuable or consistent with organizational ideology.

Originating from Foucauldian thought that the containment of expressions of sexuality to, socially defined, appropriate (such as between adults, in a private setting) and inappropriate (for example, amongst children) contexts results in sexuality becoming ubiquitous either through its presence or notable absence. This transpired in social practice as, in order to apply this measure to society as a whole it became necessary to consider every aspect of pleasure which could be associated with sexual desire or sexuality and therefore needed to be policed to some degree. Hence, Foucault (1979) argues that simultaneously sexuality was becoming a measure for appropriate behaviour and therefore was at the forefront of social thinking.

Burrell (1984) applies this notion to organizational sexuality by highlighting the inclusion of sexual harassment policies that were developed in terms of heterosexual interactions. This over inclusion of heterosexuality as the nature of harassment to be monitored simultaneously acts as a mechanism to suggest to workers that heterosexuality is considered the organizational norm. Simultaneously, this concept is reinforced by the over exclusion of alternative sexual identities being acknowledged in sexual harassment policies. It becomes apparent that sexual identities that are inconsistent with organizational ideals are to remain hidden and subsequently, marginalized.

As the processes of organizational heteronormativity and over inclusion and exclusion demonstrate, organizations place more value on particular attributes of sexual identity than others. Consequently, some sexual identities such as heterosexuality become over included while others are excluded. It has been touched upon in the previous section, that employees become skilled in aesthetic labour to gain expertise in their work. The remainder of this section

will focus on dissecting the notion of aesthetic labour further, with the aim to uncover the various means by which organizations manage the aesthetic performance of workers, and in turn, how workers themselves become commodified as a result of these processes. As this thesis is concerned with female workers, the review will also be directed toward the aesthetic labour processes of women in the workplace. Although male employees also perform aesthetic labour, a key interest is interactive service work which tends to be considered a gendered, feminine, occupation (Pettinger, 2005).

The organizational management of aesthetic labour is evident in the recruitment process of advertising opportunities (e.g. Hancock & Tyler, 2007) and selecting suitable candidates for the roles (e.g. Pettinger, 2005; Witz et al, 2003). Hancock and Tyler (2007) demonstrate, through the use of recruitment documents, that organization's perpetuate 'a predominantly aestheticized regime of meaning that repeatedly constructs gender in accordance with organizational imperatives' (ibid, 2007: 529). The aesthetic presentation of gender in recruitment materials indicates from the initial interaction with a potential employee what aspects of their sexuality are desirable and valuable to the organization and consequently begin to shape the way in which a potential employee presents themselves and their sexual identity. Adkins (1995) reiterates the importance of sexuality in the recruitment stages when noting that female workers in the interactive service industry found that being 'heterosexually available' (ibid, 1995: 149) was essential to getting work. In Witz et al's (2003) study of hotel employees, they found that workers were selected first on the basis of their appearance and personality rather than skills, and they sought out employees who 'embodied the desired iconography of the company' (ibid, 2003: 48).

The organization of aesthetic labour continues from the recruitment phase into employment through staff training programmes in which employees may be advised on how to 'present themselves through posture, gesture, use of personal space, facial characteristics and eye contact' (Witz et al, 2003: 42), as well as how to engage with aesthetics through 'hair-cuts and styling, acceptable make-up and individual makeovers' (Witz et al, 2003: 48). More recently, our understanding of the aestheticization of labour has been developed through the analysis of inter-relationships between human and non-human elements within workspaces, in a shift away from focusing only on the labour process of interactive service workers. For example, Chugh and Hancock (2009), in their study of hair salons, suggest that while hairdressers receive training on body language, it is the 'relationship between the architectural and spatial design of the salons, and the embodied, aesthetic labour of the employees' (Chugh & Hancock, 2009: 470) that constitute an aesthetically significant 'servicescape' (Bitner, 1992: 57). This means that incorporating an analysis of the context within which labour takes place, is crucial in developing an understanding of the processes underpinning the aestheticization of labour.

The literature from the recruitment processes and staff training programmes in the interactive service industry, indicates that female employees particularly, are shaped and moulded into portraying themselves in heightened forms of archetypical (and therefore, heterosexual) femininity. Organizations then, place value on the use femininity to enhance their organizational performance. This notion has been supported by studies into the work of flight attendants (Hochschild, 1983; Taylor & Tyler, 2000). As Taylor and Tyler (2000: 87) outline, there is an expectation to have a 'well groomed', flawlessly feminine appearance and flight attendants are instructed on how to use their physicality in a more heightened feminine demeanour. In this sense, their sexuality is being used as a tool to enhance the customer

experience through the performance of a feminine role. Likewise, Pettinger (2005) found that in the retail service industry the aesthetic labour required of female workers in 'enacting certain forms of femininity is fundamental to the gendering of employment [...] and is directed at enhancing sales in the competitive marketplace' (ibid, 2005: 461).

The manner in which organizations select and educate their employees to enhance organizational performance through aesthetic labour, demonstrates the way in which workers themselves become commodified through the embodiment of the aesthetic labour they engage in. Bourdieu's (1984, 1990) concept of embodied dispositions suggests that ongoing engagement with the social world and its demands is fundamentally embodied as the body is inseparable from the actor. Therefore, when organizations influence employees on how to present themselves, from Bourdieu's perspective, a process of embodiment occurs that influences feelings and ways of thinking and consequently workers are embedded within the transactional process.

Adkins (1995) addresses the commodification of workers specifically in the interactive service industry suggesting it is demonstrated through the relinquishment of key aspects of their personhood, including sexuality, to the organization. Therefore, through control over sexuality being taken over by organizations, organizations are then able to commodify aspects of their employees' sexuality and, taking Bourdieu's position, therefore, the feminine form becomes commodified itself, and within the transaction, the service provider is consumed (Witz et al, 2003).

So far the ways in which organizations shape the image, physical appearance, demeanour and in turn, feelings of employees in the interactive service industry through a process of embodied aesthetic labour have been examined. It has become evident that heteronormative ideologies

of the way femininity should be performed are adopted by organizations and subsequently valued in the consumer market.

Ingrained in the aesthetic labour literature is the notion that organizational aesthetics and sexuality place value on youth (e.g. Riach & Wilson, 2014). The flawlessly feminine appearance idealised by organizations such as those within the airline industry (Taylor & Tyler, 2000) holds the intrinsic implication of youth being desirable. However, previous literature is relatively lacking in the explicit examination of how aesthetic labour shapes and is shaped by, the ageing process. Therefore, it would be empirically valuable to investigate further the dynamic between sexuality and the process of ageing to gain insight into how these factors influence the lived experience of the working life course.

This section of the chapter has reviewed the critical literature surrounding organizational sexuality and demonstrated how particular types of sexuality become normalized and naturalized within the organizational context. The section critically analysed the concept of sexuality as organization by evaluating how organizational sexuality reinforces heteronormativity. In doing so, these processes maintain an idealised social image of what it means for workers to be aesthetically pleasing to the consumer, how the feminine worker is shaped to conform to the organizational ideologies and finally, how the workers themselves become consumed through the performance of sexuality in the workplace. The organizationally valued image of femininity emerged, which contains within it an underlying assumption that youth is beneficial in the performativity of sexuality, despite the topic of ageing remaining relatively under-addressed in the literature surrounding aesthetic labour.

Conclusion

This chapter began by evaluating what sexuality means in the contemporary social context. Its existential significance was outlined and indicated why sexuality is intrinsically associated with shaping the experience of the social world. The social construction of sexuality was then examined and demonstrated the many and varied ways in which mainstream interpretations of heteronormative sexuality are reinforced and reproduced through social processes. The chapter then focused on sexuality in organizations by explaining how sexuality has been viewed and valued within the organizational context, focusing specifically on the de-sexualization and re-eroticization theories surrounding the topic. Following this, the chapter turned its focus toward how and why labour becomes sexualized. This section drew from Warhurst and Nickson's (2009) typology of sexualized labour to demonstrate the organizational processes through which sexualized labour emerges. The final section of the chapter analyzed the critical literature surrounding workplace sexuality, highlighting the specific forms of sexualized demeanor that are considered valuable in the interactive service industry.

Throughout the chapter the way in which sexuality becomes embedded into organizational life was critically evaluated. This process raised the research question of how these uses of sexuality for commercial gain in mainstream work contexts translate into working environments where sexuality is absolutely explicit and being directly commodified, such as the lap dancing industry. Moreover, the underlying assumption emerged that youthful interpretations of femininity are valued highly in organizations where the interaction between employee and consumer are critical in the sales transaction. This led me to the question of how the ageing process impacts on the lived experience of interactive service work, and moreover, the experience of ageing within an industry that is explicitly sexualized. Given the research

questions that emerged from the literature review of organizational sexuality, the following chapter will provide an in-depth examination of what ageing is and the current literature surrounding ageing in the organizational context.

Chapter Two

Ageing and Organization

Introduction

As the previous chapter highlighted in its literature review of organizational sexuality, youth and young adulthood are deemed to be both symbolically and materially valuable, and therefore desirable, within the organizational context. In order to develop this finding, this chapter will focus on the construction of, and the processes surrounding, ageing both within the wider social context and within the working life course specifically. This will be examined as both an individual lived experience and a broader social process. The chapter will begin by providing an examination of the social ontology of ageing in order to evaluate how the ageing process shapes, and is shaped by, the social context in which it takes place. The chapter will then examine how social perceptions of the ageing process are reflected in organizational life and how this may manifest itself in the lived experience of everyday working life and the career trajectory more specifically. In conclusion, the chapter will discuss and emphasize how heteronormative categories of gender, as discussed in Chapter One, mean that women not only 'age' at a relatively younger chronological stage in the life course than men, but also age in very different ways, and asks: What does this mean for women working in the lap dancing industry? How are their lived experiences of sexuality at work shaped by the process of heteronormative, gendered ageing considered in this chapter?

What is ageing?

The ageing process is of particular relevance in society today because there is an ageing demographic of the population in the UK (Office for National Statistics (ONS), 2012). The

number of people in the UK aged 65 and over increased by 1.7 million between 1985 and 2010 and by 2035 it is expected that those aged 65 and over will occupy 23% of the total population (ONS, 2012). Given that people are now expected to live longer, the social, political and economic consequences surrounding ageing have become increasingly researched and debated in a number of academic disciplines including Sociology (e.g. Humphrey, 1993; Vincent, 2006), Politics (e.g. Coole, 2012; Grady, 2013) and Organization Studies (e.g. Ainsworth & Hardy, 2008; Riach & Kelly, 2013). Academic debate surrounding age and ageing has highlighted the complex nature of the topic as an empirical concept. Despite this, everyday uses of the term tend to proceed from the assumption of a shared understanding about what language such as 'ageing' and 'old' mean (Hepworth, 2000). However, it is argued here that ageing is a highly complex process that is influenced by a vast number of factors which shape and guide the way in which ageing may be understood, experienced and positioned in the social context. For instance, the medical and pharmaceutical arena's as well as trends within consumerism each play a role in how ageing can be understood in everyday life. For example, the way in which birthdays are traditionally celebrated shape the chronological ordering of the ageing process as well as facilitating the means by which ageing is associated with broader life phases such as 'middle aged' (Bytheway, 2005). This highlights how culturally inscribed age is because birthdays by years in other cultures are not so important. Despite this apparent social and cultural consensus on meanings of age and ageing, a variety of analytically distinct yet empirically inter-related ways of understanding what ageing is (Tulle, 2008) are circulating in contemporary market societies. To make conceptual sense of these, this chapter will introduce three ontologies of ageing which indicate three distinct but related ways of understanding the ageing process within the social sciences. First, ageing will be examined in terms of a biomedical ontology. Second, the ageing process will be considered within a social constructionist ontology. Third, a

socio-material ontology of ageing will be explained and evaluated. Finally, the chapter will draw upon the three ontologies to explain and evaluate how the three ways of conceptualizing ageing contribute to the experience of ageing in organizations. The focus will remain throughout the chapter on how the ontologies of ageing impact upon workers' lived experiences of employment over time (and as they age). Ultimately, this section aims to provide a social ontology of the ageing process as an organizational phenomenon which will underpin the remainder of the chapter, and the thesis as a whole.

A bio-medical ontology of ageing.

Traditionally, a biomedical approach to the conceptualization of ageing has formed a dominant discourse. A bio-medical discourse is premised upon an essentialist approach, meaning biologically predetermined and inevitable, therefore, deeming ageing to be a pre-dominantly physical process. This perception of ageing developed largely alongside the post-war medicalization (Blaikie, 1999) in which 'old age' became problematized and subsequently, in the 1950's, became the topic of much biological interest. The popularization of study into biological ageing meant that there was an increasing amount of research (Ehni & Marckmann, 2008; Fishman et al, 2010) conducted into methods of remedying symptoms of old age and subsequently opened the possibility of extending the human lifespan (Vincent, 2006). As the focus within the biomedical discourse is solely on the biology of ageing, the ageing process becomes reduced to physical manifestations within the body alone. Therefore, the predominant preoccupation is with the (physical) body rather than the ageing person as a whole (Koch & Webb, 1996; Vincent, 2006).

In Estes and Binney's (1989) account of biomedical ageing, it was reported that within this ontology, ageing becomes a biomedical problem based on 'individual physiological pathologies'

(Fishman et al, 2010: 198). Consequently the biomedical industry has been configured to control and 'cure' the physical manifestations of ageing (Fishman et al, 2010).

This biomedical approach to ageing is underpinned by three dominant perceptions of the ageing body which have been summarized by the critical perspective of Katz (1996), first that the body must be examined for 'inner states of disorder' (Katz, 1996: 40), second, the older body is pathologized as requiring medical attention and finally, that the aged body is ultimately dying. While these assumptions highlight the pathologization of the ageing process within the biomedical discourse, they focus only on the inner physical disorder which disregards the growing obsession there is, represented by the growing anti-ageing industry, with outer signals of ageing as indicators of inner states of disorder.

Not surprisingly, within this biomedical ontology, a profoundly anti-ageing discourse has emerged in recent years (Fishman et al, 2010), one that has promoted the development or creation of an 'optimal self' (Fishman et al, 2010: 198) which is in contrast to a self which is only 'free of illness' (Fishman et al, 2010: 198) . Therefore, the focus is not merely on preventing becoming 'old' but actively seeking to improve one's appearance throughout the life course. This has implications for the social construction of ageing as it is intertwined with, and occurring within, an anti-ageing market within both medical and pharmaceutical areas as well as consumer cultures. This will be discussed in more depth later in the chapter.

As these principles highlight, within a biomedical discourse of ageing, human agency is effectively lost and the body becomes reduced to a state similar to that of a machine whereby the body becomes an entity to be 'entered, studied and tampered with in order to be repaired' (Koch & Webb, 1996: 957). However, it can be argued that human agency is not lost entirely because the biomedical discourse works on the assumption that some bodies are more able to

control themselves (i.e. younger male bodies) than others (i.e. older bodies). Therefore, although the biomedical discourse appears to remove human agency, it remains present in some form and thus it is indicated that a definite separation of biological ageing and social ageing cannot be exclusively made. Moreover, throughout the ageing process, within this discourse, the 'machine' is deemed to require an increasing amount of maintenance in order to prolong survival.

As a consequence, the biomedical ontology constructs ageing largely within a narrative of decay and decline. In summary, the biomedical discourse of ageing is viewed as,

a process of detrimental physical decline [that] places ageing under the domain and control of biomedicine. Medicine, with its focus on individual organic pathology and intervention, has become a powerful and pervasive force in the definition and treatment of ageing (Estes & Binney, 1989: 587).

As this quotation suggests, the biomedical ontology contributes to defining ageing as a physical process to be fought and rectified, despite its material inevitability. Thus, the implication is that the older an individual gets, the more they will have to rely on medical treatment and therefore the more 'problematic' and costly they become within the medical domain. However, it is not just the increasing reliance on medical intervention which shapes the biomedicalization of ageing but importantly, it is how biomedical discourses define the types of intervention that are appropriate for specific medical conditions. For example, equating old age with illness has led to a perception of ageing as being abnormal. Similarly, the medical industry has defined certain conditions as pathological and consequently, attitudes of both the person themselves and others around them become shaped by the medical discourse (Estes & Binney, 1989). For example, sick role expectations may lead to behaviours such as social withdrawal and increased

dependency on others which, in turn, impact upon how individuals are perceived in the social world (Estes & Binney, 1989). This pathologization of conditions associated with ageing also suggests that some aspects of ageing can be 'cured' by the medical profession. This reinforces the dominance of a biomedical ontology, as the discourses within it both pathologize conditions associated with ageing and simultaneously provides 'cures' for them, and in doing so, pathologizes ageing itself to the detriment of closing off other conditions of possibility in terms of the way in which ageing is thought about.

Given the narrative of decline that is created, reproduced, and adhered to through the biomedical ontology of ageing, this perspective inherently promotes ageism through the creation of categories and labels (Koch & Webb, 1996). One such example was the creation of 'geriatric' medicine as a distinct branch within the medical industry (Blaikie, 1999), a label which in itself marginalizes those who fall within it by segregating older patients and highlighting the notion that they will require specialist medical skills for their treatment.

An examination of the emergence of 'geriatric' medicine allows for a greater understanding of how the biomedical ontology came to be the dominant way of conceptualizing ageing and why the older population remains 'characterised as a homogenous group of individuals' (Kirk, 1992: 484). Although the introduction of 'geriatric' medicine is relatively recent, Zemen's (1942 cited in Kirk, 1992) review of ancient writers' perception of ageing shows there was a tendency to perceive old age as a diseased state. However, 'geriatric' medicine as the category as we know it today was developed in the 1940's at the same time as the National Health Service was introduced in Britain (Kirk, 1992). The category of medicine emerged as a result of predominantly German and French doctors who developed clinical practice and researched the medicine of old age in the early 1900's. The early research into the medicine of old age focused

on identifying the criteria for the ageing process and highlighted the manifestations of disease in older individuals and therefore became a category for special medical attention (Kirk, 1992). By forming a category of 'geriatric' medicine, a definition of when old age started had to be decided upon. Belgian mathematician Quetelet noted that the body mass index declined from age 50 and from 60-65 survival rates dramatically decreased, concluding that old age began between 60 and 65 years of age (Kirk, 1992). Despite the fact that this mathematical equation now holds no weight in terms of mortality rates, these age markers are still significant in contemporary society as determinants of life stages (Phillipson, 2013).

The notion of 'geriatric' medicine has implications for gender differences as well. Firstly, as the state pension distribution age for women was younger than men at 60 and 65 respectively (Mein et al, 2000), the implication is that women reach the later stage of life prior to men. Secondly, fertility also impacts upon the notion of 'geriatric' medicine because women become medically categorized as 'geriatric' mothers if they bear children when they are over the age of 35 due to the increased risk associated with it (Van Katwijk & Peeters, 1998).

The fundamental marginalization of older people which underpins the biomedical discourse is demonstrated both by the way in which older people are viewed by others, particularly within the medical setting. For example, Koch and Webb (1996) found that nurses negatively stereotyped older patients that they were working with as their responses to them were 'rooted in the biological model of decline' (Koch & Webb, 1996: 958). This negative stereotype relates to the notion of disgust which has been found to be present particularly in workers who are responsible for the maintenance of 'bodywork' for older people. 'Bodywork' refers to the relation between the body and work within paid labour including health, hygiene and welfare routines used to maintain bodies (Wolkowitz, 2002). As the norm this is conducted on ourselves

but may also be a form of work to be carried out for others for example in the case of carework. It has been found that workers in caring roles for older people experience disgust (e.g. Koch & Webb, 1996; Twigg, 2000). As disgust is rooted in the fear of contamination (Twigg, 2000), and is experienced when interacting with older people (Koch & Webb, 1996; Twigg, 2000), it serves to demonstrate the discourse which has developed, in part, as a result of the biomedical ontology that ageing has a strong association with disease and younger workers seek to avoid 'contamination'. This topic is of interest in relation to the lap dancing industry as workers may have to overcome feelings of disgust toward customers, particularly older customers, in order to be successful at their work, a technique that has been observed in the work of prostitutes (Sanders, 2004). Likewise, customers may have to counter similar feelings in relation to older dancers, a process about which little is known within academic research on customer service interactions within the commercial sex industry.

In addition to the perception other's hold toward older people, the biomedical narrative of decline also contributes to ageist self-perceptions of the body. As Koch and Webb (1996) suggest, the biomedical approach 'powerfully influence(s) how patients make sense of their bodies' (Koch & Webb, 1996: 957). In this respect, as the body ages it becomes increasingly viewed as an object of inquiry. Likewise, the expectation of decreasing physical competence, which the narrative of decline suggests, reinforces an ageist perception of the body because it encourages the lowering of expectations one has of the body as we get older. One consequence of these lowered bodily expectations is the notion of enfeeblement (Vertinsky, 1998) where it is not necessarily the body's biological incapability but the expectation that the older body will be less competent and therefore less is demanded from it, which ultimately lowers the body's fitness level (Tulle, 2008). This perception of the body's increasing physical

incapability is facilitated by a biomedical ontology of ageing because it does not allow for a consideration of the subjective experience of ageing or even recognize a plurality of biomedical pathways to ageing. The discourse of the vocabulary used within this ontology neglects how we may feel as we age, rather the focus is pre-dominantly on the biological process. This demonstrates a weakness of the biomedical ontology of ageing as it disregards individual differences and lived experiences of the ageing process.

Within biomedical discourses are intrinsic gender differences and consequently variations in how the ageing process is experienced. By reducing ageing to its physical manifestations, the biological sex differences become both highlighted and relevant as the 'medical body is differentiated only on the grounds of sex' (Hughes, 2000: 13). In particular, ageing may be conceptualized as an increasing need for maintenance of the body, subsequently bodies which endure an increased amount of 'wear and tear' or biological pressures will be perceived to be ageing more rapidly as they will require more maintenance. In regard to the gendered experience of ageing within this discourse, fertility plays a key role (MacLennan et al, 2000). As the female experience of pregnancy, childbirth and menopause impact significantly on the biological makeup of the body within the biomedical discourse, the female body may be perceived as ageing at a more rapid pace or at least is susceptible to more physical, invasive trauma which may require ongoing maintenance. For example, MacLennan et al (2000) conducted a study that demonstrated medical conditions associated with pelvic floor dysfunction are more common in the female sex as a result of the impact of pregnancy and childbirth on the body. Again, this highlights the notion that the biomedical ontology is primarily concerned with ageing in terms of the physical body (Koch & Webb, 1996; Vincent, 2006) and the ageing implications of the biological sex of the body (MacLennan et al, 2000).

So far the biomedical ontology of ageing has been explored. Within this ontology, ageing is reduced to the relatively one dimensional status of a specific physical process of inevitable biological decline, one that requires increasing medical maintenance as the ageing process progresses. Ultimately, this discourse is underpinned by a narrative of decline and deterioration of the body and therefore, this ontological foundation of ageing is primarily concerned with and highlights the mortality of the human body. However, a biomedical approach to ageing neglects a consideration of social and cultural constructions which may impact upon the ageing process. Moreover, the subjective, embodied experience of ageing and what it means to grow older also remain unconsidered within this ontology and it is these omissions that will form the focus of the remainder of the chapter.

Ageing as a social ontology

An alternative ontology positions ageing as a social process. A social ontology of ageing became popularized more recently than the traditional biomedical ontology and was developed largely within sociology from the 1960's onwards (Phillipson, 2001). Within this ontology it is maintained that ageing does not merely constitute physical manifestations, rather, ageing shapes, and is shaped by, behaviour and attitudes which are 'determined by changes in political, economic, and social structures' (Blaikie, 1999: 3). The following section of the chapter will examine some of the many discourses through which ageing comes to be socially constructed and influenced by the social world. However, before exploring the social construction of ageing in contemporary society, it is necessary to acknowledge the work of Foucault as this underpins much of the thinking surrounding the social constructionist perspective on ageing (e.g. Biggs & Powell, 2001; Katz, 2000; Powell & Biggs, 2003).

Foucauldian approaches to ageing

Foucauldian insights have been applied to many areas of social research however, it has only been more recently that Foucauldian ideas have been applied to ageing research in an attempt to develop knowledge of the many channels by which ageing is socially constructed and to counter the dominance of the biomedical ontology discussed above (Powell & Biggs, 2003). Taking a Foucauldian perspective on ageing, as with any discipline, involves an examination of how social processes shape and exert knowledge and power onto society and subjectivity through adopting a critical approach to the social world (Powell & Biggs, 2003). A key aim within Foucauldian thinking is to dissect the underlying assumptions surrounding, in this case, ageing in order to uncover the specific means by which social knowledge of ageing has been constructed and shaped to develop the particular knowledge that contributes to its meaning. Drawing on the critical thinking of Foucault allows for a different lens to be applied to ageing, one which can uncover 'a whole series of different tactics that combined in varying proportions the objective of disciplining the body and that of regulating populations' (Foucault, 1979: 146). Serving here as a framework for investigating the social construction of ageing, are the key Foucauldian concepts of genealogy and discourse, and technologies of the self (Biggs & Powell, 2001). Genealogy refers to the Foucauldian technique of 'tracing historical pathways that have contributed to temporary circumstances' in order to identify 'historically variable ways of specifying knowledge and truth' (Biggs & Powell, 2001: 5). In contrast, technologies of the self refer to the ways by which individuals work on themselves in a project of the 'self'. In this sense, individuals become subjects that they work on 'in order to function socially' (Biggs & Powell, 2001: 7), a process through which individuals may come to conform to or resist, and most often a complex combination of both, social ideals surrounding the concept of ageing as a social construction. It is through these 'technologies of the self' that the subject is able to resist

disciplinary power that the Foucauldian perspective suggests is enforced through a multitude of social processes. In other words, 'technologies of the self' become 'techniques that permit individuals to affect, by their own means, ...their own bodies, ...their own selves, modify themselves to attain... perfection, happiness, power.' (Foucault, 1979: 74). However, a critical approach to this suggests the desirable images of ageing may be shaped by broader social agendas but experienced subjectively through individuals.

Katz (2000) demonstrates how technologies of the self are used in old age to construct an image of 'successful' ageing. Katz (2000) notes that 'successful' ageing is increasingly being measured in terms of activity and inactivity due to neoliberal political agendas and therefore those who maintain activity into old age are considered to age successfully. As Katz summarizes, 'the production and celebration of an active body in old age is a disciplinary strategy of the greatest value. It is the construction of the body as active that allows it to become such a productive transfer point in the circulation of intellectual capital and professional power' (Katz, 2000: 148). This highlights the importance of the socially situated context in terms of how ageing may be experienced subjectively because, in this case, it is argued that the current political agendas shape perceptions of ageing.

In taking this approach to ageing, the subjectivity of the process is valued and considered, and hence actively contributes to the understanding of ageing as it is experienced in the social world. Therefore, ageing becomes more than inevitable material deterioration by being conceptualized as a tool for shaping and being shaped by social, political and economic factors. Consequently, the social situated-ness of ageing, by taking a Foucauldian perspective is accounted for. This section will draw upon these Foucauldian concepts to critically examine the

processes involved in shaping our social understanding of ageing within contemporary western society.

It can be argued that alongside age comes a series of social and moral commitments that are expected to be adhered to and correspond with specific phases of life (Hockey & James, 2003). These commitments are gendered in nature and relate specifically to the life course. For instance, there is a perceived appropriate age bracket for embarking on motherhood (see below) and a series of lifestyle expectations for women with children such as not doing paid labour, working flexibly and/or lower paid roles (Ainsworth, 2002). This is highlighted in so far as 'individuals who overstep or step outside the expectations of their age become newsworthy' (Hockey & James, 2003: 4). For example, both a twelve year old attending university and a fifty five year old having a baby transgresses social expectations and therefore makes headlines (Hockey & James, 2003). This point may be further illustrated by news articles such as that of the Telegraph in 2009 when a nine year old became newsworthy as the youngest ever student to pass a Maths A Level with a grade A. Headlines such as this demonstrate how powerful, fixed and structured the construction of ageing is and further, how social landmarks shape and construct the accepted universal path of ageing. These accepted social and moral expectations, within the social constructionist perspective, are underpinned by behaviours that are deemed desirable or suitable and are defined in terms of age. Categories such as childhood, adulthood or old age demonstrate social categories which shape social and moral expectations.

The articulation of this social constructionist ontology of ageing within contemporary market societies, and particularly within consumer culture discourses, means that the socio-culturally stipulated categories surrounding ageing are underpinned by an assumption that 'old age is something to be transcended' (Andrews, 1999: 301); therefore, to retain youth is both possible

and desirable. Andrews (1999) suggests that old age is constructed as something to be transcended by a culture that defines certain types of old age as 'young' and therefore desirable. The mechanism through which this is achieved is the ability to compartmentalize the 'self' into internal and external aspects, creating a 'false dualism' (Andrews, 1999:301). This enables individuals to reassure themselves that although their body must age, internally they are able to retain youth through, for example, their youthful spirit (Andrews, 1999). The efficiency of this mechanism is demonstrated by the ability of individuals to see old people 'not as an extension of their future ... but rather as totally apart from themselves' (Andrews, 1999: 304), an observation that builds on the biomedical approach above.

As this compartmentalization suggests, there exists a socially constructed image of old age as akin to depression (Andrews, 1999). Hence mechanisms are adopted to distance the self from old age regardless of the chronological age that is occupied. This mechanism promotes the notion of 'successful' ageing, a concept which refers to ageing whilst retaining certain attributes associated with youth (Andrews, 1999) such as active lifestyle and/or youthful appearance. It is this desire that underpins the consumer culture which will be discussed in more depth shortly, one that frames ageing less in terms of a state of physical decline (as in the biomedical approach discussed above), but more so in terms of aesthetic deterioration. Within a consumer-oriented society, particularly one that has undergone a substantial process of aestheticization (Welsch, 1996), this means that growing older as an aesthetic deterioration also equates to a process of market de-valuation. How this is lived and experienced by women in particular, especially those charged with the performance of aestheticized forms of labour, will be considered in more depth later in the thesis, and returned to towards the end of this chapter.

Exploring the development of a social constructionist approach to ageing means that this normalization and idealization of youth and a corollary framing of ageing as a process of aesthetic deterioration and de-valuation, can be further explained. The following section will evaluate how the social context over the past century has shaped the contemporary social preoccupation with youth. As has been outlined in the biomedical discourse of ageing, the medical industry contributes greatly to the perception of ageing as physical decline. This concept has also guided the social construction of ageing as it provided a basis for how ageing was conceptualized in the post-war era and likewise, the medical industry remains an influential entity today. In the contemporary social world, medicalization has both allowed for, and constructed a culture of medicalized bodies (Hughes, 2000) in which we get sick, we get treatment and we get better (or at least we attempt to). This has developed into a social ethos whereby there is an increased life expectancy and a culture which aims to fight against the ageing process. The development of this social culture relates to the Foucauldian notion of technologies of the self because ageing becomes framed as a process that can be 'overcome' with the assistance of consumer products, lifestyle choices and services. Therefore, this culture sets up a social space for individuals to work on themselves and shape the position they hold in society by taking control of how they age.

Structuralist approaches to ageing

As well as a Foucauldian approach, more structuralist and institutionalist approaches have contributed to how ageing is conceptualized in the social sciences, as well as within the organizational context, through the categorization of life into distinct stages. The categories of education, work and retirement have, up until relatively recently, been clearly defined phases of life which made up an important element in the construction of a situated identity in the

ageing process (Phillipson, 2013). This clear structuring of the ageing process in terms of education, employment and retirement was predominantly established in the 1950's and 1960's as a by-product of the social welfare system and as a consequence, fixed ages for retirement were constructed (Phillipson, 2013). Retirement acted as a signpost for entering the later phases of the life course; as Moen (1995: 239) articulates, 'the postretirement years are too often cast as postproductive years'. It should be noted here that even with this seemingly rigid structure of ageing, gender differences were also being constructed and maintained due to the difference in retirement ages for men and women. With women's standard retirement age being 60 and men's 65 (Phillipson, 2013) women would make the transition into 'later life' at a younger age while men would remain a valued member of the workplace for a further five years. Consequently, women may have to work harder to retain a youthful image in their retirement at a younger age than males respectively.

While retirement trends now are far more variable, flexible and individualized insofar as the shift into retirement occurs at many different ages which are increasingly decided upon in terms of individual circumstances and vary case by case (Hockey & James, 2003; Phillipson, 2013), the socially ingrained desire, and pressure, to maintain a youthful appearance continues to be dominant, though not exclusively, for women (Black, 2004). This represents the socially inscribed positions of value that are placed on older men to a greater degree than older women (Sontag, 1978). The notion and implication of more flexible ageing in the economic sector will be returned to in an examination of neo-liberalism shortly. First however, the impact of an antiageing culture will be evaluated.

Anti-ageing emerged as a key component of modern culture in the 1990's (Cole & Thompson, 2001) and emphasizes the perception of ageing as something to be monitored, controlled and

cured. In particular, anti-ageing can be used to refer to a notion of successful ageing or healthy ageing and the vast consumer industry associated with anti-ageing. Each of these highly interrelated aspects of anti-ageing as a social imaginary which, although it incorporates biomedical spaces, can also be viewed and interrogated separate to them, will be examined next.

The anti-ageing culture constructs successful ageing as maintaining youthful characteristics for as long as possible, through lifestyle choices and physical appearance (Calasanti et al, 2012). By adhering to an active lifestyle and maintaining a youthful appearance, individuals are able to age 'successfully' and be perceived as healthy and productive, both features associated with youth (Rudman & Molke, 2009). Furthermore, the anti-ageing culture assists in constructing the widely accepted underlying assumption that to look good and feel good is to look and feel young (Calasanti et al, 2012). The normalization and idealization of youth is reinforced by policy making organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO) who promotes active ageing, autonomy and independence in older members of society. Specifically, the WHO in their global movement for active ageing campaign which began in 1999, promote socially, economically and physically active ageing as methods of retaining autonomy and independence into later life, traits which are archetypically youthful. Campaigns such as these reinforce a social ideology of youthfulness which in turn underpins the success of the anti-ageing consumer industry which provides further opportunities for retaining youth, for example, through beauty therapy and beauty products to promote physical youthfulness (Black, 2004).

The anti-ageing consumer industry plays a significant role in shaping the social perception of ageing and also demonstrates that women are particularly susceptible to this consumer market (Sontag, 1978). For example, Black (2004: 10) notes beauty salons are 'overwhelmingly female

spaces' where men are not seen as a 'core clientele'. The anti-ageing consumer industry exploits a social fear of decline and death by promoting products which allow individuals to feel as though they are slowing the ageing process (Cole & Thompson, 2001). This is a key concern for women because 'women become sexually ineligible much earlier than men do' (Sontag, 1978: 75). Therefore, the ageing process incites more anxiety onto women and assumes men will have more sexual agency for a longer amount of time than women. Consequently, as Katz (2001: 27) suggests, 'powerful marketing practices support ideals of timeless living'.

The 'mature market' has become a key consumer category and within today's society it is predominantly concerned with masking ageing and promoting timelessness as a lifestyle. In part, this is due to the increasing market of retired and active individuals. This occurs through 'real estate, finance, cosmetics, and leisure enterprises [that] target a growing, so called ageless 'seniors' market and fashion a range of 'uni-age' bodies, fashions and identities that recast later life as an active, youthful consumer experience' (Katz, 2001: 28).

The anti-ageing consumer market reinforces the social construction of successful ageing by depicting an image of ageing as active and autonomous in contrast to the biomedical perspective where ageing consists of decline and decay. Consumer products such as lifestyle magazines, active holidays aimed specifically at retired consumers, fitness classes, anti-ageing creams and treatments as well as more intrusive treatments such as cosmetic tattooing, all promote an image of achievable agelessness within the social world (Andrews, 1999; Armstrong et al, 2009).

The consumer industry plays a vital role in how individuals shape their self-identity in relation to the ageing process (Bartky, 1990; Black, 2004). The marketing of consumer products implies that the self is an ongoing project which should be worked at to improve and sustain. This is

similar to the Foucauldian notion of technologies of the self, outlined above, whereby the self is worked on to achieve happiness and power (Foucault, 1979). In this respect, the anti-ageing consumer industry provides an increasing number of products, tools and opportunities for individuals to continue working on the technologies of the self. As well as providing an ever increasing number of products to fight the ageing process, the anti-ageing industry also creates knowledge of what it means to age because ageing becomes a reflexive process of managing and maintaining self-identity. As Giddens (1999) suggests, information and knowledge about ageing and the body becomes part of what it is. Therefore, the anti-ageing consumer industry constructs an image of the ageing body as something to be worked on, improved and even corrected. In turn, ageing becomes a concern for individuals as they experience the ongoing reflexive process of the ageing self.

Within the anti-ageing industry, age is communicated predominantly through bodily appearance (Black, 2004). By promoting a 'beautiful' appearance that is equated to a young appearance, the consumer industry encourages a more positive self-identity and suggests this can be achieved through anti-ageing consumer products (Coupland, 2007). Therefore, youth is normalized via the production and availability of anti-ageing products and the images of idealized youthful beauty that they promote.

Another factor that contributes to the normalization and idealization of youth is the language that is used to shape the way in which age and ageing may be thought about and conceptualized socially. The vocabulary used when addressing older members of society has undergone a transformation since the 1980's. The current vocabulary serves to support the social construction of ageing as a flexible, autonomous process whereby binary age categories such as old age no longer exist (Katz, 2001). This facilitates individuals to manage and retain

youth throughout their life due to use of language that implies timeless living (Katz, 2001). For example, use of the words older and ageing have become widely used within the academic literature and suggest an ongoing process rather than the use of terms such as old or 'elderly' which suggest more fixed categories.

Likewise, the vocabulary used in marketing products for the older consumer reinforces this notion because the language used in marketing 'is a component of the strategy to depict maturity and consumerism as intrinsically linked in the life cycle' (Katz, 2001: 30). Through the use of marketing language, the ageing process ceases to be measured in terms of chronology but more in terms of 'spending, owning and investing' (Katz, 2001: 30). Therefore, ageing becomes less focused on age as a number and more on lifestyle which in turn, may be manipulated through further marketing strategies.

The social construction of ageing can also be interpreted in terms of neoliberal ideology. In this respect, ageing discourses 'are constructed for, and work towards, ideological ends, principally the support of neoliberalism, which represents contemporary capitalism's ruling ideology' (Grady, 2013: 295).

Therefore, the social perception of ageing is shaped to sustain relations of capitalist domination. Neoliberal ideologies become powerful in the wider conceptualization of ageing not only by promoting particular beliefs and values but by universalizing and naturalizing them until it becomes difficult to perceive ageing in any other context. Hence, the values and beliefs become seemingly inevitable (Grady, 2013). Furthermore, this construction of knowledge denigrates 'ideas which may challenge it; excluding rival forms of thought and obscuring social reality in ways convenient to itself' (Grady, 2013: 295-296). This process demonstrates how the

political construction of beliefs and experiences can dominate the social world and the way in which ageing is experienced is also susceptible to political agendas.

The construction of discourses surrounding ageing that serve to enforce neoliberal ideology can be demonstrated by the current pension crisis (Grady, 2013) in the UK. Positioning population ageing as a crisis, which the pensions crisis does, allows it to be managed according to neoliberal ideals. Therefore, the neoliberal solutions to the 'problem' such as privatization and individualization become the 'only' solutions.

Consequently, pension reform serves to meet neoliberal aims that place people with the type of capital value that will suit the wider neoliberal ideology (Grady, 2013). It places older workers with responsibility for their own financial 'successes' or 'failures' and removes the notion of a right to retirement at a fixed age which is in contrast to the prevalent discourse in the late twentieth century. Therefore, the construction of a pensions 'crisis', is an example of how neoliberal ideology contributes to the normalization of youth in today's society. By categorizing those in retirement as a problem (Grady, 2013), it encourages people to retain youthful traits to remain separate from the problematized category.

So far, both the biomedical and social ontologies of ageing have been outlined and evaluated.

These separate ontologies are however, not wholly contradictory. Rather, they are related in the sense that the biomedical ontology provided the foundations for ageing to be perceived as a process to be fought against through its focus on the biological 'cures' for sickness and ageing.

This way of thinking has subsequently been confounded by discourses premised upon a social constructionist ontology, such as anti-ageing consumerism. Moreover, the anti-ageing industry promotes products and procedures such as Botox, anti-ageing creams and cosmetic surgery that imply age may be defined through physical appearance and adapted through biological

procedures. In contrast, the following section will examine a third way of understanding what ageing is, focusing on a socio-material ontology of ageing as an alternative perspective within which ageing is considered as an embodied, subjective experience.

Ageing as a socio-material ontology

As the social ontology of ageing has shown, there exists a social ideal of agelessness (Andrews, 1999) which is reinforced through discourses of language, anti-ageing consumerism and neoliberal political agendas and is experienced to a particularly acute extent by women. Therefore, people continue to work hard to maintain a youthful self-identity through their lifestyle choices and anti-ageing products. However, processes within this ontology occur simultaneously with our inevitable biological journey through life until, ultimately, death, highlighted within the biomedical ontology of ageing.

The following section will argue that a socio-material approach to ageing provides a more coherent conceptualization of the processes by which ageing constitutes a lived experience. A socio-material ontology of ageing brings together both biological ageing and its social construction in order to conceptualize it as an embodied, socially negotiated process. The socio-material discourse of ageing maintains that 'we become ourselves in the process of embodying ourselves [to qualify] as fully integrated social actors' (Tulle, 2008: 2). Therefore, it is argued that subjectivity lives in, and through, our body. This approach makes a shift away from thinking of ageing as merely chronology but recognizes that ageing, and indeed sexuality, are embedded in the specific situated context within which it is experienced and embodied.

Therefore, a socio-material approach to ageing makes a move away from ageing as something that happens to us, as bio-medical and socially constructed ontologies suggest, towards thinking about ageing as something that is dynamic, lived and experienced. Underpinning this

ontology of ageing is Merleau-Ponty's (2002) notion of embodied perception. This post dualistic ontology of subjectivity is premised upon an understanding of subjectivity as it is lived in, and through, the materiality of the body, from our own perspective. For Merleau-Ponty, mind and body are not separate, as in a Cartesian ontology, but are fundamentally intertwined.

Therefore, according to Merleau-Ponty, all knowledge is embodied and situated and the body is constitutive of how we experience the world. In this respect the body is both subject and object of perception as it is the site of encounters with other people and the world we inhabit.

Moreover, from our situated perception of the world, Merleau-Ponty suggests we develop systems of social possibilities that compel and constrain our inhabitation of it and through which our bodily capacities are shaped. That is to say that we experience ageing in and through our bodies but simultaneously this experience is compelled and constrained by our socially situated understanding of ageing. Merleau-Ponty's understanding of ageing as a lived, embodied phenomenon that is simultaneously material and subjective will be returned to later in the thesis, in the discussion chapter (Chapter Eight).

Within this ontology, physical bodily ageing is experienced through embodied subjectivity. Both embodiment and enselfment 'are life-long processes, primarily because the body is unfinished and their achievement needs a constant labour of maintenance (Tulle, 2008: 2). A further key element of the socio-material discourse is the situated context in which embodiment and enselfment is taking place (Tulle, 2008). Therefore, ageing consists of a complex dynamic between biological ageing and social behaviour's that become embodied subjectively by the social actor, in a specific time and place, as a process of achieving a sense of self, and social identity. By perceiving ageing as an embodied process, other aspects of identity such as gender are intrinsically confounded in how ageing will be experienced by the individual (Sontag, 1978).

For example, in Sontag's (1978) gendered account of ageing, outlined above, women experience the pressures of ageing more acutely than men and this in turn will impact upon the experience of ageing as an embodied process.

In order to compensate for the compromised sense of self that the physical ageing process creates, social cultures that serve to allow individuals to retain a positive self-identity despite their ageing physical body have developed. One such process draws from the notion of Cartesian dualism whereby the body is perceived as an outer shell while the mind remains a separate entity where the true identity of a person is held (Tulle, 2008). Within the ageing process the two aspects of our being are increasingly in conflict 'on the one side, our corpus, which drags us inevitably into our dreaded old age, and on the other, our spirit, which remains forever young' (Andrews, 1999: 301). By compartmentalizing the self in this manner, our body can age but our true sense of self, our spirit, does not have to age at the same rate. This mechanism allows a transcendence of age that and is widely used within contemporary western culture and is expressed day to day through sayings such as 'I don't feel old' or being 'young at heart' (Tulle, 2008). It is also this dualism that the consumer culture depends on whereby products are sold to assist in 'looking as young as you feel', regardless of the chronological age that is occupied by the consumer.

Whereas the Cartesian separation of body and mind is frequently relied upon within the social world, particularly within consumer culture (Andrews, 1999), the socio-material ontology of ageing suggests that subjectivity and objectivity cannot be entirely separated. Rather, an embodied dimension of both subjective and objective experience is a more accurate conceptualization of the lived experience of ageing (Tulle, 2008). Tulle (2008) contributes to the development of a socio-material ontology of ageing with her study of ageing athletes and

suggests a reconfiguration of the mind/body relationship. Tulle (2008) indicates that the mind and body should 'act as one' (Tulle, 2008: 17) however, throughout the ageing process this becomes more and more difficult and increasingly they begin to act against each other and the other element can be employed to compensate for a temporary, or permanent lack of ability in either element (Tulle, 2008).

Within the neo-liberal discourse of ageing, those who overcome the limitations of their bodies, or their physical shell of age, are considered to age successfully. This has been demonstrated within occupations and hobbies which are considered to be predominantly for younger people such as athletics (Tulle, 2008) and ballet dancing (Wainwright & Turner, 2003). In Wainwright and Turner's (2003) study of ballet dancers, it was found that as dancers aged they would work harder to overcome the increasing limitations of their bodies in order to maintain their capital and age successfully within a competitive industry. Therefore, the better skilled individuals are at hiding their physical ageing, the more successfully they will be considered to be ageing. In this respect bodily skill can be considered crucial in the process of ageing successfully by social standards.

So far the chapter has examined three dominant discourses of ageing in order to demonstrate how ageing affects and is affected by our social world. The following section will turn the focus toward the embodied experience of ageing in the organizational context and consider how ageing impacts on the lived experience of the working life course.

Ageing and organization

In the previous sections of the chapter, some of the ways in which ageing may be conceptualized have been examined. The following section aims to evaluate the relationship

between ageing and organizations. In doing so, the ways in which ageing impacts on the experience of working life, and vice versa, will be explored.

Within the organizations, as with the wider conceptualization of ageing, youth continues to be normalized and idealized. One of the ways the normalization of youth can be demonstrated and reinforced is through ageism, in other words 'workplace discrimination on the grounds of age' (Duncan & Loretto, 2004: 96) within organizations.

Existing research has indicated that it is more difficult for older workers to re-enter employment than for younger workers who have been temporarily unemployed (e.g. Macnicol, 2007; Moore, 2009). This signifies a culture of discrimination which is evident within the recruitment process. In Moore's (2009) study of work histories, it was found that explicit discrimination was present in recruitment processes with cases of individuals 'being told directly that they were too old' (Moore, 2009: 660). Further to this, Moore (2009) reported almost all participants experienced actual or perceived age discrimination throughout the recruitment and job hunting processes. Therefore, whether the discrimination is actual or perceived, the normalization and idealization of youth in organizations becomes reinforced, either by the organization or the perception the older applicant has of their self-identity.

Following the recruitment process, discrimination of older workers has been found to be present within day to day working life. Moore (2009) found that as age increases access to training and career progression decreases. This indicates that organizational culture places increased value on youthful employees by providing more training and career progression opportunities. This inherently reinforces the normalization of youth as well as shaping an organizational culture in which youth is regarded as capital (Skeggs, 1997; Sontag, 1978), and consequently is valued as such.

However, age inequality is impossible to separate from inequality surrounding other features of identity such as gender and sexuality. Rather it can be said that age is bound up with discrimination against, for example, gender, sexuality, race and class because these aspects of identity are unable to be lived out separately, nor can they be 'compartmentalized into neat, discrete categories' (Moore, 2009: 657). Therefore, it is necessary to acknowledge the intersectionality, as the 'theorization of the intersection of multiple inequalities' (Walby et al, 2012: 224), of all aspects of identity when addressing just one or two. In addition, by taking the intersectional nature of identities into consideration both the 'differences within, as much as between, social groups' (Cronin & King, 2010: 880) may be accounted for.

The way that gender intersects with age in this respect has been termed 'gendered ageism' (Duncan & Loretto, 2004) and accounts for the variation between how older men and women experience discrimination (Moore, 2009). While both men and women report discrimination on the grounds of age (Duncan & Loretto, 2004), it has been suggested that women 'disproportionately experience ageist attitudes with regard to appearance or sexuality' (Moore, 2009: 656). This intersection between age and gender may be seen as a 'double disadvantage' although this gives a misleading implication of a simple division of identifying characteristics which, in reality, will be confounded with many others. For example, Bradley (1996) highlighted the inter-relatedness of social divisions such as gender, race, class and age, all of which become components contributing to one composite identity.

Organizational gendered ageism, which refers to the intersection between age and gender which results in potential inequality in the organizational context, is reproduced by the 'established gender segregation of the workforce' (Moore, 2009: 657). This gender segregation shapes, and is shaped by, the gendered employment patterns of younger and older workers.

For example, younger female workers are more likely to attain work in customer facing roles such as sales and customer service while older women are more commonly found in administrative roles (Moore, 2009). This employment pattern is representative of 'established occupational segregation' (Moore, 2009: 657) based on the social and cultural construction of gender roles (Skeggs, 1997). This segregation of the labour market can be linked back to the review of aesthetic labour in the previous chapter because customer facing roles utilize aesthetic labour which capitalizes on a youthful appearance. Therefore, aesthetic labour capitalizes on appearance and by implication, age, a process illustrated by the higher number of younger workers occupying customer facing roles as well as the segregation of older female workers to administrative roles. This demonstrates that within some occupational roles the 'importance of image and appearance can represent a very real barrier for older women' (Moore, 2009: 658). This is particularly the case within interactive service work, which relies largely on aesthetic labour more so than technical skills (Moore, 2009).

The segregation of workers according to gender and age can be used to demonstrate the types of capital placed on individuals according to their categorization. Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital has been mobilized to argue that women have only feminine cultural capital (Skeggs, 1997); the latter refers to archetypically feminine traits such as being caring or having a feminine, arguably sexualized, appearance. Skeggs (1997) notes that this feminine cultural capital is only convertible on low skilled, low paid or voluntary caring work. Therefore, women are only able to 'gain power in interpersonal terms rather than wider institutional power' (Skeggs, 1997: 9). Consequently, opportunities for women to increase their capital assets and convert this to a form of material reward are fundamentally limited. Hence, throughout their working life course and by necessity, the ageing process, women are required to negotiate,

maintain or resist the feminine capital that is assigned to them by the organizations or sectors within which they work. As Skeggs (1997) argues, the feminine cultural capital that takes the form of caring experience, becomes devalued through its contact with institutional practices. With this in mind, it would be of interest to examine how the ageing process is negotiated by workers in the lap dancing industry where the feminine appearance is explicitly capitalized upon. In doing so, the various ways in which workers maintain and resist the feminine capital that is both placed upon them, particularly as they age, by the organization, the lap dancing industry as a whole and themselves may be explored and will be highlighted later in the thesis.

Ainsworth (2002) provides an account of how feminine cultural capital is constructed by organizations and female workers respectively into an apparent 'feminine advantage'.

Ainsworth (2002) puts forward the processes by which older women workers are constructed in terms of what she calls the 'flexible female'. The term flexible female refers to the tendency for female workers to be more willing than male workers to occupy lower paid, lower skilled or part-time and temporary roles in the workplace (Ainsworth, 2002). This construction of workers suggests that older women hold an advantage over men in comparable situations, as they become perceived as more easily employable. However, this construction works on the premise that women are prepared to take on stereotypically feminine roles which are also lower paid with lower social status attached to them (Moore, 2009). Consequently, Ainsworth (2002) argues that this process reinforces the 'invisibility of older women workers' (Ainsworth, 2002: 579). Hence, according to Ainsworth (2002), the 'feminine advantage' ultimately disadvantages women in organizations and her findings show support for 'a fundamentally gendered view of age identity' (Ainsworth, 2002: 596).

This section has addressed the topic of ageing in organizational settings and has highlighted the importance of acknowledging the intersections between ageing, gender and sexuality within this context. It has demonstrated some of the many ways in which organizations shape, and are shaped by, the gendered ageing process. The following section will briefly examine the intersection between ageing and sexuality exclusively.

Ageing and Sexuality

Similarly to the shift from an essentialist approach to a social constructionist perspective on ageing, Marshall (2010) suggests that sex and sexuality has historically been perceived as exclusively for the young. However, more recently, the maintenance of sexuality and sexual activity has been associated with the notion of successful ageing (Marshall, 2010). The following section will explore how this shift has occurred and the impact it has had on how sexuality is constructed within the contemporary social world.

The desexualisation of older people has traditionally formed the dominant perspective (Marshall, 2010). This desexualisation process is demonstrated by the notable absence of anyone over the age of 60 in many surveys and studies concerned with documenting sexuality and sexual behaviour. For example, the British National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles, published in 1994, included only respondents up to 59 years of age (Wellings et al, 1994). Hence it was assumed that 'sexual decline in both men and women was ... to be an inevitable consequence of growing older' (Marshall, 2010: 212).

In contrast, within contemporary society the sexual life course has been reconstructed to both include and encourage sexuality into and throughout older age. This shift in perception of ageing and sexuality is demonstrated through media headlines and the increasing inclusion of older participants in studies of sexuality (e.g. Heaphy, 2007; Marshall, 2010; Potts et al, 2006).

A key contributing factor to the shift in discourses surrounding ageing and sexuality was the introduction of sexual-pharmaceutical 'solutions' to sexual dysfunction, the most famous of which being Viagra (Potts et al, 2006). The effect such pharmaceutical products had, and continue to have, on the perception of sexuality throughout the ageing process in contemporary society, is to define sexuality in terms of an ability to engage in penetrative sex, ultimately privileging a biomedical ability to have (hetero)sex over a more embodied and subjective experience of sexuality (Potts et al, 2006).

However, this biomedical implication of pharmaceutical intervention has been critiqued by Potts et al (2006) in their study into counter-stories of erectile dysfunction throughout the ageing process. Potts et al (2006) suggest that although sexuality continues to be an important aspect of maintaining a positive self-identity as we age, it does not need to be defined in terms of a pharmaceutically defined norm of coital heterosex. Rather, Potts et al (2006) argues that many older couples who experience sexual dysfunction adjust their sexuality to accommodate the dysfunction without medical treatment and although this adjustment means sexuality is interpreted differently, it is not necessarily a negative adjustment. Although Potts et al's (2006) study is focused towards the experiences surrounding male sexual dysfunction, it raises the notion of adapting to accommodate changes in sexuality throughout the life course, as we age, and suggests that sexuality needs to be far broader than merely an obsession with intercourse fuelled by pharmaceutical and consumer industries. This concept may be relevant to the study of the lap dancing industry as it raises the question of if and how lap dancers adapt or adjust to accommodate for their expression of sexuality as a commodity as they age within a sexualized industry. Likewise, it also raises the question of how the lap dancing industry may be used by,

or provide a service for, older customers within a society that now promotes sexuality throughout later life, in a sense, capitalizing on decline.

A further contributing factor to the perception of sexuality as a key element of successful ageing is the cultural imagery used within consumer marketing (Katz & Marshall, 2003).

Similarly to the above discussion of consumerism and the socially constructed notion of successful ageing as an autonomous process (Katz, 2001), Katz and Marshall (2003) suggest that sexuality is also shaped by the consumer culture which promotes lifelong sex, arguing that:

there is nothing coincidental about the central place accorded to sexual function in contemporary health promotion discourses and the growing market in supposedly legitimate sex-enhancing consumer goods (Katz & Marshall, 2003: 9).

Therefore, the growing consumer market targeting older consumers promotes and shapes the notion of maintaining a sense of sexuality throughout the life course as a lifestyle choice associated with ageing in a healthy and successful way by constructing a set of positive ideals for consumers to strive for.

Heaphy (2007) uses the study of non-heterosexual ageing to highlight how sexuality and gender interact throughout the ageing process in distinct ways depending on social categories defined by sexual orientation. Heaphy's (2007) study emphasizes the specific process through which gendered meanings of ageing are constructed in marginalised non-heterosexual cultures and how this process may be negotiated. Drawing from this study, this thesis aims to examine the gendered meanings of ageing within the explicitly heterosexualized lap dancing industry in

which workers themselves arguably become marginalized through their expression, and commodification of, sexuality.

This section has briefly outlined the way in which the intersection between ageing and sexuality has developed over recent history from a narrative of sexuality as declining with age to a more recent construction of sexuality as an aspect of positive and successful ageing. While the literature review so far has addressed the intersection between sexuality, gender and ageing, the question remains, how does the intersection between these elements of identity impact upon women who work in the lap dancing industry. It is this question that will be examined in the following chapter.

Conclusion

This chapter began by addressing the question of what ageing is and what it means within the contemporary social context. Three dominant discourses surrounding the conceptualization of ageing were outlined and evaluated, the biomedical, social and socio-material perspectives. In doing so, ageing was argued to be a highly complex socio-material process which is fundamentally gendered. Therefore, ageing is experienced as an embodied, inter-subjective process which shapes how meaning is constructed and perceived in the social world. The chapter then reviewed ageing in organizations, demonstrating how older workers' identities are constructed and shaped by organizational processes through the notion of sexual capital.

The chapter also articulated how youth is normalized and idealized in both the social and organizational contexts and as a consequence, ageing becomes a process to be transcended and managed. It emerged that particularly for women there is both social and organizational pressure to transcend age in order to be perceived as a productive and 'successful' member of both society and organizations.

The following chapter will review the literature relating to the lap dancing industry specifically in order to examine how sexuality and ageing have been studied in this context in previous research. By considering how they have been studied in the context of a highly sexualized working environment in which a youthful appearance is explicitly commodified, it will be possible to understand how the intersection between ageing and sexuality can be brought together within this thesis as a whole to build upon the literature currently surrounding the lap dancing industry and ultimately, the ways in which dancers maintain, resist and manage ageing as a biological, social and socio-material embodied experience may be conceptualized.

Chapter 3

The Contemporary Sex Industry

Introduction

The previous chapters have explained and evaluated the two key social concepts of sexuality and ageing in terms of gender relations. In doing so, it has been demonstrated that the social world as a whole, and especially so in some organizational contexts, places value on socially constructed and negotiated forms of youthful, heteronormative, sexuality. In order to develop this analysis further, this chapter will review the literature on the sex industry as a whole, and the lap dancing industry specifically, in order to examine and evaluate how sexuality and the ageing process shape, and are shaped by, an industry in which sexuality is explicitly commodified in the sales transaction. Through the critical analysis of previous research, the way in which sexuality and ageing feature currently in empirical academic studies will be demonstrated, and opportunities to further develop this area of investigation will be highlighted. The chapter will begin with an overview of the sex industry, followed by an evaluation of the various forms work can take in the contemporary sex industry. Following this, the history of erotic dance will be examined in order to establish how the lap dancing industry came to be the popular and controversial form of entertainment it is today. Finally, previous research surrounding the lap dancing industry specifically will be critically evaluated.

A brief history of the sex industry

This brief history of the sex industry will focus on sex work throughout the twentieth century in order to demonstrate and contextualize how the sex industry came to be considered a marginalized industry within which workers become stigmatized members of society. The focus

will be on the history of women working in the sex industry in order to demonstrate how socially acceptable gender norms influence the process through which workers in the sex industry become increasingly marginalized.

In contrast to the diverse nature of the contemporary sex industry (Kingston & Sanders, 2010), throughout the first half of the twentieth century sex work was predominantly considered to take the form of prostitution and as Caslin (2010) suggests, it was during this era that prostitutes became legally, socially and morally 'othered', a social position that sex workers remain in today (Armstrong, 2010).

Caslin (2010) suggests that the 1920's formed a pivotal time in socially positioning female sex workers in the margins of society and defining them as a 'separate and lower class of women' (Caslin, 2010: 11). This was due to a perceived rise in promiscuity of women generally which led to fears of increasing prostitution in society and ultimately threatened gender norms and moral order. In particular, a fear developed that social order would be compromised by prostitutes as it was predicted that younger women would be influenced into having promiscuous lifestyles (Caslin, 2010). This concern for the disruption of gender norms and social order is demonstrated by the criminalization of prostitutes which Caslin argues has been used 'as part of wider cultural discourses which seek to regulate which types of sexual practice are respectable and thus acceptable' (Caslin, 2010: 12). As a consequence of the regulation of prostitution as an indicator of what was acceptable sex for women to engage in, any women who had pre-marital sex came under increasing amounts of scrutiny and likewise were increasingly perceived as being a 'derivative form of prostitut(e)' (Caslin, 2010: 14).

The positioning of prostitution in the margins of society in this way and for these reasons, goes some way to demonstrating how and why those who were perceived to have a closeness to

prostitution also become stigmatized. In addition, given that the basis of this marginalization are gender norms, it perhaps suggests why women working in the sex industry experience marginalization differently to men as women are perceived as having passive sexuality which contradicts with the behaviour of a sex worker whereas masculine sexuality is perceived as something they have rational control over. These points remain evident in contemporary society where, for example, lap dancers experience stigmatization as a result of a perceived closeness to prostitution (Shteir, 2004).

Having contextualized how the sex industry has been positioned in the margins of society, it is necessary to acknowledge the diverse nature of today's industry in contrast to the traditional view of sex work as prostitution, and particularly street prostitution alone, (Kingston & Sanders, 2010) and how the sex industry has come to consist of a whole spectrum of labour surrounding the consumption of commercial sex.

The sex industry has undergone a transformation since the internet became globally accessible (Bernstein, 2007) and some of the consequences of this will be outlined next. The internet has enabled the sex industry to increase in accessibility for both consumers and sex workers. In this respect, the avenues of communication have been increased through use of the internet (Kingston & Sanders, 2010) and the buying and selling of sex and/or sexual services can be negotiated at any time or any place provided there is internet connectivity.

Similarly, this virtualisation of the sex industry, which resulted from the increased avenues of communication allowed by the internet, has meant that the types of work performed within the industry have altered considerably. The use of online sex chat rooms, strip shows and live sex shows can be viewed online and also performed exclusively to an online audience as a

direct result of advancing video technology and internet communication (Kingston & Sanders, 2010).

Relating to both the accessibility and the virtualisation of the sex industry is another factor of cultural diversity. As the sex industry has become a globally accessible market, many different cultures are able to mix and, as Kingston and Sanders suggest, 'the mixing of ideas, beliefs and cultural practices can inform national and international politics, and social norms' (Kingston & Sanders, 2010: 2). For the sex industry, this meant that commercial sex became arguably less stigmatized as it became increasingly normalized and socially acceptable (Brents & Sanders, 2010). This is illustrated for example, by Playboy becoming more mainstream after it developed its online presence in 1994 and was the eleventh most visited website by 1996 (Kingston & Sanders, 2010).

Despite the mainstreaming of some forms of work within the sex industry, many remain stigmatized and as a consequence workers are discreet about their occupation (Brewis & Linstead, 2000). As developing technologies have enabled the sex industry to incorporate many forms of sex as work, it has also enabled workers to have the ability to hide their chosen occupation more successfully. For example people can work from their home using web cams and select who they interact with online. Increasingly then, during economic downturns, sex work has appealed to larger numbers of people (Kingston & Sanders, 2010).

Given each of these factors which have contributed to the diversification of the sex industry, many different forms of work are regularly categorised into the bracket of commercial sex. Within the contemporary social world occupations that are considered to be types of commercial sex work include, 'prostitution, go-go dancing, stripping, phone sex, pornography

video production and dominatrix work' (Mavin & Grandy, 2013: 6) as well as lap dancers and even sex shop assistants (Kingston & Sanders, 2010).

So far, the way in which the sex industry has been contextualized as a stigmatized industry throughout the twentieth century has been outlined and it is widely agreed that the industry today remains marginalized (Kong, 2006; Mavin & Grandy, 2013; Sanders, 2005; Wesely, 2003). In addition, the transformation that the sex industry has undergone due to technological advances and particularly, the development of the internet and how this has impacted upon the range of services provided within the sex industry have been discussed. While lap dancing is considered by some to occupy the sex industry (Mavin & Grandy, 2013) and remains part of a 'sex as leisure' industry (Kingston & Sanders, 2010: 3), it has a history of its own that has not been so exclusively attached to the sex industry and it is the history of erotic dance and striptease that will be considered next. As lap dancing in contemporary British society is inspired by, and was pioneered by, American style strip clubs, the focus will be on how classic striptease evolved into the lap dancing that is commercially available today.

A history of strip tease and lap dancing

In contrast to opinions about lap dancing clubs today, which are generally considered by those outside of the industry to be seedy venues where women work in this deviant occupation (Colosi, 2008), *striptease* was, and still is, considered by some to be a more demure performance of artistry and illusion (Shteir, 2004).

The roots of striptease can be found in the rise of romanticism and its associated passions (Shteir, 2004) and this style transferred into women's dance. This was particularly the case within ballet which was one of the first forms of art traditionally performed by women for men

(Shteir, 2004). When the French ballerina Francisque Hutin performed in New York in 1827, she not only introduced French dancing to America in contrast to the English jigs American audiences had been accustomed to, she also made an impact with her, for the time, revealing costume which exposed her lower legs as she danced. Her performance evoked a controversial reaction and consequently she covered her legs for following performances but the demand to see her legs again was so high that she reverted back to her original dress. This demonstrates the desire for audiences to observe more of the body in the theatre than was the norm elsewhere, a curiosity that continues to be capitalized on within the contemporary sex industry. Interestingly, it was following this introduction of female sexuality in the theatre that prostitution in New York became a bigger business with women targeting theatres to find clients (Shteir, 2004).

Following the introduction of ballet as a dance which exhibited the female body and introduced the American audience to the performance of female sexuality, the CanCan became popular and demonstrated that there was a market emerging for dancing that exposed women's bodies within more mainstream entertainment, as opposed to the services provided within brothels at the time. The earliest acts of undressing however, did occur within the theatrical brothels of Paris, within the region of Montmartre, an area famous for its creative culture (Shteir, 2004).

The first act of undressing that was not intended for soliciting but to celebrate the Left Bank, occurred during a procession through Montmartre to the Moulin Rouge. Although in this case, those who undressed were subsequently fined, it was shortly after this that similar undressing acts 'exploded into the music hall scene' (Shteir, 2004: 37) in France.

A key factor in the popularity of revealing women's body's as entertainment, and particularly for popularising it as a form of theatre in America, was the development of film in the 1890's.

Peep show parlours showing short loop films of women undressing first opened in America in New York but soon their popularity rose and parlours opened in gold rush towns and vaudeville theatres (Shteir, 2004). This is indicative of the association stripping still has today with chasing fast money and the discreet nature of the industry whereby it was a world you could, literally, peep into.

The performance of striptease itself was born in the American Jazz Age and continued up until the sexual revolution, although more recently striptease performances have made a comeback alongside vintage fashion trends (Shteir, 2004). Striptease tended to be performed in burlesque theatres and vaudeville houses where performances often incorporated tongue in cheek humour to a suggestive striptease but also retained an air of sophistication (Shteir, 2004) through hinting at irony. Despite this, even during the striptease era there was some variation as to whether striptease could be considered sophisticated or subversive and this reflects the taboos surrounding it which both increased the appeal of striptease and made it fundamentally controversial (Liepe-Levinson, 2002).

Throughout the jazz age, striptease became associated with the New Woman sexual liberation and 'a testament to women's newfound economic freedom' (Shteir, 2004: 4) and in many respects marked a distinct gender identity for women. As Liepe-Levinson emphasises,

The decade that spawned the stripper in America was marked by profound cultural and social disturbances. Women obtained the right to vote, bobbed their hair, shortened their skirts, and traded in their corsets (Liepe-Levinson, 2002: 2).

During World War II striptease became patriotic, morale boosting and akin with the pinup girl. Following the war, striptease became less about the tease and more about the strip which was

reflected in the loss of the tease in its name. Strip capitals soon emerged and included Los Angeles and Las Vegas and stripping soon became increasingly linked with gangsters and deviant cultures (Shteir, 2004). Throughout the history of striptease it has been associated with both mainstream entertainment and a more deviant culture. Shteir sums up the position of striptease within the entertainment and commercial world:

Striptease straddled the arenas of vice and popular entertainment. I think of this as the principle of 'near'. For most of its history, striptease was never exactly prostitution, but it was 'near' prostitution. It was not pornography, but 'near' pornography, not exactly about the consummation of the sexual act, but about its 'near' consummation (Shteir, 2004: 5-6).

This principle of 'near' articulated by Shteir (2004) is founded upon the notion that striptease has been continuously associated with prostitution throughout history. One reason for this is that, to varying degrees, in each occupation the woman is presented as an erotic object for consumption. This has consistently proved to be controversial as it has potential implications for re-defining the social perception of gender identity which, as outlined above, threatens the social order.

Although classic striptease during the Jazz Age capitalized on female sexuality using a 'raunchy combination of sexual display and parodic humor' (Shteir, 2004: 6), following the sexualized culture of the 1960's, striptease adjusted into a strip industry that accommodated the newly sexually liberal culture it inhabited. As flesh and nudity became increasingly commonplace within cinema, fashion and theatre, the performance of stripping became more and more sexualized to accommodate the changing boundaries of hedonistic pleasure. Ultimately though, contemporary strip occupations such as lap dancing can be considered descendants of the

striptease industry as, from the vaudeville houses to burlesque theatres to contemporary stripclubs, the premise of women undressing for consumer satisfaction remains constant. The key change in the characteristic of the strip industry, Shteir (2004: 6) suggests is that the 'French spectacle that casually undraped women for dramatic effect' has been replaced by lap dancing which 'dramatically undrape[s] women for casual effect' this change demonstrates the impact a sexualized culture has on the world of strip and tease whereby the nudity in itself has lost much of its dramatic effect but the sexualized undressing of dancers has become a key element of the performance.

So far this chapter has examined the way in which the sex industry as a whole has been socially positioned as a deviant and marginalized field of work. The many occupations that fall into the sex industry as a consequence of developments in technology and the proliferation of the internet have been outlined. The history of erotic dance and striptease has also been examined and has demonstrated how lap dancing in contemporary society may be positioned as close to prostitution and therefore, stigmatized by association. The following section of the chapter will be concerned with explaining and evaluating the key issues and debates that have previously been considered within the literature surrounding the sex industry, with a specific focus on research directly concerned with the contemporary lap dancing industry.

Lap dancing research: Background

Analysis of strip work is beginning to be developed in the sociology of work but much of this analysis is of the US and Canadian industry (e.g. Frank, 1998/2002/2003; Jackson, 2011). The work of Katherine Frank was based on the US lap dancing industry and played an important role in introducing sociology to strip work analysis. Through her ethnographic study, she connects gender, sexuality and the marketplace, arguing that customers' understandings of their

involvement in the strip industry are 'deeply intertwined with cultural discourses about masculinity, sexuality and consumption' (Frank, 2002: xx), but Frank also emphasises how customers visits to strip clubs become meaningful through personal experiences of gender and sexuality. Therefore, Frank's research played an important role in laying the foundation for a sociological understanding of the strip industry as one that is shaped by broader social and cultural discourses but becomes meaningful to customers through their individual experience of it. Further to this, Frank developed an understanding of the ways in which consumption of pleasure and meaning making in the strip industry are 'intertwined with material inequalities and constraints' (Frank, 2002: xxi) such as social class, race, heterosexuality, marriage and fantasy. In this respect, Frank opened up many avenues for further investigation of the strip industry and, in particular, as much of her focus has been on customers, there remains scope for the understanding of dancers embodied experiences to be developed.

More recent studies of the lap dancing industry, based in the US and Canada have also emphasised relationships between class, ethnicity and gender (Brooks, 2010; Law, 2012), and constructions of femininity (Jackson, 2011), as well as performances of intimacy within the strip industry. However, while many of the insights gained from the study of the US strip industry are applicable and important, distinctive features of the UK industry are important to study in order to understand the industry in the UK context, particularly since the rapid expansion of the British industry in the early part of the twenty first century (Jeffreys, 2008).

In response to the proliferation of the lap dancing industry in the UK (Jeffreys, 2008; Sanders & Hardy, 2014), there has been an increase in research centred around the UK industry. The most significant and influential piece of research into the UK strip industry, and is the largest study to date, was conducted by Sanders and Hardy between 2010 and 2013. Their research develops

the foundation laid in the US by Frank because it provides a holistic analysis of strip work in the UK, incorporating the labour processes within clubs, the legislative landscape in which they are situated, as well as the broader politics surrounding the UK strip industry, with the working conditions of dancers making up the central focus of their analysis.

The work of Sanders and Hardy (2014) has provided the basis for much of the recent research in the UK, some of which has focused on licensing and regulatory frameworks surrounding the strip industry (Sanders & Campbell, 2013; Sanders & Hardy, 2014), a body of research that has, in some respects, been concerned with the context of the industry in the UK, in particular documenting licensing changes and critiquing regulatory frameworks (Colosi, 2013; Sanders & Campbell, 2013), and this makes up a topic that is discussed further in the following section.

Other research that has incorporated elements of context has focused on the impact of economic changes (Lister, 2012), the wider political economy (Hardy & Sanders, 2015), as well as context in terms of locality and the community (Hubbard & Lister, 2014). These studies have made important inroads to considering context in studies of the lap dancing industry in the UK however, there remains scope for a more phenomenological interpretation of context and space in order to understand how the situated context of the industry, and the setting and space in which it occurs become meaningful for those working as, and embodying the role of, a lap dancer.

The political context and regulatory framework

Since the opening of US style lap dancing clubs in the UK in the 1990's (Sanders & Hardy, 2012), the industry has grown rapidly and become increasingly visible (Hubbard & Colosi, 2012). Prior to 2009, lap dancing venues were licensed in a similar way to entertainment venues such as pubs and nightclubs with regulations in accordance with the Licensing Act 2003. What

distinguished lap dancing venues from more mainstream entertainment venues at this time, was a list of conditions that they were required to adhere to. For example, age restricted entry and providing a statement of the specific nature of the entertainment to be provided within the venue (Colosi, 2013).

As the industry grew and became increasingly visible, it also became increasingly debated, and campaigns such as Object developed simultaneously. The action group Object took the position that the lap dancing industry encouraged the objectification of women and sexism within society. Despite the lack of evidence supporting it, the campaign 'Stripping the Illusion' led by Object and the Fawcett Society (Colosi, 2013), played a key role in drawing attention to policy and regulations surrounding the industry and directly opposed the licensing regulations under the Licensing Act 2003. As a consequence of this campaign, the lap dancing club was licensed under the Policing and Crime Act 2009 and lap dancing clubs became Sexual Entertainment Venues (SEV's). Under the Policing and Crime Act 2009, the lap dancing industry became grouped together with forms of entertainment that are largely considered to make up the sex industry and more power has been given to the local authority of proposed venues to make the final decision about whether an application for an SEV is successful. Although each local authority have their own guidelines outlining the conditions stipulating whether an SEV may be deemed acceptable or not, they tend to be consistently ambiguous across local authorities and as such it is seemingly down to the discretion of each local authority to make the final decision (for a discussion see Hubbard & Colosi, 2012). That being said, the licensing conditions of SEV's themselves have clear conditions that shape the interactions within the clubs. Most notably, a licensing condition is that there will be no touching between the dancer and customer other

than shaking hands when they meet and holding hands to lead customer to a private dance area (Brighton & Hove City Council, 2010).

The legal changes surrounding the licensing of the lap dancing industry have been considered problematic given that the Policing and Crime Act 2009 homogenises occupations within the sex industry, thus failing to account for important differences in types of work and regulating them in accordance with these individual differences. Relating to this point, the 2009 licensing can be criticised as it encourages stigmatization of those working in the lap dancing industry by licensing it within a framework of criminalisation despite it being a legal occupation. Therefore, the Policing and Crime Act 2009 highlights a preoccupation with considering lap dancing in terms of crime and deviance as opposed to being focused on working conditions and minimising exploitation within the industry (Colosi, 2013).

As it stands, licensing of the lap dancing industry in the UK is crime focused and homogenises various occupations within the sex industry. Although there has been some movement toward incorporating dancer safety into licensing conditions set by local authorities, in particular in response to the research of Sanders and Campbell (2013), there remains a large amount of variation between local authorities and the overarching SEV policy neglects this important aspect of licensing, leading to a lack of consistency among venues across the UK. Therefore, there remains scope for a shift towards prioritising regulations that ensure worker safety and minimise exploitation. There also remains scope for developing a regulatory framework that considers the broader landscapes of occupations such as how website material and spatial layout of club interiors may promote safety and enhance working conditions within the industry.

The working role of lap dancers

Previous literature in this relatively under researched field has tended to focus on issues such as risk (e.g. Holsopple, 1999), an empowerment/exploitation debate (e.g. Wesely, 2003) and regulations (e.g. Bindel, 2004) to the relative neglect of examining the specific ways in which sexuality is sold, how it is constructed and how this is experienced and negotiated throughout the socio-material ageing process of dancers. The following section will examine the current literature in order to review the key issues surrounding the industry and tease out the ways in which sexuality is commodified and how ageing features in this process.

Stigma

The stigmatization of lap dancing has already been addressed, in part, within the previous section of the chapter, where the historical social context has been explained and how it became known as a deviant occupation has been described. Crocker and Major (1989) have defined this process of stigmatization as one involving the production of social categories about which others hold negative attitudes, stereotypes, and beliefs. Goffman (1963) dissects the notion of stigma, explaining negative social responses as a belief that those stigmatized are 'not quite human' by society's standards. Moreover, Goffman (1963) suggests that a 'stigma-theory' is constructed by the rest of society as a mechanism to explain the inferiority of those stigmatized based on a social ideal. Similarly, Hughes (1958: 122) coined the term 'dirty work' to describe labour that was physically, socially or morally tainted and those conducting the work are susceptible to becoming tainted themselves.

The academic literature has reinforced lap dancers as marginalized workers, particularly within earlier studies of the industry which tend to frame lap dancing as a deviant occupation (Wahab

et al, 2011). This is illustrated in Skipper and McCaghy's (1970) study of American strippers where they suggest that the occupation is deviant because 'an adult woman is not expected to expose her nudity to any male not her spouse, with the exception of a physician and then only under highly structured circumstances involving health reasons' (Skipper & McCaghy, 1970: 392).

More recently, research has acknowledged that there is still a significant amount of stigma attached to being a dancer (Bindel, 2004; Grandy & Mavin, 2014; Mavin & Grandy, 2013; Wesely, 2003). For instance, studies have shown the industry may be stigmatized due to a perceived closeness it has to prostitution (Mavin & Grandy, 2013) or a perception that it reinforces the 'sexual objectification of women' which becomes 'a tool of women's oppression' (Wesely, 2003: 486).

Despite the acknowledgement within contemporary research that dancers remain stigmatized and lap dancing is in some cases still considered a deviant occupation, additional research has emerged that works 'towards constructing exotic dance as a legitimate form of labor' (Wahab et al, 2011: 57). For example, Hanna (2013) eloquently dissects the perceptions of dancers as deviant, uneducated prostitutes held by some social groups and argues that these stereotypes are outdated and inaccurate. Furthermore, research into lap dancing and lap dancers continues to build on the literature constructing the work as a legitimate form of labour by focusing on topics other than merely stigma and deviance, some of which will be outlined in more depth below.

Risk

The issue of risk has also emerged in previous research into both the sex industry more broadly and lap dancing specifically. Underpinning much of the literature on sex work is the assumption that it is a high risk role (e.g. Brewis & Linstead, 2000; Sanders, 2004). The research indicates that risks are present within sex work in many forms such as sexual health risk (Scambler et al, 1990) and risk of drug abuse and use (Green et al, 2000). However, a key article contributing to the study of risk in prostitution was Sanders' (2004) research which provided a broader perspective on risk. Three categories of risk were identified, health, physical violence and psychological risk. Health risk and risk of violence were found to be more easily managed with support more readily available. For example, sexual health clinics equipped specifically for supporting sex workers. In contrast to these types of risk, Sanders' (2004) suggests that psychological or emotional risk is the priority for sex workers and it emerged as a highly complex and time consuming concern for the workers. Sanders suggests this is because without emotion/psychological management both social and self-identity may be compromised. To protect their social identity workers place high importance on the risk of their working role being 'found out' by society, family and friends, thus suggesting that stigma and risk are key factors to be negotiated by workers.

The topic has emerged in research conducted regarding both policy-making (e.g. Bindel, 2004) and research into the exploitation of women in the lap dancing industry (e.g. Holsopple, 1999). For example, in Bindel's (2004) research conducted for Glasgow City Council it was found that security measures were administered inconsistently by club staff. Consequently, the level of risk dancers encountered was somewhat variable within the work they perform.

Holsopple's (1999) study of the lap dancing industry provided a more explicit account of the types of harassment encountered by dancers. Holsopple (1999) identified the presence of

verbal, sexual and physical abuse and also dancers being coerced into prostitution. Interestingly however, Deshotels and Forsyth (2006) found that lap dancers may take the view that sexual harassment occurs in all work as part of the working environment, therefore, in lap dancing 'at least you get paid to be sexually harassed' (Deshotels & Forsyth, 2006: 233).

Given these studies are in agreement that lap dancing constitutes a relatively risky occupation, it would be of interest to discover whether dancers themselves consider this to be the case and how they manage and negotiate any perceived risks within their career, particularly the psychological and social risks that are prioritized in Sanders' work.

Empowerment and exploitation

The central debate within the literature on lap dancing concerns the question of whether dancers are empowered or exploited. The radical feminist view argues that female sexuality is used as a form of male sexual oppression and exploitation of women (Kong, 2006). In contrast, the sexual radicalist perspective emphasizes the freedom of sexuality, arguing that it resists male domination by not allowing one man to 'own' their sexuality, ultimately rendering sexuality a powerful force. However, Jeffreys (2008: 151) critiques this 'free choice' liberalism suggesting that such arguments exemplify a 'decontextualized individualism that is common to many defences of the sex industry'. Similarly to the lap dancing literature, a key debate in the scholarly material on prostitution is the radical feminist perspective versus the sexual radicalist position. This debate becomes even more prominent when a physical sexual act is commodified in the ultimate display of commercial intimacy. The radical feminist view argues that prostitution is the purest form of male oppression and exploitation and powerlessness of women (Kong, 2006). In contrast, the sexual radicalist perspective emphasises the freedom of the prostitute, arguing that they resist male domination thus rendering the prostitute powerful.

Likewise, it is suggested that the commercial exchange is a liberating experience for the female prostitute (Kong, 2006). If either the radical feminist or sexual radicalist perspective is taken, however, women are perceived to be either oppressed or liberated, therefore these perspectives give a relatively simplistic account of how power can be conceptualized. In contrast, researcher's such as Sanders (2005) and Brewis and Linstead (2000) demonstrate that empowerment and exploitation can be simultaneous, fluid and embedded entities in the process of the commodification of the body, and sexuality more generally. Therefore, the question may be asked, do lap dancers experience feelings of empowerment or exploitation from the work they do and how do they conceptualize their experiences both in their day to day working life and throughout their working life course?

Performance of sexuality

Some previous literature surrounding the lap dancing industry has examined the work in terms of the performativity of the role. Within this branch of research dancers have been analyzed as fantastical actors (Wood, 2000) conducting strenuous emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983; Wood, 2000) and performing extensive bodywork (Mavin & Grandy, 2013) in order to become skilled in the commodification of counterfeit intimacy (Barton, 2007) for the consumer. It is this area of research that will be reviewed next.

Barton (2007) suggests that the performance of a lap dancer is rooted in the construction of a persona which serves as 'a self that exists in the clubs who has a different name and personality' (Barton, 2007: 587). The performance of this persona relates to the prevention of risk and works as a coping strategy for dancer's as well as enabling dancer's to become skilled at their work and consequently higher earners (Barton, 2007). The performance of a persona also allows dancers to perform a fantasy for customers more convincingly because it allows the

dancer to step out of their 'authentic' self and in this sense they are 'not only performing a fantasy for her customers, she is performing a fantasy for *herself*' (Barton, 2007: 588).

Barton (2007) also found that an important element of creating and performing the dancer persona was becoming skilled in the performance of counterfeit intimacy. Being skilled in this requires dancers to be able to convince customers that they are not only attractive but 'that she is sexually interested in them' (Barton, 2007: 589).

There are several strands to the successful performance of counterfeit intimacy with one being the performance of emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983). Hochschild's (1983) notion of emotional labour describes the commercialization of human feeling and management of emotions. Within the lap dancing literature, Wood (2000) highlights the necessity for emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983) to be performed by dancers suggesting that it is essential to the construction of a fantasy for the customer. Wood (2000) demonstrates it in terms of creating pleasure for customers through dancers objectifying themselves in order to fulfill the customers' fantasy. As Wood (2000) describes, this is achieved by the dancer becoming, 'through the customers assumptions of her history, personality and desires, a fantastical actor whose job it is to turn attention and action toward him' (pp. 15). Each of these techniques for managing self-identity and creating a persona in order to commodify sexuality can be regarded as the management of what Sanders (2005) calls a 'manufactured identity' which Sanders (2005) found in her research into sex workers is often used to become professionally skilled at the work. Sanders' (2005) proposes that sex workers produce a manufactured identity, the purpose of which is twofold. First, it can protect the sense of 'self' by separating the working identity and the private identity, serving as a 'self-protection mechanism' (pp. 319). Second, it

allows the worker to construct a sexualized version of themselves and meet the sexual ideologies of both themselves and their clients, ultimately capitalizing on their sexuality.

Relating to the performance of counterfeit intimacy, Deshotels and Forsyth (2006) coined the term 'strategic flirting' as a technique for portraying a particular image of sexuality to the customer through the use of their interpersonal skills after a quick and subtle assessment of the customer's desires. This technique also requires emotional labour to be simultaneously performed to give a convincing performance of counterfeit intimacy.

A further factor that has been found to be an intrinsic element of a lap dancer's performance in the workplace is the performance of bodywork. Within sex work research generally, bodywork has been considered to be used in several different ways and take several different forms. Brents and Jackson (2013) put forward a typology of bodywork within sex work following their examination of legal brothels in Nevada. Brents and Jackson (2013) suggest bodywork has multiple dimensions including the performance of physical labour, where the body is the tool; aesthetic labour, where a particular image is constructed of the body; bodily labour, where the customer's body is the object of performance, and interactive bodily labour, where the customer is encouraged to interact with the body. In order to further this typology, it would be relevant to examine these forms of bodywork within the lap dancing industry specifically to establish how bodywork may be negotiated in its many forms in other areas of the sex industry other than prostitution.

Mavin and Grandy (2013) have provided one study that acknowledges the bodywork performed by lap dancers specifically in their research into the 'doing of gender' in the lap dancing industry. They suggest physical appearance to be a key element of selling lap dances. They found that dancers increase their earnings by becoming skilled in portraying a heightened form

of femininity. They provide an account of dancers' concern with the physical attributes they associate with an occupational image of feminine sexuality. Mavin and Grandy (2013) suggest it is the dancer's body that is the product for sale, therefore they have a preoccupation with changing outfits throughout the night, monitoring their weight and physical fitness and a concern with the ageing process which were all identified as factors associated with the maintenance of the 'dancers bodywork' in 'a somewhat narrow depiction of femininity' (Mavin & Grandy, 2013:11). Mavin and Grandy's (2013) research provides an excellent foundation for further exploring the bodywork which goes into the work of a lap dancer and their study could be developed further by an examination of bodywork as an embodied process throughout the career of a lap dancer as they grow older in an industry where a youthful body is normalized and idealized.

Therefore, previous research indicates that lap dancers tend to perform relatively specific forms of heightened, archetypically feminine, sexuality, however less is known about how, and indeed why, particular performances of sexuality come to be valued and deemed desirable within the industry. That being said, Grandy and Mavin (2012) in their analysis of the portrayal of lap dancing in the media, suggest that occupational image is partly informed by its media presence. Grandy and Mavin's (2012) study means that it is important to consider the broader social context in order to understand how perceptions of an industry, and performances within it, come to be. Currently, there is scope for an analysis of how the physical and social context of the lap dancing industry condition expectations for performances of sexuality within it.

Boundaries

Within the previous literature on the lap dancing industry the notion of boundaries, and in particular, the fluidity of boundaries has been addressed. As will be demonstrated in the

section below, boundary negotiation has been found to be a complex process for dancers and the current research into this area is critically evaluated next.

Wesely (2003) proposes that working in the lap dancing industry may result in body boundaries becoming fluid and that they are 'determined by dancers customer by customer' (Wesely, 2003: 494). Wesely (2003) argues that the nature of the work encourages dancers to go to, and through, previous body boundaries they may have had. This research can serve as a basis for examining where boundaries lie between lap dancing and prostitution, however it is not without its limitations. While the research puts forward the notion of fluid body boundaries, it requires further research to establish the factors that contribute to how the body boundaries move and in which direction. Finally, Wesely (2003) focuses predominantly on the physical boundaries of dancers to the neglect of other types of boundaries such as internalised or emotional boundaries.

Barton's (2007) ethnographic study of boundary negotiation in lap dancers goes some way to developing Wesely's (2003) focus on physical boundaries. In her study, Barton (2007) examines how dancers negotiate boundaries that assist in protecting dancers' self-identity and manage the stigma attached to their working identity. Barton (2007) found that dancers constructed counterfeit intimacy (as described in the performativity section above) that serves as a protective mechanism for their self-identity. However Barton (2007) found that the boundary between counterfeit and authentic intimacy blurs. Barton (2007) suggests that this boundary becomes increasingly blurred when the dancer has performed for a longer amount of time. This suggestion has been supported by Egan (2006) who reported in her study as a dancer researcher that the more dances a customer would buy consecutively, the more she could allow herself to indulge in 'a different kind of eroticism - mine' (Egan, 2006: 30).

However, the notion of counterfeit intimacy as distinct from authentic intimacy has been criticised by Price (2000) who suggests that counterfeit intimacy assumes there is a 'real' intimacy that exists and can be identified. I would suggest however, as an interpretative researcher, that the key distinction between the two types of intimacy is whether the dancer herself perceives that there is a distinction to be made between the two and moreover, whether the dancer experiences both forms as she conducts her work.

Nonetheless, both Barton (2007) and Egan (2006) provide insightful contributions to the literature regarding the construction of boundaries within lap dancing. Their research could be built upon by examining how boundary construction and negotiation is affected during the socio-material process of ageing in the industry (see Chapter Two, above).

Similarly to this boundary between counterfeit and real intimacy, Barton (2007) also highlights a boundary between a dancer's persona and their 'authentic' self. The persona helps dancers to become increasingly skilled at performing their work (see performativity section above) but also forms a key boundary which must be negotiated between how much of their authentic self a dancer reveals to customers, or allows to come through, and their working persona. However, further research is required in this area to examine how fluid this boundary is and how it may change throughout the working life course of dancers, their ageing process, and during their day to day working life.

Underpinning the themes that previous literature has tended to focus on such as those evaluated above, risk, constructed sexuality and boundaries for example, are the expectations surrounding the role of a lap dancer. For instance the expectation of how a lap dancer will be is associated with risk because they are negotiating the perceptions others will have of them such as customers or their family and friends. Similarly, lap dancers construct sexuality to meet the

expectations of the role they perform and this also may have implications for the boundaries they must negotiate throughout their working life. In Pettinger's (2013) analysis of 'Punternet', a discussion forum documenting encounters of commercial sex, customer expectations are outlined. Pettinger (2013) suggests that customers of women working as prostitutes expect or feel entitled to a good service. Customers feel they have received a good service when the women are professional, committed to pleasing them and appearing to enjoy their work. However, there is a lack of research into how expectations within the grey area of the lap dancing industry are formed, experienced, and negotiated, by dancers as they perform the role of a lap dancer.

Lap dancing, sexuality and ageing

Although there is an underlying understanding within the lap dancing literature that youth is valued in the commodification of sexuality, there is a notable lack of research that addresses the topic of ageing specifically. Despite this, the following section of this chapter will examine the few pieces of current literature that have addressed ageing in the lap dancing industry to varying degrees in order to evaluate how the intersection between ageing and sexuality can be researched further.

One of the only studies that has directly addressed ageing in the lap dancing industry was conducted by Carol Ronai in 1992. Ronai's (1992) study consists of an examination of ageing as 'managed utility' for lap dancers working in Southwest America. Like many other studies, Ronai's (1992) research reinforces the notion that youth is a valued resource within the lap dancing industry as 'ageing for the dancer means she is no longer persuasive sexually' (Ronai, 1992: 309).

However, in contrast to the suggestion that youth is an intrinsic element of the commodification of sexuality in the lap dancing industry and therefore careers within it will be short lived, Ronai (1992) maintains that the nature of the industry means that there is no such thing as a clear retirement from it. Instead, Ronai suggests that 'at no point can it be confidently said the dancer has quit, or retired...'retirement' is more a matter of what roles evolve from her situation than a matter of leaving, departure, or final exit' (Ronai, 1992: 310).

The key reason Ronai (1992) puts forward for why dancers don't, or struggle to, permanently leave the lap dancing industry is because of the benefits the work has. For example, the high earning potential for those with 'limited skills' (Ronai, 1992: 312), flexible hours and no responsibilities attached to the work. In addition to this, the stigma attached to workers in the industry facilitates an insider and outsider culture which 'drives them closer together in defence of outsiders negative conceptions' (Ronai, 1992: 312).

Consequently, Ronai (1992) suggests that as dancers age they manage their utility whereby they adapt the way in which they conduct their work in the industry by carving out a niche for themselves. Examples of strategies dancers used to carve out a niche in Ronai's (1992) study were to seek out other roles within the industry such as waitressing, management or security staff. Alternatively, Ronai (1992) found that some dancers would sell fewer dances as they got older, instead making their money from drinking with customers and selling 'sit downs' where they are paid to sit and talk to customers. Dancers who carved their niche out in this way developed their social skills in order to 'cultivate regular customers' (Ronai, 1992: 313).

Ronai's (1992) findings also suggest that older dancers become more inclined toward prostitution. As Ronai puts it, 'she may make up for declining visual sex appeal with wholesale sexual activity' (1992: 313).

Finally, Ronai (1992) acknowledges the role of the club itself in the way in which dancers carve out a niche for themselves. Ronai (1992) indicates that the varying statuses of clubs and their prestige impact upon where a dancer will work as she gets older. For instance, some clubs will be known for having dancers with a lot of cosmetic surgery, or for being particularly attractive or particularly sleazy. Therefore, older dancers can use this variation in club reputation to switch clubs as they get older in order to find a location in which they are able to work and effectively continue to meet their required earnings.

Ronai's (1992) paper makes a valuable contribution to the literature surrounding ageing and lap dancing by demonstrating that the social construction of ageing is contextual and situated.

Consequently, within the sexualized domain of lap dancing, becoming older is not attached to the later stages of life, as much of the ageing literature focuses on, but is rather measured by the distance there is between a worker's age and the youthful ideals the industry is built upon.

Despite this, in relation to contemporary research, Ronai's (1992) study is now outdated in some respects. First, the notion that dancers have 'limited skills' (Ronai, 1992: 312) and therefore less employment options, has been contradicted in more recent research which has suggested that an increasing number of students and professionals use lap dancing to supplement their income or pay their way through education (e.g. Hanna, 2013; Roberts et al, 2013). Therefore, it would be of further interest to examine the ageing process of dancers, less as workers who feel their employment options are limited outside of the industry and more as workers who do have other options but nonetheless choose to lap dance. A second reason that Ronai's (1992) study may be outdated, at least in terms of the British lap dancing industry, is the assumption it holds that it is the earning potential which keeps dancers working in the industry. More recently, Sanders and Hardy (2012) have explored the way in which British strip

clubs survive economic turbulence by decreasing the earning potential for dancers, by taking an increased share of their earnings. Despite this, the lap dancing industry remains popular. This is illustrated by the high numbers of women working in the industry (Sanders & Hardy, 2012).

Further to this, while Ronai's (1992) study explores how dancers carve out new roles for themselves as they grow older to cope with the ageing process, the embodied experience of growing older in an industry where there is pressure to maintain a youthful sexuality remains unexplored.

An alternative way of conceptualizing ageing in the lap dancing industry is through the process of becoming more established within the organization as opposed to considering only the process of becoming chronologically older. Although ageing was not the focus of her research, Colosi (2008) touched upon this experience in terms of dancers becoming increasingly skilled at their work.

Colosi (2008) conducted an ethnographic research project on a UK lap dancing club and explored the performance of the dancers in some depth. The findings suggest that throughout the career progression of a lap dancer, a series of transitions are made from 'new girl' status through the transitional phase and into 'old school' status. Colosi (2008) found that this progression was simultaneously matched with the dancer's development of their performance skills and on achieving 'old school' status the dancers had perfected their performances. In this respect, dancers age within the club regardless of their chronological age but instead in terms of when they move from being considered a new girl to an old school dancer by those within the organizational setting. This form of ageing is highly related to dancers becoming skilled in their work and becoming immersed in the lap dancing culture (Colosi, 2008). While this study has contributed to developing this typology of dancers throughout their career progression,

how this progression is experienced as a sociomaterial, embodied process is yet to be explored fully.

A further aspect of previous research which may relate to how ageing is experienced within the lap dancing industry has been highlighted in Mavin and Grandy's (2013) study of UK lap dancers. Mavin and Grandy (2013) make a distinction between dancers for whom the work is temporary and those for whom it is a career. This distinction between 'temps' and 'lifers' (Mavin & Grandy, 2013: 245) raises the question of if and how temps and lifers experience the ageing process in different ways (both chronological and ageing within the organization), and how they negotiate these processes in their everyday working life and throughout their working life course.

Conclusion

The first chapter of this thesis demonstrated the ubiquitous nature of heteronormative sexuality within the contemporary social world. It then critically evaluated how sexuality is negotiated and utilised within interactive service organizations by both workers themselves and through organizational ideologies surrounding aesthetic labour and sexuality. Overall, it was demonstrated that within the embodied process of performing aesthetic and sexualized labour, workers themselves become commodified within the transaction. Further to this, by examining aspects of sexuality that are deemed to be desirable by organizations, it became clear that, within heteronormative sexuality, youth is very much valued, idealized and normalized.

Undertaking this review of the commodification of sexuality raises questions of how workers manage and negotiate their sexuality within sexualized occupations and specifically raises the question of how these ideals surrounding sexuality emerge within occupations such as the lap dancing industry.

Developing the notion of youth being an intrinsic element of the ideologies surrounding sexuality within a heteronormative culture, Chapter Two explored ageing as a fundamentally gendered socio-material process. The chapter concluded that within contemporary society, ageing is socially and organizationally constructed as a process that can, and should, be transcended and managed and that this reinforces the prioritization and idealization of youth both in, and through, organizations and the wider social world. This chapter raised the question of how workers in an explicitly sexualized industry like lap dancing manage and negotiate the pressures to remain youthful as their body is laid bare for scrutiny by consumers.

Chapter Three brought together the key concepts of Chapters One and Two by reviewing the current literature concerned with lap dancing as a sexualized industry in which the valuation of youth is magnified by the nature of the work. As dancers' appearance and bodies are used to perform an image of their sexuality as part of the transaction process, both sexuality and the ageing process have been shown to be key factors within this sales transaction and particularly in the negotiation of bodily boundaries within the industry. Despite this, as this chapter has shown, questions remain surrounding the intersection between sexuality and ageing within the lap dancing industry. In addition to this, throughout Chapter Three the position of lap dancing as a stigmatized occupation due to its perceived closeness to prostitution has been emphasised. In spite of this social perception of the work, there is a lack of research into how the boundaries between lap dancing and prostitution are negotiated, particularly as an embodied experience in the commodification of sexuality, and throughout the ageing process of a dancer.

My research aims to address these gaps in the current literature by examining the lived, embodied experiences of lap dancers as they negotiate various boundaries within an industry that is a legitimate form of work but nonetheless is stigmatized through a widely perceived

association with prostitution. The research aims to examine the negotiation of these boundaries within the commodification of sexuality and throughout the ageing process of dancers. In this respect the research will contribute to the small amount of literature which focuses on the ageing process as an embodied experience which occurs throughout the life course and does not assume that ageing research is only relevant if it focuses on the later chronological stages of life.

In order to achieve these research objectives, my methodological aim will be to collect rich, indepth data focusing on the lived experiences and perceptions of lap dancers. The following chapter will outline the methodological emphasis, aims and framework for the study in more depth.

Summary of thesis so far

The following section summarises key areas of the current literature surrounding the lap dancing industry, and the sex industry more broadly, which relate to ethnographic research, working in the sex industry, and ageing in the sex industry with the aim to demonstrate what is currently known and emphasise the areas of this research field which still need further examination.

Previous ethnographic studies of the sex industry and lap dancing have consisted of researchers entering the industry in various ways. Some researchers have conducted studies while working as dancers themselves (e.g. Colosi, 2008; Lister, 2012; Ronai, 1992), others have participated in the industry as customers (e.g. Bindel, 2004; Trautner, 2005) or been employed within other roles such as a cocktail waitress within a lap dancing club (e.g. Price, 2008) and others have observed the industry through shadowing workers in their work, domestic and social lives (e.g.

Sanders, 2005). Despite this variation in how researchers adopt their role in the industry, once a role has been decided upon it remains relatively fixed. That is to say there is a lack of ethnographic work that has been conducted where more than one role is fully explored, for example that of both a dancer and a customer. Although a woman may not be able to adopt the role of the archetypal lap dancing club clientele, which in the heteronormative world of stripping tends to be a man, I suggest that adopting the role of a customer as well as a dancer, has the potential to provide a more nuanced understanding of the lap dancing industry.

The methods of data collection within ethnographic studies of the lap dancing industry have predominantly used a combination of participant observation (with the participation occurring in the various forms outlined above) and interviews (e.g. Colosi, 2008; Price, 2008; Ronai, 1992). Notably lacking within ethnographic studies of this nature are an engagement with websites associated with specific clubs, and with the lap dancing industry more generally.

Relating to this, is a lack of analysis focusing on how the industry is portrayed through websites and how this shapes the lived experiences of workers within the industry. By addressing this gap in the literature, a deeper understanding of first, how websites and promotional materials contribute to the semiotic landscape of the lap dancing industry and second, how this semiotic landscape shapes the expectations of exchanges within a lap dancing club. In examining the semiotic landscape of the industry will allow for further understanding of any tensions between the formal and informal contracts which shape the lived experiences of the dancers themselves.

Further to this, ethnographic studies of the lap dancing industry have tended to adopt one form of observation such as participant observation, either as a dancer or as a customer (e.g. Ronai, 1992), or non-participant observation (e.g. Sanders, 2005). Therefore, an ethnography that

combines different forms of observation may be able to achieve a richer understanding of the industry altogether.

The way in which lap dancers construct and perform gender has been studied, most notably in the UK, by Mavin and Grandy (2013) who suggest physical appearance to be a key element of selling lap dances. They found that dancers increase their earnings by becoming skilled in portraying a heightened form of femininity. They provide an account of dancers' concern with the physical attributes they associate with an occupational image of feminine sexuality. While Mavin and Grandy (2013) successfully identify techniques dancers adopt to maintain a heightened performance of femininity, there remains scope for further examination of bodywork as an embodied process and in particular throughout the ageing process of dancers.

In relation to boundary construction and negotiation within the lap dancing industry, previous research has indicated that dancers' boundaries tend to become fluid and subsequently may be compromised throughout the working life course (e.g. Barton, 2007; Wesely, 2003). Various types of boundary have been addressed within the literature and include physical boundaries (Wesely, 2003), boundaries between authentic and counterfeit intimacy (Barton, 2007), and finally, between a dancers' authentic self and a constructed persona (Barton, 2007) and these have been discussed in more depth in Chapter Three. However, it was argued that questions remain about how fluid boundaries are and how they may change throughout the working life course of dancers, their ageing process and during their day to day working life.

Previous research that has addressed age and ageing within the lap dancing industry has been limited despite the underlying understanding that youth is valued within the commodification of sexuality generally, and particularly so in the lap dancing industry specifically (Mavin & Grandy, 2013; Ronai, 1992).

One of the few studies that has examined ageing in the strip industry specifically was conducted in the US by Carol Ronai in 1992. Ronai's findings reinforce the notion that youth is a valued resource within the lap dancing industry and conceptualises the ageing process as managed utility for dancers. In other words, 'dancers manipulate the definitions assigned to them regarding age-appropriateness for their occupation' (Ronai, 1992: 308) by 'shifting their resources' (Ronai, 1992: 310).

Therefore, although youth is valued within the industry, instead of careers being short lived, Ronai (1992) suggests that dancers manage their ageing process in such a way that they can maintain career longevity within the industry, even if it means adopting a slightly different role. Ronai found that dancers would carve out a niche for themselves using a variety of strategies such as taking on a new role or focusing on selling 'sit-downs'.

Ronai's study provides valuable insight into ageing within a sexualized industry which prioritises youth and it could be further developed first, by examining whether Ronai's findings are similar in the contemporary lap dancing industry, second, whether the findings within the US strip scene have similarities with the UK lap dancing industry, and third, how key shifts in the social construction of ageing within the contemporary social world have impacted upon the way in which age and ageing is experienced by those working in the lap dancing industry, where their body, as it inevitably ages, is literally put on display for both scrutiny and consumption.

Colosi (2008) provides an alternative way of conceptualising ageing in the lap dancing industry by suggesting that a series of transitions are made from 'new girl' status through a transitional phase and into 'old school' status. This progression was found to simultaneously match with the development of dancers' performance skills, and on achieving 'old school' status the dancers had the capacity to exhibit skilful performances. In this respect, the ageing process of dancers is

less related to chronological ageing and more associated with experience and skill acquisition within the organizational setting.

Therefore, within the previous research of ageing in the lap dancing industry there is a distinction between chronological ageing and ageing within the organizational context or, as I will phrase it, organizational ageing. However, key differences between these processes of ageing have yet to be examined directly and there is little understanding of the inter-related relationship they may have. I suggest that further research will contribute to the development of a typology of the different ways people age within heteronormative, sexualized, organizational settings.

To summarise, in terms of ethnographic research into the lap dancing industry, there remains a gap in the literature for a study within which the researcher adopts various roles within the industry, for instance both dancer and customer. Related to this is the gap for more research which utilises different methodological observation techniques such as participant observation and non-participant observation which varies from the usual method of adopting one or the other data collection technique. There also remains a lack of research incorporating an analysis of the socio-material and cultural context of the lap dancing industry, and how this is experienced by those working in it.

In terms of developing the literature on working in the sex industry generally, there is a lack of research focusing on the embodied experiences of workers, particularly as they age. Taking lap dancing specifically as an industry situated within the sex industry, there is a gap in the literature for an exploratory study into the lived, embodied experiences of boundary construction and negotiation in relation to, and throughout, the ageing process.

Associated with the literature on ageing in the lap dancing industry, there is scope to develop a typology of how age and ageing is experienced by examining the dialogue between chronological and organizational ageing within a sexualized industry. In particular, studying how this is experienced by dancers and perceived by both customers and other workers in the industry in relation to the semiotic landscaping of industry expectations will mean an insight can be gained into how the ageing process is negotiated by dancers within this specific sexualized context.

Overall, this study aims to address these gaps in the literature by conducting an ethnographic study that incorporates a range of different methodological perspectives to examine the embodiment of boundary negotiation and ageing, particularly in relation to boundaries between dancing and prostitution, during the commodification of sexuality in the lap dancing industry.

Chapter Four

Researching Women Working in the Lap Dancing Industry

Introduction

Following on from the previous chapters that have reviewed the existing literature on (respectively) sexuality; ageing and gender, and the sex industry, focusing on the lap dancing industry in particular, this chapter will focus on the methodological approach that was utilized during the data collection and analysis process. The chapter will begin by reiterating the key research aims and objectives of the study and will then provide an account of what was done in order to achieve these research goals. Following this, the chapter will explain how data was collected and analyzed and why it was done in this way. The chapter will then critically evaluate the retrospective auto-ethnographic element of the research, and examine key topics related to this, such as reflexivity in embodied research and ethical considerations. Finally, the chapter will provide a critical evaluation of the strengths and limitations of the data collection and analysis process.

Research questions

As the previous chapters have highlighted, research has been conducted on both sexuality and ageing in the lap dancing industry. However, it remains somewhat limited in many respects and furthermore, no attempts have been made to develop an understanding of sexuality and ageing as inter-related elements in the performance of the role of a lap dancer.

Previous literature has focused on the performance of gender in the industry, particularly in regard to the physical bodywork which goes into performances of femininity (Mavin & Grandy, 2013) as well as techniques that are utilized by dancers to simultaneously perform gender and

enhance sales such as 'strategic flirting' (Deshotels & Forsyth, 2006), both of which have been discussed in Chapter Three. What remains lacking in this literature are accounts of the embodied processes of performing gender and sexuality, particularly in relation to the ageing process in an industry which valorizes, commodifies and hyper-normalizes youth to the extent that for workers in the industry, there is no other way to be.

Boundaries have also featured in previous literature and it has been suggested that lap dancers experience and negotiate physical boundaries, which Wesely (2003) maintains often become compromised. Barton (2007) identifies subjective boundaries that are negotiated by dancers in the workplace and highlights in particular a boundary between counterfeit and authentic intimacy, as well as a boundary between the dancer's working persona and their authentic self. What remains lacking in the study of boundary construction and negotiation in the lap dancing industry is an understanding of how the semiotic landscaping, as well as the social and material context of the industry, impacts upon formal and informal contracts within the one to one interaction of dancer and customer and consequently, the tensions between the expectations and the performance of the transaction.

As outlined in Chapter Three, ageing in the lap dancing industry is relatively under-researched, with the notable exception of Ronai (1992), despite a wide understanding that lap dancing is associated with an ideology of youthful images of sexuality (Mavin & Grandy, 2013). Therefore, a gap remains in the literature for a more developed understanding of how the ageing process relates to the lived experiences of dancers as they negotiate their way through an industry with specific expectations of images of sexuality that are associated with youthfulness. Furthermore, there has yet to be an examination of how the social positioning of the industry through, for

example, websites, advertising and media shape, and are shaped by, the ageing process of lap dancers.

Methodologically, with the notable exception of Bradley-Engen's (2009) ethnographic study in which she adopted the role of both dancer-researcher and customer-researcher, ethnographic research into the lap dancing industry has tended to consist of researchers exploring one role i.e. dancer or customer rather than conducting research which explores a combination of roles which could potentially result in a more in-depth understanding of the industry as a context for a highly defined and gendered exchange which could enhance knowledge of the social construction of sexuality and ageing more broadly. Moreover, there remains a lack of research in which dancer-researchers have taken a retrospective stance. A retrospective stance can be interesting and insightful because someone who has experienced the lap dancing industry as a fully integrated dancer at every stage of their career including entry into the industry, throughout their career and leaving the industry means they have had full experience as an insider. This contradicts with a dancer-researcher position where they are in continual negotiation with insider and outsider roles.

Drawing from these gaps in the current literature, the key aims of the study were to conduct a piece of research which utilised different methodological observation techniques such as participant observation and non-participant observation which varies from the usual method of adopting one or the other data collection technique.

In terms of developing the literature on working in the sex industry generally, there is a lack of research focusing on the embodied experiences of workers, particularly as they age. Taking the lap dancing specifically as an industry situated within the sex industry, there is a gap in the

literature for an exploratory study into the lived, embodied experiences of boundary construction and negotiation in relation to, and throughout, the ageing process.

Overall, the methodological priority for the study was to gain rich, in-depth data to address the research questions: How do performances of youthful sexuality come to be valued within the lap dancing industry? How and why do boundaries come to be blurred and ambiguous within this sexualized industry? How are sexuality, ageing and boundaries experienced by dancers working in the industry? Because my perspective is that our experiences don't happen in a vacuum but are socially constructed and contextual, I felt it was necessary to incorporate website analysis, observational techniques and interviews in order to gain an understanding of the social and material space in which the lap dancing industry is situated and how the role is embodied and negotiated by dancers themselves. The conceptual framework for this methodology will be outlined in the following section of the chapter.

Methodology

Ethnography has its roots in anthropological research in which traditionally, researchers would live alongside the group of people they were studying, sometimes for many years at a time (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Ethnography has become increasingly popular within the social sciences as both disillusionment with quantitative methods has grown (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995) and attention to the interpretation of culture as a means of shaping, and being shaped by, lived experiences has developed. Ethnography in the social sciences today is characterised by spending an extended period of time immersed in the field of interest conducting a range of data collection methods. Wilson and Chaddha (2009: 549) summarise the purpose of ethnography as a method which aims to examine 'behaviour that takes place within specific

social situations, including behaviour that is shaped and constrained by these situations, and people's understanding and interpretation of their experiences'.

Bearing in mind the aims of an ethnographic study, and drawing from Gagliardi's (1990) notion of organizational landscaping, it was important to enrich the data collected, and our understanding of lived experiences, by incorporating the landscape and material setting in which lap dancers perform and embody their role. As Gagliardi (1990) suggests, the landscaping of corporate artefacts highlights the importance of understanding the processes through which material organizational artefacts, such as bodies, shape the values and beliefs surrounding an industry, as Gagliardi (1990: 26) puts it, 'artifacts evince and reflect social and cultural dynamics...if there is a dominant vision, this will be faithfully reflected by the artifacts'.

Therefore, an understanding of organizational landscaping and the criteria through which sexuality and ageing is encoded into this particular industry becomes crucial in enabling us to understand more about how the context conditions and compels the role of a lap dancer. With this in mind, my research seeks to develop an understanding of how sexuality, ageing, and the exchange relationship, is landscaped (Gagliardi, 1990) in the lap dancing industry. More recently, Strangleman (2016) has advocated the use of visual methods in studying lived experiences of the landscaping of organizational life in his study of the former Guinness brewery in London, Park Royal. For Strangleman, landscaping is a particularly important concept in understanding the ways in which workplace and setting, and employee lived experience are mutually influential.

Given that the methodological priority for the study was to capture and portray the lived experiences of, and narratives constructed by, lap dancers in relation to boundaries and ageing in their industry, conducting an ethnography was deemed to be the most suitable

methodological framework to achieve these goals as 'ethnography entails immersion in a social setting and fairly prolonged involvement' (Bryman & Bell, 2011: 437). In addition as it is a multi-method approach it allowed for holistic analysis to occur during the data collection and analysis phase (Zickar & Carter, 2010) because they formed part of an integrated and interactive process which was continually reviewed by both myself, participants and my supervisors.

Website analysis

The first element that made up the triangulated methodology was the textual analysis of the online presence of lap dancing clubs. The websites of the clubs in which the dancers who participated in the study worked were selected for semiotic analysis. The purpose of incorporating website analysis into the triangulated structure of the methodology was to examine the way in which websites, through their advertising material, contribute to the semiotic landscaping of the ideological and normalized images of sexuality and age in the lap dancing industry. Related to this, a further purpose was to conduct an exploratory study of how website and media material construct and shape the expectations of the dancer- customer interaction through the textual and visual language they present, and that which they leave absent and the images which are used in their advertising and recruitment material. Through examining the websites the aim was to compliment the lived experiences of the dancers provided through interviews and participant observation in order to achieve an in-depth understanding of the context in which dancers then negotiate the expectations of sexuality, age and interactions in their everyday working life and throughout their working life course.

As Alvesson and Willmott (2002) suggest, identity and consequently, life experiences derive from interactions with 'cultural raw material' (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002: 626) including language, symbols, and the sets of meanings these may represent. Therefore, the focus of this

element of the ethnography was to study the language and symbols present on the websites to gain an understanding of the sets of meanings these constructed for dancers in the lap dancing industry. In order to analyse the language used on the websites, discourse analysis was employed as the perspective was taken that 'Language, put together as discourses, arranges and naturalizes the social world in a specific way and thus informs social practices' (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000: 1127-1128). Specifically, the critical discourse analysis tradition was applied as it takes into account how 'language is produced, disseminated and consumed' (Bryman & Bell, 2011: 537) and forms a context sensitive approach by being concerned with how language relates to the socio-historical context in which it is used. It was decided that critical discourse analysis would be the most appropriate form of analysis as it emphasises the role of language in the reinforcement of ideologies within the social world (Bryman & Bell, 2011) which, as explained above, was a key methodological purpose of the study. Furthermore, this approach would allow for insight to be gained into how social inequalities may be reproduced through language and discourse (Fairclough, 1992) which relates specifically to the valorisation and hyper-normalisation of youth, which was to be explored in more depth in this research.

Participant observation

The second element of the triangulated methodology was participant observation which served to supplement many aspects of the interviews, and specifically, the embodied nature of the working experience and it is this aspect of the research which will be focused on next.

Participant observation forms an intrinsic part of ethnographic study, to the extent that now the terms are used somewhat interchangeably (Bryman & Bell, 2011) and it is generally understood that in order to be immersed in a research field, participant observation occurs

almost organically during the process of integration into a particular organization or group of people.

Within the sex industry, participant observation has been used to collect data in a number of studies (e.g. Colosi, 2008; Ronai, 1992; Sanders, 2004) and by researchers becoming members of the industry in different ways, for example as customers or as dancers, which has been outlined at the beginning of the chapter. I felt that participant observation was an appropriate method of data collection for this study as, particularly within the sex industry where there is often an element of secrecy and discretion involved in the workers lives, for example, one interviewee explained that the work meant 'we had to keep secrets in our lives from certain people, so unless you were a dancer you didn't necessarily understand' (Analisa), to gain a deep understanding of dancers' perspectives it was necessary to become a member of the world in which they work. As I already had experience of membership status as a dancer, I decided to conduct the fieldwork from the customer perspective so I could understand the industry from another position. By doing this my aim was to gain deeper understanding by exploring different perspectives within the industry.

As Colosi (2008) highlighted in her study of lap dancing in the UK, it was important to ensure participant observation occurred at various times throughout the working week so that an accurate impression of the working environment could be developed. Specifically, it was important to vary the days of the week I would spend time in the club as well as the time of night I arrived at the clubs. Ordinarily, weeknights Monday through to Wednesday were considered quiet nights while Thursday through to Saturday tended to be busier. The start of shifts were usually relatively quiet on most nights and got busier as the night went on,

therefore, using this template I was able to get a balance between observing busier periods and slower parts of the shifts.

In agreement with Sanders (2006), I felt that it was important to spend time with dancers both at work and in their private lives in order to gain an extra level of understanding of the dancers' experiences. My position as an ex-dancer benefited me greatly in this respect because I was able to socialise with dancers I already knew as well as spend time with dancers in their home as I was already an insider. Consequently I was able to build up a more comprehensive understanding of a dancer's working self and everyday self.

As noted previously, gaining data that reflects embodied aspects of work is notoriously difficult for researchers and may form some of the reason why embodied research remains relatively scarce (Bain, 1995). Despite this, it has been suggested by Hockey and Allen-Collinson (2009) that participant observation, particularly in an auto-ethnographic methodological context can be a successful way to gather embodied sensory data and for this reason participant observation was utilised in this study as a key method for accessing the lived, embodied experiences of dancers. In particular, it allowed me to observe dancers while they experienced the embodied processes which they discussed during interviews such as the different rhythms of the shift, how they interacted with, and felt about their body as the changes and shifts occurred.

Semi-structured interviews

The third phase of data collection was the interviews. The priority for the interviews was to allow workers within a marginalised occupation the freedom to speak openly about their experiences in as much depth as possible. Taking this into consideration, elements of participatory action research (PAR) (O'Neill, 2008), narrative research methods, visual methods

and sensory phenomenology were incorporated into the interview process and will be explained and evaluated next.

In order to achieve in depth data demonstrating the lived experiences of lap dancers in their own words, certain elements of Maggie O'Neill's (2008) participatory action research methodology were employed. The key premise of this approach is to gain insight into an area by 'valuing the knowledge and experience of community members' (pp. 86) in this case, lap dancers. Applying PAR methodology can give voice to marginalised workers by allowing them to express their experiences, theorise about them and reflect on them as part of the research process. This ensures that the data collected is influenced by the researcher to a minimal degree. It is these aspects of PAR methodology which were adopted for my study for two main reasons. First, the approach is designed specifically for developing knowledge of marginalised workers, as lap dancers arguably are. Second, the key purpose of the approach is to give voice to participants which is congruent with my research aims to portray the experiences and perceptions of lap dancers in their own words. This not only met the methodological aim but also the ethico-political aim of the study to enable lap dancers to speak candidly about their experiences with full consenting knowledge that they were participating. This was of particular importance first, as it was a priority to conduct ethically sound research and second, because much of the previous research conducted in the UK has been covert in nature (e.g. Bindel, 2004) and thus, ethically questionable.

Narrative research methods were also drawn from. These methods allowed dancers to tell their story and most importantly, their interpretation of their experiences as the use of narratives as data enable researchers to examine the 'emotional and symbolic lives within organizations' (Rhodes & Brown, 2005: 169) and can gain insight into culture formation and maintenance as

well as providing rich data because an individual's narrative contains the 'subject-specific morals and beliefs of the people telling them' (Rhodes & Brown, 2005: 172).

In this case, semi-structured interviews were used as the platform for participants to tell their stories and articulate their narrative. It was important to incorporate in-depth interviews into the methodology as first, it is a method which has been a successful tool in previous research (e.g. Deshotels & Forsyth, 2006; Sanders, 2005) into the lap dancing industry to gain insight into dancers working lives. Second, combining interviews and participant observation into an ethnographic study enables insight to be gained into both the public and private lives of those working in the sex industry, and as Sanders (2006: 456) advocates, it is a 'successful recipe for data collection'.

This was the chosen structure for interviews because it allowed a balance between participants' freedom to express themselves and the researcher's ability to remain focused on the theoretical conceptions of the research topic (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Therefore, this method formed an essential tool for teasing out how the interpretation of an experience can go on to influence the perception of boundaries and the experience of ageing within a sexualized industry. In order to promote an informal interview style to encourage dancers to express their own feelings and stories surrounding their work, prompts such as 'That's really interesting, thank you. Let's just chat for a bit' were used. This worked as a device to allow the dancers freedom to bring up any thoughts or topics they felt were relevant and also allowed for the dancers to have a period of reflection on the interview. For example, it prompted one dancer to describe the difficulties of being asked about her work, 'Yeah I think when you ask dancers about their job, it never sounds like a fun job because you talk about the bad bits quite a lot and I think, I dunno, it IS a fun job, you know, but sometimes it's hard to get that across.'

This quote demonstrates that the interviews were set up as a reflexive space for dancers. It was important that the interview formed a mutually reflexive context for both dancer and researcher for two key reasons. First, so the interview had a more informal, conversation style in order to encourage dancers to speak freely and bring up topics of their own accord. Second, so that dancers could reflect upon how they felt about their work and the interview experience respectively, as shown in the quote above.

This reflexive space was achieved by emphasising prior to the interview that it was an informal discussion about their experiences and specifically there were no right or wrong answers so whatever they chose to talk about was interesting and useful. In addition I felt that my position as an ex-dancer aided in the construction of a reflexive environment as dancers indicated that they felt they could open up more to me knowing I was, to some extent, an insider. This was also facilitated by shared memories that were discussed during interviews, I felt that these served as ongoing reminders that the interview was informal and helped the women to be relaxed and honest. For example:

I: Do you remember you and me used to wear that bunny girl outfit and get loads of doubles together?

A: I was thinking about that outfit the other day. It was a one size outfit wasn't it from Ann Summers and the knickers used to keep going baggy. I thought I can't bend over 'cause it's gone baggy!!

I: I had to sew mine up!

A: Yeah that was one of my favourite outfits though because if you had a tan it looked really nice...

In order to enrich the data further, visual methods were also incorporated into the interview process. As O'Neill et al (2002) suggest, the use of visual stimuli in interpretative research can 'transgress the traditional boundaries of representation' and 'inspire praxis through a politics of feeling' (pp. 74) resulting in an enhanced portrayal of the lived experiences of, in particular, marginalised groups. Moreover, Warren (2008) maintains that through the use of visual stimuli in organisational studies 'the feel of an organization's culture' can be studied and this aesthetic data can 'shed light on many aspects of organizational life' (pp. 560) that might otherwise remain occluded. Visual methods can be used in many ways, however in this case Walker and Weidel's (1985) notion that visual methods can be used to enhance other methods such as interviews was utilised. Walker and Weidel (1985) suggest visual stimuli can have a 'can opener' effect to facilitate conversations being triggered, leading to a more sophisticated understanding of the participants' experiences. Within this study, this was achieved by asking participants to bring an item with them to the interview which represented how they feel about their work. This served as the visual stimuli and enhanced the interview process by facilitating lines of questioning. For example, one participant brought a garter as her visual stimuli and allowed me to ask 'can you tell me why you chose to bring the garter as the item that represents an aspect of your work?' which then led to an insightful line of conversation about her working experiences which she had given some thought to prior to the interview commencing.

In order to promote dancer's reflection on their own embodied experiences, Hockey and AllenCollinson's (2009) work on accessing the phenomenology of the working body was drawn from. As Hockey and Allen-Collinson (2009: 219) suggest, 'empirical research examining embodiment via the intertwining of the social and the sensory is relatively scant' and therefore,

this study aimed to contribute to the relatively sparse literature which focuses on the embodied sensory experience of the working body.

In order to collect data that would provide an understanding of the lived embodied experiences of dancers, a phenomenological approach was adopted and some elements of Hockey and Allen-Collinson's (2009) typology of the sensory dimension of workplace embodiment were used to promote 'attentiveness to the things of immediate experience' (Van den Berg, 1972: 77, cited in Hockey & Allen-Collinson, 2009). First, the notion of movement, rhythm and timing was of interest. While movement, rhythm and timing seemed an obvious area of interest for those with dancing as an occupation and I felt that although it was important to gain an understanding of the embodied sensory experience of dancing in the strip club context, I did not want that to detract from the aspects of movement, rhythm and timing that were not directly associated with dance, for instance the ebbs and flows of the shift, and of their career more broadly, and the timing and movement around the work space associated with the level of skill for selling dances that they developed within their working role.

A further element of Hockey and Allen-Collinson's (2009) typology which was drawn on was the notion of listening and hearing in relation to the embodied sensory experience. This element of sensory, embodied experience related to the lap dancing industry in various ways, each of which I aimed to explore during both interviews and participant observation. As Hockey and Allen-Collinson suggest, accounts of the experience of listening to our own working body are somewhat lacking in empirical research and therefore, this was a focus of my own empirical work. In the lap dancing context, and inkeeping with the broader research purposes, I aimed to gain insight into how dancers experience, listen to, and interpret their working bodies as they age in a sexualised industry. In addition I sought to understand if and how they used their body

to control or disguise their emotional state while they performed their work. Finally, the process of listening to the customer's desires and then to their own body in order to enact those desires through the embodied performance formed a further area of interest. In practice, accessing the embodied sensory experience of others has been found to be problematic (Bain, 1995), however within the interview process of this study I sought to achieve an understanding of the embodied nature of lap dancing by focusing on gaining thick sensory description (Taylor & Hansen, 2005). In order to do so in the interview context I encouraged indepth description of the sensory experiences by probing for further explanation of more fleeting comments dancers made about their embodied sensory experiences, for instance asking questions such as 'how did you know you were feeling anxious?' led to dancers speaking in increased depth about their interactions and relationship with their own working body. Further to this I also encouraged dancers to reflect on how their body felt and how they felt about their body at the beginning and end of shifts, as well as at the beginning of their career and later on in their careers. I found that in particular this allowed some insight to be gained into the embodied experience of rhythm and timing in the lap dancing industry.

So far, the epistemological and methodological underpinnings of the study have been described and discussed. The following section will outline the data collection methods and data analysis procedures which were employed during the study.

Research design, methods and data analysis

The study adopted an interpretative epistemological position due to the highly subjective research aims and strove to incorporate a rich understanding of the dancers' lived experiences, as described above. The methodology combined a variety of methods to increase the depth of data. These methods and data analysis techniques are outlined and explained below.

The research took the form of a retrospective auto-ethnography due to my own experience working as a lap dancer prior to beginning the research project. At the time, the study was undertaken, I no longer had any role within the industry, although my experiences without doubt contributed to the research process, a topic which will be covered in more detail later in this chapter.

Data was collected during a twelve-month ethnographic study of lap dancers and lap dancing clubs in the South-East of England during 2014 and 2015. A triangulated methodology was employed which incorporated the analysis of lap dancing club websites, participant-observation and in-depth semi-structured interviews with lap dancers. The data collection and analysis processes occurred concurrently as an inter-related and not linear procedure. Therefore, this section will focus on both data collection and analysis.

Websites of the lap dancing clubs which were observed during the course of the ethnography, and those in which dancers who were interviewed worked, were selected for semiotic analysis. The analysis process consisted of identifying broad themes which emerged from the text, images and artefacts on individual websites through reading both 'with' the text and sceptically, in order to draw out underlying sets of meanings and discourses present on the websites (Strangleman, 2016). This was followed by cross-website comparisons of the themes in order to identify those which occurred consistently from club to club. A further stage of analysis was to focus on what was not being said on the websites in relation to images of sexuality and ageing as, 'what is said is always a way of *not* saying something else' (Bryman & Bell, 2011: 528).

Participant observation was conducted on nine occasions in six different clubs (see Appendix One for details) in which I took on the role of a customer and interacted with dancers and other

club staff from this perspective as a complete participant (Gold, 1958). This involved entering the club as any other customer would, spending time in the club and being approached by dancers, watching stage shows and interacting with dancers without them knowing that I was a researcher. I decided to covertly observe as a customer to preserve the environment in the respect that dancers wouldn't modify their behaviour because they thought they were being researched. Data was collected in the form of outline field notes taken during observation and full field notes made immediately after periods of observation.

The study consisted of eleven semi-structured interviews with lap dancers who either currently work in, or have previously worked in the industry (see Appendix Two for dancer demographics). Interviews lasted between one and two hours and the majority took place in a neutral location and were informal in style in order to encourage the dancers to speak freely and express their thoughts openly, although to supplement the interviews, some shorter ones were conducted within the club setting as a result of spontaneous opportunity arising. The majority of the questioning consisted of probing around topics brought up by the dancers, prompts such as 'why do you think that is?' and 'what makes you say that?' were used to gain clarity and depth of understanding. The age of dancers ranged from 21 to 34 and they had a combined experience of 16 years working in the industry. Pseudonyms are used throughout for both the dancers and venues.

The use of a visual prompt was also incorporated into the interviews as dancers were asked to bring an item with them to the interview which in some way represented the work they do. This prompt acted as a tool to focus the discussion of the work by providing a talking point from which other topics could be raised. In particular, this was a useful method to enable dancers to talk about areas of the work that I, as the researcher, may not have asked about, ultimately

leading to the dancers developing their own narrative of working life as opposed to a more stilted question and answer interview.

My previous experience in the lap dancing industry meant that I had already established contacts who were both currently dancing or ex-dancers, something I will reflect on and evaluate later in the chapter. In order to access my sample I utilised these contacts and subsequently used snowball sampling to access further dancers who would be happy to be interviewed.

Data analysis of the interviews were conducted using the technique of data immersion (Bryman & Bell, 2011), achieved by reading and re-reading interview transcripts. This allowed the content of the interviews to be categorized initially at an individual level. This was followed by a coding process in order to tease out the key themes which were present across all interviews.

So far the research objectives have been emphasised, the methodological priorities, and a description of the research methods which were employed has been given. The following section will evaluate the retrospective auto-ethnographic nature of the research, how reflexivity was maintained throughout the research process, and the ethical considerations associated with the process.

Retrospective auto-ethnography, reflexivity and ethical considerations

While my ethnography included participant observation from a customer's perspective, I have referred to it as a retrospective auto-ethnography due to my previous experience dancing in the industry. Therefore, while I am researching from the customer-observer stance, I simultaneously experienced that position through the lens of an ex-dancer and consequently within my fieldnotes this was reflected upon. For example when I began to get frustrated with a dancer during my first period of observation:

I found myself getting frustrated with the dancer because she had failed to notice the customer who was trying to get her attention for a dance. This has reminded me how careful I need to be when researching because I automatically critiqued the dancer for how she did her job and I slipped into this role easily.

A key aspect of conducting a retrospective auto-ethnography is researching within a familiar scene. As Bryman and Bell (2011) highlight, when collecting data in a context with which you are familiar a high degree of self-awareness is necessary in order to observe the scene in such a way that even the mundane everyday activities become meaningful. Therefore, it was crucial that my research was conducted carefully and reflexively. The following section will evaluate how a reflexive piece of research was achieved.

Given that the methodological framework of this study consisted of a retrospective auto-ethnographical structure, it was imperative that the research was undertaken reflexively. Reflexivity concerns the researcher utilising both themselves and their participants' contribution as part of the construction of knowledge (Lister, 2012). It has been argued that taking a reflexive position in research can enhance methodology (Churchill & Sanders, 2007) through an understanding of the type of knowledge the study is producing. Therefore, being reflexive in my research was a priority.

At this point it is necessary to address the key distinctions between reflexivity and reflection which have often been used synonymously but, in agreement with Riach (2009), it is suggested here that an acknowledgment of both can provide a more layered understanding, and execution of, reflexive and reflective practices in research. Specifically, drawing from Alvesson and Sköldbberg's (2009) distinction between reflective and reflexive empirical research, with the former referring to Giddens' notion of the 'interpretation of interpretation' (Alvesson &

Sköldbberg, 2009: 9) and the latter being concerned with the 'linguistic, social, political and theoretical elements [that] are woven together in the process of knowledge development' (p. 9), the priority within this study was to incorporate both reflective and reflexive considerations throughout the data collection and analysis process. Riach (2009) makes a further distinction between these concepts using Weick's (2002) notion of real-time reflexivity and Giddens' (1999) consideration of temporal reflexivity. Riach (2009) uses these concepts to highlight a distinction between reflexivity as both 'in time' during periods of data collection and following data collection, while reflection is always retrospectively considering the interaction.

Therefore, reflexivity is considered here to be bound up within epistemological concerns as it incorporates linguistic, social, political and theoretical aspects of how we perceive our position, and knowledge of, the world. In contrast, reflection is a retrospective consideration of actions within the social world. Consequently, reflection can be seen as 'an important component of reflexivity' (Riach, 2009: 359) but it is necessary to acknowledge that reflexivity is also much more than that in relation to the wider social world.

Particularly for qualitative, and in this case, interpretative research, in order for the study to be reliable it must be undertaken with a reflective and reflexive attitude (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2009). To ensure the research was suitably reflexive and reflective in nature the following steps were taken throughout the research process.

Reflexivity was purposefully woven into the data collection and analysis process by incorporating various levels of interpretation which were ingrained into the way in which the empirical data was perceived, understood and therefore, constructed. Following this, the analysis of data became reflexive by examining the dynamics between each level of interpretation, thus ensuring that no level was considered with priority over another (Alvesson

& Sköldberg, 2009). The first level of interpretation was the initial interaction with the raw data such as interviews and fieldnotes. Second, was the initial interpretation where underlying meanings were evaluated. Third, a critical interpretation was incorporated by considering the social, ideological and power related consequences of the finding. Finally, a reflection of my own selection of which pieces of raw data to use was undertaken. By taking this reflexive approach to data analysis, and conducting data collection and analysis concurrently, I was able to consider the inter-related nature interpretations and perceptions of both an individual nature and within the wider socio-political context. Further, I was able to monitor throughout the data collection and analysis process whether one level of interpretation was tending to be prioritised over another and reflect on why that may be the case and rectify it where necessary. In addition, to achieve a reflexive piece of research I received input from participants' by clarifying any aspects of their story that required a deeper understanding, providing participants with early copies of my work and receiving feedback from them so that I could portray their experiences as accurately as possible. This method has been successful in previous research in the field (e.g. Wesely, 2003) and enhanced my research twofold. First, it contributed to the research being ethically sound by allowing participants to review what was being written about them, a right that Gillham (2005) argues all participants should have. Second, it increased the validity of the study by allowing participants to become active in the social construction of knowledge (O'Neill, 1998). One consequence of monitoring the validity and accuracy of the study is that it provides a more reliable source for the relevant groups and associations the findings may be presented to.

Further to this, I felt that my position as a researcher who has worked in the industry I am studying, had a significant impact on the data collection process. I certainly felt I could relate to

what dancers were saying and consequently found some of their experiences highly emotive. This raised the research concern of how much of my own experiences and reality would I be imposing onto theirs? Gaining an awareness of this meant that I took more care to clarify points with dancers I was interviewing and encourage them to put their experiences into their own words rather than saying things like 'you know how it is'. In contrast, a benefit of this scenario is that both my own experiences and that of the dancers I interviewed are taken from the industry of interest so both arguably hold relevance. Furthermore, this situation served to encourage a safe environment for dancers to express their experiences and lowered their sense of suspicion toward the outside interest of a researcher, a problem which has been encountered within other studies into the industry (e.g. Colosi, 2008).

In terms of ethical considerations, the sex industry has been identified as a 'problematic area of inquiry' (Sanders, 2006: 451) and it is the ethical concerns of this study, which will be discussed and evaluated next.

In order to protect the identity of the dancers who participated in the study pseudonyms were used throughout for both dancers and clubs. In addition to this, interviews took place in a neutral setting away from the club itself to ensure that dancers could speak freely without outside pressures from the club's management staff to portray the club in a particular way. This decision is discussed in more depth below, but was used following Mavin and Grandy's (2013) study where they felt aware of the presence of management staff while conducting interviews within a club setting. From an ethical stance, it assisted in protecting the identity of dancers who took part in interviews from the club staff because it allowed the dancers a choice of whether or not they told the club that they even took part in a study at all and therefore, their

place in the club would not be jeopardised by talking about their experiences in an interview scenario.

Maintaining anonymity is important in all empirical research (Bryman & Bell, 2011) but especially so when researching the field of the sex industry where workers tend to be marginalised by society. The industry is notoriously private and in some cases workers hide their occupation from family and friends, therefore, protecting their identity within ethnographic studies is imperative for maintaining their personal lifestyle choices. I felt that my own position as an ex-dancer, who worked hard to protect my lap dancer identity from many aspects of the 'outside world', assisted me in this respect because I was able to relate to the importance of maintaining anonymity by being able to put myself in their position and question whether I would have been satisfied that my identity would be protected enough to partake in such a study.

One ethical concern I encountered while planning and conducting my fieldwork was entering the clubs as a customer covertly and what the consequences of this would be. I didn't conduct all my participant observation covertly but I came to the decision that in some cases it would be appropriate despite the widespread belief that participant consent is vital when conducting ethically sound research (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Further to this, I have been critical of previous studies, which have, in my opinion, used covert methods of data collection unethically (e.g. Bindel, 2004). Therefore, the decision to use some elements of covert data collection was reached for the following reasons: First, I felt that my position as an ex-dancer gave me an awareness that what is said within the stripclub environment can be considered part of the performance of the lap dancer's working role, which can be likened to a persona, and therefore any data collected under these circumstances must be considered as what they are, part of an

act, a performance of the lap dancer role. In this respect then, I felt that covert observation of dancers in their working environment would allow me to experience their performance as a dancer while maintaining an understanding that what is said during this time is by no means representative of the dancers thoughts or feelings that they may express during, for example, an interview and thus should not be treated as such.

Further to this, I felt that covert participant observation would be a valuable method of collecting embodied data through the observation of the different paces of work experienced by dancers. In addition it would allow me to reflexively experience the environment through my own sensory embodied experience. In order to do this it was necessary to disrupt the stripclub environment as little as possible to ensure that I was perceiving it as it would usually be. As Gans (1962) suggests overtly observing this environment runs the risk of adjusting the natural setting so much that any data collected would not be of sufficient quality. In line with this, it is not unusual for a group of dancers or ex-dancers to visit stripclubs during an evening out so I felt that my actions were quite usual, it was merely how I was perceiving the environment that had to adjust.

Critical evaluation of limitations of the study

In the following section I will discuss the limitations of the methodology and the steps that were taken to minimise these limitations.

The first issue for consideration is the limited generalizability of in-depth studies (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). However, as the research aim for this study was to gain a deep insight into working life in the lap dancing industry, richness of the data gathered was prioritised and enhanced through the use of a smaller sample size and a number of methods, outlined above. Therefore, limited generalizability was indicative that the specific research objectives were

being achieved. Furthermore, as research into the UK lap dancing industry is in its infancy, this type of in-depth, exploratory research may form the foundation for future work which may be increasingly generalizable.

As the priority was richness of data, knowing when to conclude the data collection process had to be managed carefully (Bryman & Bell, 2011). As this was a doctoral research project, time constraints formed a large influence. However, if this had not been the case then a saturation point of the recurrence of familiar themes (Altheide, 1980) would have been worked towards.

A related issue to generalizability is the applied sampling method. As a snowball sample was employed, the probability of getting a homogenous sample increased (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Given the stigmatised nature of the industry, its notoriety of wariness toward outside interest (Lister, 2012) and no accessible sampling frame, snowball sampling techniques have dominated the previous literature and form the most feasible method of gaining access to participants (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Through use of this method I aimed to build trust with participants and develop and maintain my sampling network long term so for future research my sampling options will have evolved.

Another consideration to be made when researching a stigmatised group is the location at which the interviews take place. Mavin and Grandy (2013) highlighted this issue in their study of lap dancers using semi-structured interviews to collect data. The location they predominantly used for interviews were the clubs in which the dancers worked, inside the dressing rooms and therefore, within close proximity of both the management staff and their offices. Regardless of the industry being examined, Mavin and Grandy (2013) discussed how the locations they used were busy and highly susceptible to distractions. Consequently, this was problematic with regard to the quality of the interview conducted as trains of thought could

often be lost and it is always advised to conduct interviews in a location with as few distractions as possible in order to maintain a space in which both parties are able to talk freely (Lister, 2012). In the case of the lap dancing industry specifically, Mavin and Grandy (2013) noted their concern about the close proximity of management, feeling that this had the potential to inhibit the respondent's answers as there was constant awareness of the authority around them and possibly pressure to portray the club in a way that management would approve of. Taking Mavin and Grandy's (2013) concern into consideration, I ensured that each of the interviews I conducted was carried out in a neutral location away from the club setting. Locations used included pubs, cafés and, in one case the interviewee's home, each of which allowed the dancers to speak freely about their experiences without the outside pressure and distractions experienced by Mavin and Grandy (2013).

I felt that the interviewer/dancer rapport was enhanced due to the fact I had established a previous working or personal relationship with them. There was both a mutual trust and an understanding that they were in a non-judgmental environment. I found that this unique dynamic between interviewer and interviewee benefited the study in two further ways. First, when initially approaching the dancers to take part, they each responded positively and subsequently all attended their arranged interviews. Second, the dancers did not express any suspicion toward me or my motivation for conducting the study which has been problematic for other researchers investigating this industry (e.g. Colosi, 2008). In contrast, they all expressed their enjoyment about talking/reminiscing about their years in the industry.

However, while there were certainly benefits to the interviewer/interviewee dynamic, as a researcher I was aware that I needed to work hard to ensure the dancers were expressing themselves in their own words and not relying too heavily on a mutual understanding of the

industry. For example, I tried to keep expressions such as 'you know how it is' to a minimum and instead encourage them to describe the way they experienced the said event.

This chapter has explained and evaluated the research methods that were applied in this study and outlined the considerations and limitations that were made prior to, and during, the data collection and analysis, and what steps were taken to minimise these limitations. The following chapter will provide an account of the data collected from the study.

Chapter Five

Encoding lap dancing: Semiotic and discursive framing

Erving Goffman (1956) laid the foundation for the examination of how expectations shape social interactions and exchanges. Goffman's account of internalized rules suggests that the feelings of guilt, shame and embarrassment when going against situationally defined social norms shape and contain social behaviour, which ultimately renders us blind to conceiving of alternative scripts within specific interactions. Hochschild (1983) develops the work of Goffman by highlighting the emotional burden associated with maintaining the expectations of social interactions, particularly within interactive service work. Specifically, Hochschild (1983) draws attention to the importance of understanding how an industry is encoded in order to gain a more nuanced insight into how customer service interactions are experienced by service providers, and consumed by customers. As Hochschild (1983) argues, it is the marketing of industries that creates a set of expectations surrounding what customers are reasonably owed during a transaction, and these expectations are fundamentally based on how service workers are framed to consumers. Given the importance of encoding an industry to understanding how the expectations assigned to workers are constructed and framed, this chapter will encode the lap dancing industry by considering how the expectations of the interaction between lap dancers and their customers, and the expectations of how a lap dancer and a lap dancing customer *should* be, will be examined through an analysis of the online presence of lap dancing clubs. Ultimately this will apply Hochschild's (1983) thinking to a prominent gap in the literature surrounding the shadow industries and how worker and customer expectations are encoded. Using the analysis of the websites of lap dancing clubs in the South East of England, this chapter will map out the semiotic and discursive framing of the lap dancing industry that occurs

through the online presence of websites promoting their Sexual Entertainment Venue. The chapter will have two key purposes. First, to identify how the nature of the exchange between lap dancers and their customers is constructed through the presentation of the industry, and crucially, the transaction itself on the club websites. Second, to understand how websites play a fundamental role in constructing the image of an ideal worker for the lap dancing industry. The chapter will be divided into three broad sections, first the dominant aesthetic signifiers that emerged from the data analysis will be outlined. Second, the discursive themes that contribute to the framing of the lap dancing industry will be explained and evaluated. Finally, the processes through which customer and dancer subjectivities are constructed online will be examined.

The analysis process consisted of identifying broad themes which emerged from the text used on individual websites through reading both 'with' the text and sceptically, in order to draw out underlying sets of meanings and discourses present on the websites. As well as analysing the text used within the websites, images were analysed separately but applying the same technique of teasing out themes that were present in the visual imagery. Semiotic analysis was used to decode signifiers and their associated meaning (Barthes, 1977). This was followed by cross-website comparisons of the themes in order to identify those which occurred consistently from club to club.

Aesthetic signifiers

Club Décor

The club décor that was portrayed on the websites displayed a large amount of consistency across venues and emerged as a meaningful element in setting the scene for the exchange

between dancer and customer. The dominant themes are teased out and examined below in order to establish how the setting is signified to customers and dancers in the following section.

Colour

Colour emerged as a dominant aesthetic signifier for club décor on the websites. Venues repeatedly used reds and blacks as the main colour scheme, occasionally complimented with golds and purples. The red and black tones gave a mysterious and passionate effect to the appearance of the clubs due, in part, to the traditional meaning associated with these colours. Red of course, has its meaning of danger, passion and love (Morton, 2016) assigned to it but is also a colour associated with wealth given that it was an expensive dye for fabric (Robinson, 1969). In this respect it signifies that lap dancing venues are a place of wealth, indulgence and excess. The use of the colour black signifies threat, secrecy and mystery (Edwards-Wright, 2011) which feeds into the notion of a lap dancing venue being an underground culture which should remain hidden and deviant. Gold and purple have both been associated with wealth and royalty (Morton, 2016) and can therefore be perceived to be representative of the indulgent, frivolous nature of the lap dancing industry. It also sets the scene for customer expectations such that they may be treated like royalty while in the venue. The opposite of this may also be perceived, however, so that the expectation may be that the dancers are of a 'royal' standard, and the best that money can buy. Illustrating this juggling of power roles is the colour black which is associated with power (Edwards-Wright, 2011) and symbolic of the fragile power negotiations which take place in such venues.

Patterns and textures

Along with colours, the patterns and textures that featured in the clubs' décor and were displayed on the websites, seemed meaningful and relevant. The décor portrayed on the

websites tended to contain black and red baroque style patterns giving a boutique-boudoir image. The baroque style décor added to the symbolism of the venues as theatrical and glamorous but also located in the margins of society (Shteir, 2004) and therefore, a somewhat hidden industry (see Image One & Two).

Image One: Dancer portrayed on Elegance club website



Image Two: Interior of Champagne club as shown on website

Also incorporated into the club décor portrayed on the websites was the animal print pattern. Usually taking the form of leopard print, the use of these prints and patterns emphasised the notion of raw, animalistic instinct that can be associated with sexualized interactions. Ultimately, the use of animal print patterns in lap dancing club décor can be considered symbolic of an establishment where the exchange between dancer and customer may be reminiscent of the innate animalistic drive which tends to be repressed and considered unacceptable social etiquette in other arenas of the social sphere.

Turning to the textures found on the images of club décor, notable textures that featured included velvet and leather. The use of leather on the one hand can be thought to signify an association with the animalistic nature of the work such as dealing with animalistic, hedonistic urges and a quest for pleasure. On the other hand, as a wipe clean surface it serves to represent the 'messy' business of sexualized interactions and signifies the nature of the industry in that the exchange is made up of a brief but intense interaction and once it is over there will be no sign that it even occurred in the first place.

Juxtapositioned with the leather textures is the use of burgundy velvet drapes and curtains to enhance a sensual appearance. Drapes and curtains were widely used by clubs and signified affluence, mystery and created a boudoir effect. The stark contrast between décor which enhanced a boudoir effect and the more sterile appearing wipe clean surfaces of leather and even the industrial and sterile appearance of the pole itself, is significant in the encoding of the lap dancing industry more broadly. I suggest that the boudoir effect signifies the way in which customers will be attended to and made to feel special by the dancers while the more sterile furnishings signify the way in which the industry works according to money and suggests that

customers will feel special while they are spending their money but when they stop spending dancers will move on to the next customer.

Aesthetic signifiers

Bodies

The bodies depicted on the websites showed an extremely narrow range of body types, ethnic backgrounds and representations of gender, sexuality and age. These aspects of the depiction of bodies on lap dancing websites will be examined next for two key purposes. First, to examine how the materiality of the body is signified through the use of images online and second, how the images actively construct what it means to be a lap dancer and consequently construct the boundaries between those who can conduct the work of a lap dancer and those who are not accepted in the industry. In this respect, the following section will explore how websites construct what Merleau-Ponty (2002) called body schemas. For Merleau-Ponty, a body schema is a system of social possibilities that compel and constrain our bodies within our social world and perceptual field, providing the rules for our bodies in our (situated) world.

Body shape

All bodies depicted across the websites were relatively slim, youthful and toned but curvy. Very little variation was present, there were no plus-size dancers advertised and certainly no images of plus-size dancers, apart from on one website where a dancer was described as more 'voluptuous' than others but the image provided of this particular dancer portrayed a slightly curvier dancer than the others on the website and showed no real variation from the dominant body shape.

Outfits, stylization and presentation

The materiality of the body was signified through the outfits presented in the images and will be examined next.

The outfits portrayed in the images were interesting because in the main, they attempted to demonstrate variety and I would suggest that this was to highlight how their club could cater for everyone's preferences. However, I suggest that this variety is illusory because it occurs within such a bounded image of possibilities for the materiality of the body and sexuality. An initial analysis of the outfits showed that a variety of colours were present, for example, black, red, white, gold, pinks and animal prints. Additionally, stylization of outfits appeared varied. As I commented in my notes,

Dress is quite varied on this website, perhaps because the club itself has different themes for different nights of the week so some images are of dancers in themed outfits such as Christmas outfits, naughty secretary and angels whereas other outfits seem more in line with their elegant style evenings, and consist more of lingerie. Other outfits are very plain, for example one is a very plain orange bikini.

This variation of outfits between the themed and the lingerie based styles was relatively consistent across websites and sent the message to customers that whatever you like a woman to do, we can provide entertainment to suit you. However, this is contained by the notion that any so called sexual preference you may have should be based on dressing up which seems to me to be a very narrow, and mainstream, depiction of sexual preferences.

The stylization of the individual images were varied from sultry suggestive poses on the pole and draped over furniture in the club to more fun images with dancers smiling or pouring drinks and one with a dancer holding a lolly and surrounded by sweets. Other images portrayed the

dancers' bodies in powerful stances. For example one dancer is standing facing away from the camera and turning round to pose while the picture has been taken from a lower stance to elongate the dancer's legs and making her appear quite strong in stature (see Image Three). Other images showed off the pole skills of the dancers, for example, on the pole in upside down split stances. These images portrayed the dancers in a powerful way through the demonstration of their athleticism but also portrayed the sexual and perhaps vulnerability of the body through the open legged stance. This simultaneously exhibits the materiality of the body as powerful but also ready for male consumption.



Image Three: Dancer portrayed on Elegance club website

Although the websites tended to use images of the body stylized in similar ways, one website took a notably different approach to the depiction of the materiality of the body. On this particular website, the bodies had flawless appearance to the point they looked like, or perhaps were, computer generated images. The images all had an icy blue hue over them and clothes

were silvery tones, depicting a cold, frosty effect. Interestingly, the images were all cut off so no faces were visible, culminating in a dehumanising effect (see Image Four). This particular way of portraying womens' bodies, it is suggested here, has implications for the ageing process within the lap dancing industry because portraying bodies in this computerised, unrealistic way, sends a clear message that ageing is unacceptable for our dancers and equates bodies with computer generated images in which time can stand still, be reversed and manipulated. This raises the question of whether lap dancers experience this attitude toward ageing in their working life and what this means for them.



Image Four: Dancer as portrayed on Spirit club website

Less related to the ageing process, and in contrast to the dehumanising technique of using over-airbrushed, computerised images to portray women's bodies, other websites took an alternative approach which, it is argued here also has the ultimate effect of dehumanisation. The website uses images of the dancers to introduce them to customers and each image includes a small caption about the dancer's personality. This is interesting because, in contrast

to other websites at first glance it may appear it is not dehumanising the dancers. Instead of dehumanising them by making them appear to be computer generated images of flawless 'perfection', they rather give them each a caption about their individual personality to lure customers to the club therefore making the dancers appear more 'real' to potential customers. Alongside the image of the dancer the caption allows for customers to really imagine what it would be like to meet the dancers and the website tries to cater for a variety of customers. For instance, one dancer is looking for her 'real-life Ken', consequently appealing to customers who are after a boyfriend experience. Another is the role player who can be anything from sweet and innocent to a dominatrix. This technique really tries to cater to everyone's tastes but within an extremely bounded context, i.e. no real variation in body shape, ethnicity, age etc. However, I suggest that this process simultaneously dehumanises the dancers by creating cartoon like personalities and an internet shopping experience for anyone browsing the website. This experience is enhanced by some websites which include the vital statistics of the dancers along with the caption about their personality and/or interests very much creating an 'off the shelf' package description of the dancers. Overall, presenting dancers' in this way through the websites, I argue, makes the dancers incomplete and leaves the viewer of the website to complete the image of the dancers' themselves.

Sound

On some websites music and videos were used to promote clubs. Simultaneously, these worked as aesthetic signifiers for both potential customers and potential dancers. One website used music as a welcome to the site. Before entering the site a video plays showing images of female nudity with the words 'I love you, the first and only lap dancing gentleman's club in [location of club], exotic dancing up close and very very personal' two words at a time to musical

accompaniment made up of a rhythmic sexual pounding dance beat simulating sex combined with sexualised female moans and groans. The use of music here, I would suggest, indicates to website users that by going to this particular club customers will meet and interact with dancers who will get sexual pleasure from providing sexual pleasure to customers. Therefore, this website contextualises the lap dancing industry as a heteronormative setting where men must go to allow these women to achieve this sexual pleasure that they are so desperately waiting for. In particular, the words 'I love you' spoken by a female voice at the start of the track suggest that the industry is a place where a man can go to feel sexually appreciated by women and crucially, not by a service provider who goes through the motions to make a man feel special but will herself get equal, if not more, sexual pleasure from the experience of the transaction. Not only does this send a powerful message to potential customers, it plays a key role in letting potential dancers know what is expected from them as a standard part of their job. It clearly implies that if you are not going to, or willing to, portray that level of sexuality in your performance, most likely through strenuous sexualized emotional labour then this industry will not be suited to you.

Taking together the dehumanization of dancers discussed above, which I suggested leaves dancers incomplete and allows the viewer of the website to complete their own image of each dancer, and the sexualized soundtracks of websites, the sound encourages the viewer of the website to complete their image of dancers in a specific way. In other words, a soundtrack of simulated sex encourages the customer or viewer of the website to imagine that dancers will want to, and may, have sex with them.

Discursive themes

Language

So far this chapter has analysed how aesthetic signifiers, such as the club décor and the materiality of the body, play an intrinsic role in the construction of the lap dancing industry and specifically, the way in which the industry is experienced and perceived by both dancers and customers who visit club websites. However, throughout the analysis process it became clear that it was not only aesthetic signifiers that contributed to shaping and constructing lap dancing in such a way that particular sexualities and identities, for example, heterosexuality and youth, were not only considered acceptable but acknowledged as the only possible way of 'being' within the industry, reflecting Butler's notion of heteronormativity and the heterosexual matrix (discussed in Chapter One). Rather, the analysis showed that the language utilised on the websites was also used to actively construct a very specific, and narrow, reality of the expected identity of both customers and dancers. For example the language was used to frame the customer as a heterosexual male. In addition to this, the language contributed to framing the exchange relationship between customers and dancer as highly ambiguous and therefore actively constructing the role of the dancer in such a way that the work intrinsically requires ongoing management of boundaries during the transaction. In the following section of the chapter, the specific ways in which the language used on the websites to contribute the active construction of the lap dancing industry will be explored in detail.

Language used to describe the implied exchange relationship

A theme running through the websites was how language was used in relation to the exchange relationship that could be expected between dancers and customers. The language tended to be used in such a way that any precise rules or details of the exchange were omitted. Instead ambiguity was a consistent feature of the language which suggested the particularities of the exchange were variable and up for negotiation depending on the particular service a customer

bought or how much money they were willing to pay. Specific examples of how the language was used in relation to the exchange relationship will be examined next.

Websites used ambiguity and the mystery of the encounter to sell the club, and interactions with dancers. For example, the experience was described on one website as 'closer and more personal, up close and personal, very very personal'. This type of language surrounding the exchange immediately constructs the lap dancing industry as one in which customers should expect to be able to test and push the boundaries of the interaction as no clear boundaries are set prior to them entering a club. This raises the question of how this impacts upon the experiences of the dancers and how they manage and negotiate this construction of customer expectations.

Along with promises of intimacy in terms of physical proximity, ambiguity was enhanced further by the use of language to emphasise the commitment of the dancers to please their customers. For example, one website used the phrase 'we will cater to all your needs' which suggested there was no limit to the lengths that will be gone to, to please their customers. Consequently, the use of language in this way provides customers with a set of expectations of the service that they can expect to receive before they enter the club and due to the nature of the industry, the responsibility would fall to the dancers to then manage the customer's expectations of the service provided by the dancers, the management's expectations of dancers to adhere to club regulation but also give enough to customers to keep them spending money and finally, the dancers own sense of autonomy throughout the interaction.

Notably, and further reinforcing the ambiguity of the exchange, was the tendency for most websites to write less about the dancing and more about the intimacy of the exchange, for example being 'up close and personal'. In contrast to this, some websites did highlight and

focus more on the talent of the dancers. For example, Stars website said 'All of our beautiful dancers are highly trained in the art of sensual striptease and pole dancing'. At face value this served to remind website users that the product to be consumed was the performance of a dance rather than merely using suggestive but ambiguous language and leaving the rest up to the imagination of the reader. However even in these cases ambiguous language would follow. For example, the website which focused more than any other on dancing, talked about the dancers being talented although it does refer to them being sexy and naughty, flexible and can give you a night to remember.

The language on many of the websites that were analysed acknowledged the stigmatized and marginalized nature of the lap dancing industry by attempting to separate themselves from other clubs. For example, Stars claimed that they were raising 'the standard for premium entertainment'. Ultimately, the language was used in such a way that implied we are aware that some lap dancing clubs have a particular standard of entertainment and exchange relations but many claimed that they were of a superior standard than the majority of other clubs. Again, the language used was ambiguous as it is unclear whether the premium standard of entertainment refers to the level of training dancers receive or the level of commitment dancers have to pleasing customers, as just two examples.

All the websites that were analysed promoted some form of VIP experience available in their club. This took the form of either a VIP area, VIP dances or VIP experiences. For example, on The Den's website the VIP lounge was advertised for providing 'special treatment' and held the implication that a more exciting or intimate interaction would occur in this area.

Overall, the implication of VIP experiences across the websites was similar- that paying the extra for the VIP treatment meant that in some respect customers would get better treatment.

Once again this emphasises the ambiguity of the exchange and overall, this may be seen to mean that the specific interactions can be negotiated while inside the club, therefore this is a set of boundaries which may as suggested above ultimately fall upon the dancers to manage and negotiate themselves and become highly skilled in doing so as part of the job. This raises the question of how the use of VIP experiences influences the dancer's experience of managing the boundaries when customer expectations are raised further because they are paying more money and therefore, expect a fundamentally 'better' experience.

Moreover, the dehumanisation of the dancers (discussed above) through the website presence also serves to construct the nature of the lap dancing industry and of the potential exchange between dancer and customer. This is because it positions dancers as products to be purchased, for example, Spirit's website is set up almost like a computer game, the images are quite heavily modified and there is a list of dancer's vital statistics with their ideal man (reflecting heteronormative assumptions) and favourite item of clothing. All images of women are faceless or silhouetted so dancers are de-individualised before customers go to the club.

Therefore, language used in this way, alongside dehumanising imagery of the dancers, implied to potential customers that by coming to the club they would experience a sense of empowerment which would manifest through the ability to pick and choose between women, an experience they may not be able to access in their everyday life outside of the club.

Overall, the language surrounding the exchange relationship is underpinned by deliberate ambiguity that, in turn, leaves the exchange relationship somewhat incomplete. By this I mean by excluding specific details of the exchange relationship such as the rules of the club (for instance no touching), the customer, or viewer of the website, is left to complete the exchange relationship by filling in the gaps and building up their own image of what the exchange

relationship may involve. Therefore, through the use of ambiguity regarding the exchange relationship, the individual (customer) can slot themselves into a somewhat imagined, and somewhat shaped through ambiguity, encounter that informs them of what they can expect if/when they enter the lap dancing club. The deliberate ambiguity surrounding the exchange relationship that is present on the club websites contrasts with the stringent guidelines set out on the licensing regulations. The licensing conditions of SEV's state that no touching should occur between dancers and customers and a distance of one metre should be maintained during the performance of a dance. Therefore, the website analysis highlights a tension between licensing regulations and a deliberate ambiguity that underpins the lap dancing industry and is particularly utilised as a tool for promoting the industry through websites. Given this tension, there may be scope for future regulations to incorporate licensing conditions that consider how the exchange relationship is portrayed online so that it demonstrates consistency with the licensing regulations of the club itself.

Recruitment

Recruitment sections were permanent features on the vast majority of websites and it is argued here that they play a crucial role in the constructing the way the lap dancing industry is perceived. The recruitment sections send out specific messages about the nature of the lap dancing industry and these will be examined next.

The permanency of the recruitment sections in itself sends a clear message about the industry and, I suggest, is indicative of the high turnover of girls. In addition, auditions were held regularly, in some cases twice a week, which also potentially signifies a high turnover of girls, and short career span, and a high level of rejection of girls who audition. It also implies that as they are continually looking for new dancers, the current dancers are always replaceable so

they must maintain their own image and appearance to a certain standard. The implication of this is that dancing is a short term career and this raises key questions concerning the lived experience of dancers in the industry. How do dancers themselves perceive the industry in terms of career span and turnover of workers, and what does this mean for the way in which dancers experience the lap dancing industry more broadly? This question will be returned to in Chapter Seven.

The recruitment sections also actively construct sexuality within the industry by shaping who has access to it, to the extent that anyone who falls outside of the constructed ideals become marginalised. The recruitment pages feature high quantities of images which depict the narrow image of sexuality as described in the previous section of the chapter. Applications to become a dancer tend to require a close up facial photograph and a full length body shot of the applicant in a bikini or underwear. Some websites 'helpfully' include example photographs which simultaneously tell the applicant what their body and appearance is expected to be. Thus, implying you need not apply unless your body looks 'like this'. Reinforcing the perceived ideology of the industry, and marginalising those who are not consistent with it, is the request on some websites for measurements such as bust, hips, waist and cup size. Consequently, this closes off those who do not fit with the physical ideology constructed through the website imagery, therefore applicants who present differently would potentially be put off at this stage.

The language used to describe the ideal applicant in the recruitment sections also constructs the expectations of the industry. The websites call out for 'energetic and enthusiastic' dancers, words which, drawing from a traditional ontology of ageing as decline (discussed in Chapter Two), implies physically fit and young applicants and therefore, the language reinforces the shaping of the aesthetic ideals within the industry.

The aesthetic and discursive encoding of the lap dancing experience and encounter

The following section of the chapter will examine how the subjectivities of both the customer and dancer are informed and constructed by the websites and the implications this has for the lap dancing experience.

Turning first to customer subjectivity, customers are assumed to be heterosexual males, as has been discussed in relation to images and language above. This manifests in the content of the websites both overtly and by more subtle means. The astoundingly high presence of sexualized images of women and lack of images of men overtly signifies an expectation of customers being heterosexual males. While images of women have the potential to appeal to anyone, the websites tend to be constructed in such a way that customers who vary from the heterosexual male expectation become marginalised. This process of marginalisation tended to occur in two key ways. The first way was by websites speaking exclusively to the heterosexual male market, this manifested by not mentioning women in any other context than as dancers in the club, therefore excluding women from any other role within the club context. The second way was by websites referring directly to female customers. Of the websites that spoke to potential female customers, without exception they all stated that women would be treated differently to male customers. The websites used the guise of portraying a welcoming atmosphere to talk about female customers, sometimes merely stating that 'women are welcome' and other times offering free entry to women. On first look at the websites which addressed the female customer, this seemed a welcoming and accommodating attitude for them to adopt. However, I argue that by highlighting women in this way, it is apparent that within the club context they will be hyper-visible because they do not meet the expectations of a regular lap dancing club patron. The message that is sent to women is that they are not expected to gain anything

sexually from the club, therefore they are allowed to enter for free. Further to this, providing free entry for women raises the question of how the role of female customers varies from the role of male customers. That is to say that by gaining free entry is the club saying you've got in free and now you have to expect to deal with attention from our male customers because they have come in to see women. In this respect, the question is do female customers take on a partial dancer role in the sense that they potentially have to manage male attention while they are in the club.

As well as the assumption that customers will be heterosexual males, a further assumption is made that the male customer will be motivated to visit a lap dancing venue by the physical appearance of the dancers and moreover, what the male customer deems to be attractive is a narrow representation of appearance and sexuality. This expectation of the customer's subjectivity is constructed within the websites through the use of imagery. Websites were consistent in their use of eye-catching imagery which formed a more dominant aspect of the websites in comparison to the written content.

As addressed previously in the chapter, the images of women on the websites portrayed a narrow representation of femininity and sexuality. It becomes clear through the use of this imagery that the male customer is expected to think of women who exhibit traits such as youth, are physically fit and relatively slim as the ideal image of femininity and their preferences are not expected to venture to anything outside of this constructed norm/ideology.

An interesting element of the lap dancing industry which is represented on the websites, and makes up an important part of the presumed customer subjectivity, is the assumption that women are considered to be essential in the pursuit of pleasure and relaxation for the male customer. The websites use carefully constructed language which reinforces the role women

can be expected to play in what is promised to be a sexually pleasurable transaction. For example, the websites claim to be able to provide an experience of 'luxury, class and pleasure' for their customers, provided by their 'friendly' dancers. These claims hold the implication that customers will want, and expect, dancers to 'cater for their every need' in their pursuit of an enjoyable evening.

This section has explored the subjectivity of potential customers of lap dancing clubs as it is actively constructed and reinforced in the website production. However, it is not only the customers subjectivity which shapes, and is shaped by the website design, the expectations of the lap dancers themselves are also actively constructed through the website and it is to this that I turn to now.

The imagery used on the websites, as discussed above, constructs the image of lap dancers as displaying a specific form of femininity and sexuality ie. young, Caucasian and physically fit and curvy, this occurs to the extent that there appears no other way for a dancer to be. For the subjectivity of the dancers or potential dancers, this constructs them as people who are willing and able to ensure that their own physicality is maintained in this style while they are working in the club. This includes both long term and short-term attributes. For example in the long term they are expected to keep themselves physically fit while shorter term attributes include wearing suitable make up and outfits while they are performing. The extensive use of imagery on the websites indicates the exact expectations of body shape and size, and the style of make-up that would be required of dancers, and potential dancers, before they audition for the job so they can conduct suitable bodywork and therefore are moulded into the idealistic image of a lap dancer in the eyes of the industry prior to embarking on the work itself.

In terms of personality traits and expectations, the subjectivity of the dancer is constructed on, and through, the websites and this is signified in particular through the repetition of keywords. For instance, many websites used repetition of the word friendly to emphasise the 'friendly' atmosphere of the club, and specifically with reference to their dancers, 'meet our friendly dancers'. This also occurred through the emphasis of how welcoming and accommodating each club promised to be toward their customers. This subtly influences dancer subjectivity because, although the words are directed toward the customer, they are in fact referring to the extensive sexualized emotional labour that is expected to be performed by the dancers but construct the dancers in such a way that expects them to be able to perform this labour in a highly skilled way. This raises the question of how aware dancers are of the extent to which they are performing a character and the extent to which they feel they are themselves while they work, and throughout their working life course as they age, and presumably develop their skills, in the industry, a topic that will be returned to in Chapter's Seven and Eight.

Conclusion

This chapter has used semiotic and textual analysis of lap dancing club websites to examine how the online presence contributes to the encoding and semiotic landscaping of the industry more broadly. The chapter has teased out semiotic signifiers, which emerged predominantly through the visual images situated on the websites, such as colours, textures, and body type, but also through the use of sound. In addition, discursive themes have been drawn out of the data and the way in which they construct and reinforce ideologies and expectations of the exchange relationship between dancers and customers has been examined. The chapter culminated with a summary of how the semiotic landscaping and discursive themes present on the websites actively constructs both customer and dancer subjectivity which in turn informs

the nature of the exchange relationship between them. This analysis provides an insight into the landscaping of the lap dancing industry by highlighting the heteronormativity and ambiguity that underpins it and consequently, this forms the foundation for further examination and understanding. By conducting website analysis an insight into how the lap dancing industry is framed has been gained. However, many further research questions have emerged. Key questions raised include broadly, how is this framing of the industry experienced by dancers themselves in their day to day working life and throughout their working life course, and more specifically, how do dancers manage the ideologies actively constructed through the industry with regard to physical appearance, body image, and their own subjectivity and how does this impact on the lived experience of ageing in an industry which normalises youth to the extent that ageing is considered unacceptable? A further question raised is how do the expectations of the customer/dancer exchange constructed on and through the websites impact upon the dancers experience of work and what do these expectations mean for dancers in their working life. Further to this, the website analysis highlighted how intrinsic the visual imagery of the club venues themselves are in framing the industry online. This raises the question of how the setting in which lap dancing takes place informs the experience of it for both dancers and customers and whether or not the socio-materiality of the clubs reinforces the subjectivities of those in the industry. In other words, how is the lap dancing industry embedded and situated in a particular space and socio-material context and crucially, how does the embedded nature of the industry construct, shape and influence the lived experiences of dancers? It is to the embedded nature of the lap dancing industry that I now turn in the following chapter, presenting findings from the second, observational phase of the study, focusing on the sociomateriality of lap dancing clubs.

Chapter Six

Embedding the lap dancing industry

This chapter will develop the findings of the website analysis that were evaluated in Chapter Five by providing an analysis of the participant observation phase of data collection. The chapter will first recap on the key themes that emerged from the analysis of lap dancing club websites and illustrated how the online presence of lap dancing clubs contribute to how the industry more broadly is landscaped, and a heteronormative, youthful sexual ideal is encoded into it. This will highlight the key questions that formed the focus of the participant observations, and lay the foundation for the chapter. I will then recap on the data collection process and how the analysis was undertaken. The chapter will then provide a detailed description of the findings, which will allow insight to be gained into the socio-materiality of lap dancing clubs and how this embeds the industry in a specific situated context that must be negotiated, experienced and embodied by those working within it. The chapter will finish with a summary of the key themes that emerged from the data analysis and how these findings provided a foundation for the final phase of data collection, the interviews.

From analysing lap dancing club websites aesthetic signifiers emerged predominantly through images and included signifiers such as club décor including colours, textures and fabrics; and body types portrayed, including body shape, stylization and age. It was argued in the previous chapter that aesthetic signifiers such as these played an important role in landscaping the industry and ultimately shaping the expectations and beliefs surrounding it both broadly and more specifically, for customers and workers within it. For example, images on the websites of women were found to reinforce an expectation that lap dancers will be relatively slim, toned

and young through the repetition of images of women who fitted into this particular specification.

In addition discursive themes were drawn out of the data including language choice, repetition of specific groups of words and ambiguous language. This highlighted the way in which websites construct and reinforce ideologies and expectations of the exchange relationship between dancers and customers. In particular, the ambiguous language used on websites to describe the exchange relationship was highlighted as forming a grey area in relation to expectations of the industry. Likewise, recruitment sections of the websites were found to both construct and shape ideological images of women who were suitable, or deemed to be, desirable to work in the industry.

Finally, the impact these aesthetic signifiers and discursive themes have on customer and dancer subjectivities was explained and evaluated. While the analysis of websites allowed good insight to be gained into the way in which the lap dancing industry is landscaped and encoded, in part, through its online presence, it also raised questions and issues to be further explored through the examination of the socio-materiality of the lap dancing club setting and it is this chapter which will address those questions.

Key questions raised included specifically, how is this framing of the industry experienced by dancers themselves in their day to day working life and throughout their working life course, and more specifically, how do dancers manage the ideologies actively constructed through the websites? A further question raised is how do the expectations of the customer/dancer exchange constructed on and through the websites impact upon the dancers experience of work and what do these expectations mean for dancers in their working life. Further to this, the website analysis highlighted how implicit the visual imagery of the club venues themselves are

in framing the industry online. This raises the question of how the setting in which lap dancing takes place informs the experience of it for both dancers and customers and whether or not the socio-materiality of the clubs reinforces the subjectivities of those in the industry. In other words, how is the lap dancing industry embedded and situated in a particular space and sociomaterial context and crucially, how does the embedded nature of the industry construct, shape and influence the lived experiences of dancers?

Participant observation was conducted in six lap dancing clubs in which I took on the role of a customer and interacted with dancers and other club staff from this perspective as a complete participant (Gold, 1958). Periods of observations lasted between three and six hours at a time and two of clubs were visited on more than one occasion. I varied the days and the times of night that I visited clubs in order to build up a fuller picture of how the atmosphere and pace of a club shifts in accordance with time of day and day of the week. For instance, observations during Saturday nights were considerably faster paced than observations conducted on a weeknight.

To recap from Chapter Four, so that my presence in the clubs did not disturb the natural environment and normal proceedings I made field notes covertly during periods of observations, making only brief notes whilst on the premises and writing up full notes immediately following periods of observation. Full field notes were taken using an observation schedule as a framework to focus the notes towards the research objective of achieving rich descriptive data surrounding the socio-materiality of the lap dancing club environment.

Data collected during observations was analysed via data immersion. I continued to read and re-read field notes to build up a detailed picture of the clubs I had visited and gradually I teased themes out from the data that formed my first order codes. Themes were identified as being of

particular interest because they formed repetition themes among different clubs, they were notable because they were different depending on the club or they stood out for not fitting with data from other venues. Therefore, first order codes were identified as being of particular interest or relevance and broadly divided between these three categories.

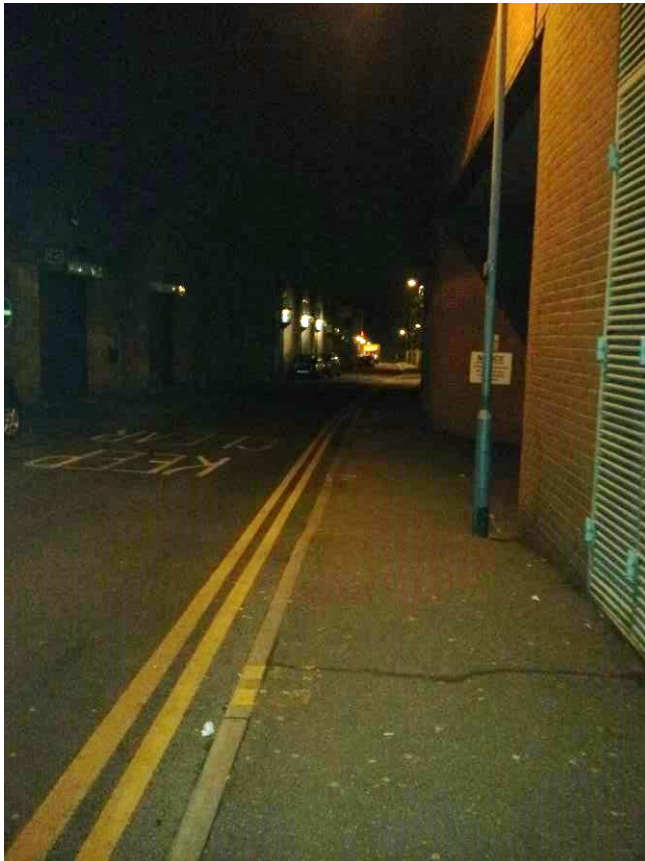
So far, this chapter has recapped on the key points raised in Chapter Five, as well as the questions it raised for further examination. The chapter will now turn to the findings of the participant observations, with the purpose to develop the findings of Chapter Five by focusing on the socio-materiality of the lap dancing context in order to gain insight into the industry's embedded social positioning.

Exterior: The setting

The typical geographical location for the lap dancing clubs visited was to be on the fringes of a town or city centre. While the club would be within relatively short walking distance from High Streets or main streets of the town or city, they were notably absent from these locations. Instead, clubs tended to be situated down side streets and among smaller independent businesses such as bars, take-away shops, restaurants, tattoo shops and small convenience stores. The inclination for clubs being found in side street or fringe locations on occasion made me feel aware that I had moved away from parts of a city where I felt safer, in one instance I even commented to my companion when we left the club and were walking up the road, 'this feels like the type of place you'd get mugged'. In this case I was referring to the feeling of isolation I felt from the stillness of my immediate proximity having left a noisy club and finding myself on a dark quiet street (see Image Five). This feeling was short lived however, as it was at the top of the road where we re-joined the hustle and bustle of a night time city. This

experience emphasised the isolation of the location but at the same time the definite closeness to mainstream nightlife.

Image Five: Photograph of quiet street location outside The Den



My interpretation of this tendency to find clubs in these fringe locations was that it was representative of the social taint associated with the industry and a social inclination to locate lap dancing, as well as the sex industry, in the margins of society, despite large growth in the number of clubs in the UK since the 1990's (Sanders & Hardy, 2012) which could be indicative of the industry becoming more mainstream, however geographical location of the clubs opening suggest that it remains, in this respect, marginalised. Related to this marginalization is that there is a possibility that some customers may want the clubs to have a discreet location so that they can come and go from the venue without being seen by friends or family and therefore, discreet geographical locations for clubs may be a benefit for their customers. This

would therefore represent a cycle of marginalization that both pushes lap dancing venues underground but also keeps them there because customers wouldn't necessarily want to be open about occupying a somewhat marginalized establishment.

My interpretation of club frontage is that this reinforces the discreetness of the industry. I felt this was the case because club entrances tended to be doorway width and the signage for the club would also be the width of a doorway and usually situated just above the door rather than along the width of the entire club venue. I am well aware that the presence of signage for lap dancing clubs, and finding clubs in amongst more mainstream business premises, would be interpreted by some as being very much indiscreet. However, my interpretation of this discreetness is using those other businesses as a comparison, and by comparison to the other venues on the same streets, the lap dancing clubs had far less, and more discreet, signage and club frontage would not use up the full width of the venue which contrasted to the more mainstream businesses.

Immediate interior

The immediate interior of the clubs I visited stood out as being varied from club to club.

Although I was consistently met by door security staff as my first point of contact and club entrances were not open for customers to come and go, rather you must be let in and out by staff, this is where the similarities across all clubs ends.

That being said, the fundamental process and purposes of interactions with the door staff in the immediate interior of clubs could be broadly divided into similar experiences within large clubs compared with smaller clubs.

For the larger clubs I visited, there was door staff standing by the door who I could see as I approached the club and who stood underneath a canopy entrance, usually with a red rope across the club entrance. To let customers in, they would unhook the rope, let them in, then replace the rope behind them, giving the entrance an air of VIP treatment in a gesture that seemed to symbolise that the customer was suitable to gain entry to this exclusive venue.

Within the larger clubs, which also tended to be chains rather than independent businesses, the primary objective of the door staff was to check the customers were suitable for the venue in terms of dress code and level of intoxication and to advise the customers of the rules of the club before they enter it. Standard rules included no touching dancers, no use of phones inside the club (to ensure no photography or filming of dancers) and no propositioning dancers and door staff tended to list the rules to customers before entering the premises. In the larger clubs, this was the extent of the interaction with door staff and customers were then pointed in the direction of a reception area where they would pay before entering the main club.

In contrast to the larger venues, the entrance to smaller clubs tended to be left closed, particularly on quieter weeknights, and would require customers to use a buzzer in some cases, or staff would open the door as and when they see customers approaching through their CCTV. Entrances to the smaller venues were in more discreet locations than the larger clubs, in my field notes I described the entrance to The Den, one of the most discreet clubs I visited:

When we arrived at the venue, from the street there were small signs to indicate the entrance was on the other side of the building and you had to walk through an archway that led into a quiet car park [...] The door to the club was a fire exit door painted black and kept shut so no one can enter the club without being let in. The door looked quite intimidating but being familiar with strip clubs I approached the door looking for a

bell/buzzer to press for entry, before I could find one the door was opened by a male member of staff who looked like they could have worked on the security team and another male member of staff who appeared to have more of a management role. The way that this happened made me realise that they had been watching us approaching through security cameras.

Entrances such as this one made me feel as though I was entering a much more taboo or underground industry, in comparison to the larger clubs where, although door staff let customers in and out, the door was open and customers would come and go, seemingly, more regularly. In the case described above, however, it had more of a rushed feel to it, and this was enhanced by the fact that it was a fire door, in the sense that it felt like we were rushed through the back door and I felt like we would enter a haven of debauchery.

Another contrast between the smaller independent clubs and the larger chain clubs was that within smaller clubs, the door staff would act as both security and receptionists, taking payment for entry where necessary and welcoming customers into the club. For this reason, smaller clubs tended to have a small desk just inside the door and larger clubs didn't have this because an allocated reception area was elsewhere inside the club. Within the smaller clubs I visited there was noticeably less emphasis on informing customers of rules before they entered the club and in one club, to my surprise, there was no interaction with door staff at all other than that they opened the door to the club.

Aesthetics of immediate interior

A common trend across all clubs was that the immediate interior of the club was brightly lit with white lighting. Often in the smaller clubs the décor of this area was relatively plain with variations of cream as the wall colour. That is to say that within the smaller clubs the décor of

the immediate interior did not correspond with the décor of the main club, it was not in keeping with any theme the interior of the main club had.

Larger clubs however, appeared to manage the immediate interior and reception areas more carefully and in these cases the décor would be in keeping with the themed décor of the club as a whole. An example of field notes from Champagne, a club that had a clear décor theme throughout:

What stood out in this area was the carpet which was black and red with a baroque pattern on it and actually ran through the entire club, and the photographic images which were spaced evenly on the wall. The images tended to be very close up of the body, emphasising flesh and would have items associated with mild BDSM such as handcuffs and whips next to or in front of the fleshy image. There was an alcove style doorway about the width of standard double doors through into the club. The alcove had curtains either side tied back which also gave the area inside a sense of secrecy and matched the décor running throughout the club.

Despite the different styles of layout and décor with the immediate interior of the clubs, they all left me with a sense of anticipation and excitement at the prospect of entering the main club. For me, this was down to two key reasons other than my own experience of the industry, which were lighting and sound. The bright lighting of the reception/payment areas contrasted with the darkness of the main club and made the main club an intriguing destination which I wanted to approach and explore further. Enhancing this effect was not only the sound of music blaring out into the main club, which gave a muffled experience of the music in the reception area and signalled to me the direction of the action of the main club, but also the sound of customers and dancers chatting, laughing and interacting. People coming and going between

the main club and reception area often meant that a door was swinging open and closed which, again, allowed the reception area to temporarily get a taste of the atmosphere further inside the club and drew my attention towards it.

Transitional spaces

The transitional spaces in clubs were often staircases, specifically, Puma, Peak, Champagne, Sovereign and Seduction all had staircases into the club, and I thought this was interesting for two reasons. First, because I felt it symbolised, and emphasised, the hidden, marginalised nature of the industry by making me, as a customer, feel like I was entering a space that was a bit more secretive than your average bar or nightclub. It reminded me that the industry is somewhat underground, and this was literally the case for clubs Puma and Peak. Second, the use of staircases as transitional spaces made the purpose of the space clear to customers and encouraged them to continue moving through the space. Staircases, by their very purpose indicated to the customer, and myself, that there was a destination they are supposed to reach at the end of the staircase and therefore became a transitional space and prevented customers loitering in this area.

In the cases of Peak, Champagne and Seduction the transitional space also contributed to a sense of entering another weird and wonderful world that, I think, really captures the essence of the lap dancing industry. This effect occurred through the décor and lighting of the space, in the cases of Champagne and Seduction this was achieved by making the transitional space in keeping with the décor throughout the entire club. In Champagne the staircase was carpeted in a bold black and red carpet with artwork hanging on the walls in frames that were used throughout the club. In addition, the stairs were lit with red tube lighting along the edge of every step, this added a subtle red glow to the area and enhanced the atmosphere. Similarly,

Seduction incorporated the American theme of the club into the transitional space by covering the walls with American flags, this meant that I was metaphorically hit in the face with the theme as soon as I entered the transitional space of the club. The anticipation of entering a world of lusting after the female form was enhanced when, to enter the main club, it was necessary to walk through two sets of doors between which there are large images of partially undressed dancers, somewhat wetting the appetite of customers and signalling that they are about to enter the main area of the club.

In contrast to Champagne and Seduction, Peak achieved the sensation of entering another world, or perhaps escaping the outside world, by making the transitional space noticeably different to the décor inside the main club. As I described in my field notes:

We walked through the door and were at the top of a staircase and the décor was dramatically different from in the entrance area. I noticed now that the carpet was a very dark grey/black colour. The walls were completely covered in black material with white single lights dotted about the material, giving an effect of stars. I thought this was a very dramatic look and realised from the entrance and the stairs that a lot of effort had gone into the décor of this club. Standing at the top of the stairs it was like you had to walk down through a dark tunnel of stars to get into the main part of the club. The transitional stairway gave an effect of entering another world I suppose because you travelled through a dark, more confined space and into a more open space and, seemingly, another world.

It was not just the stairways that served as transitional spaces, sometimes the club itself would become a transitional space and this would occur if the club used table service. When the club had table service, meaning that bar staff would take drinks orders from customers at their

tables and deliver their drinks to them so customers were not required to approach the bar themselves, a member of bar staff would meet customers as they entered the club and lead them to their table. For me, this made the club seem like a transitional space because I was led quickly through the club to a seat, rather than make my way through the club as I naturally would have if I had been left to my own devices. This process meant that on my initial journey through the club I was unable to take in my surroundings fully until I was seated. This experience allowed bar staff to show their customers first, where they should go and how they are expected to behave in the club and second, where they were expected to experience, view and take in what the club had to offer.

Interior of clubs

The usual layout of a club would consist of a relatively large main club area and either within this space or around this space there would be smaller, more intimate areas where the majority of dances would take place. Within the main club area there would be a bar and a stage/s where pole dancing would be performed and plenty of seating to accommodate large numbers of customers and encourage them to be seated so dancers can join them to sell dances.

Typically, the stage would form the focal point of the room with the seating arranged around this to encourage customers to direct their attention toward the stage and, more importantly, the dancers performing on the stage.

However, most surprising for me in terms of the layout of the lap dancing clubs I visited was that I found two clubs without stages. These clubs, The Den and Peak, therefore lacked the focal point of the stage and instead the bar became the main focus of the room and chairs tended to be positioned within sight of the bar which was also where dancers would congregate when they were in the main club area. For me, a club without a stage and without

the performance of pole dancing, lacks the full experience of a lap dancing club as stage performances added so much to the atmosphere of a club. Clubs with stages had dancers performing almost continually throughout the night and provided entertainment for customers and opportunities for dancers to earn money through receiving stage tips. This is an excerpt from my field notes about Champagne that illustrates the way in which the stage facilitated interactions between customers and dancers:

when she had finished her two song performance on stage, she crawled seductively towards the tipper, turned around so her back was facing him, told him to put the money in her knickers, and leaned her chest to the stage floor so her bum was poked out towards him, the customer tucked the note into the top of her underwear with a look on his face which suggested he was loving the whole charade while also being in awe of the dancer.

The division of space that I mentioned briefly above was an important part of the layout of all clubs, and was similar within all the clubs I visited so emerged as a theme from its repetition. As suggested above, broadly speaking, the space was divided into the main room of the club and smaller dance areas around the main club.

Typically, the main club was the area where customers would spend most of their time, drinking and interacting with friends and dancers and watching dancers perform on stage. There would be a stage in a central position of the room and seating would be arranged around the stage, facing towards it. While customers were in this area, dancers would take this opportunity to sell dances and sit-downs to them by circulating the room and building rapport with customers, this process will be examined in more detail later in this chapter. Dancers would also be able to earn tips during their stage performances within this space (as described

above). When dancers sold private dances or sit-downs, they would take the customer off to one of the smaller dance areas.

The smaller dance areas, sometimes called booths if they accommodate only one customer at a time, is where the dances are performed or sit-downs conducted. These spaces have more seating and fewer tables to ensure there is always an available space for a dance to be performed.

What I found most interesting about the division of these spaces was the careful way in which it had been sectioned. In every club except for The Den, the areas in which dances took place were partially visible to customers who were in the main club. These field notes described how the space in Peak was divided to enable customers to partially view dances that were being performed:

There were four private rooms in the club. Two of the private rooms had beaded door curtains across the doorways which gave an effect of privacy but enabling some view of the room to be possible for customers in the main club. In my opinion this worked to sell dances by allowing customers to see just enough that they would want to experience it for themselves. It was almost like enabling a peep show into a lap dance.

Whilst there tended to be dance areas visible from the main club, The Den, Sovereign and Champagne were multi storey so private dancing could also take place on other floors of the club. Consequently, dances taking place on another floor weren't visible to customers in the main club. However, staff in the clubs retained a sense of intrigue about dance areas by serving drinks upstairs with lit fireworks attached to them so customers in the main area would see drinks going up to the private areas and booths.

Overall the layout of the space in the main club area, and particularly in the clubs which had stages, facilitated an environment for watching women's bodies. The space indicated where customers were supposed to look, how they should act and who they should be. That is to say, the space informed customers that they are there to watch and consume women's bodies, they should sit back and watch women dance and display their bodies, and they should take pleasure and enjoyment from the process. Given these findings, there is scope to explore how aspects of space become woven into the embodied being of dancers, a topic that will be returned to in Chapter Seven's analysis of interview data and Chapter Eight's analysis of the embodied phenomenology of lap dancing. The environment of consuming the female form was reinforced by the aesthetics of the club and the dancers which will be explored next.

Aesthetics

Similarly to what was found during the website analysis of images of lap dancing clubs, the club décor tended to incorporate black, red and/or purple into their colour schemes, either by using a combination of two or heavily applying one colour to give a high impact effect as customers enter the club. For example, the main room of Peak was extremely purple:

This club was PURPLE!! That was the first impression when you walked in from the bottom of the stairs, it looked really purple. The walls and upholstery were purple, the chairs we sat in were made with a rich purple faux velvet material. Along the walls on a purple background were a series of large silver framed, faux antique, mirrors. A lot of the walls had material covering them and behind the mirrors had this effect as well, it was a velvet style purple material very similar to that with which the chairs we were sat on were upholstered with. The material was hung in such a way that it gave a rippled effect to the walls and added texture and warmth to the room.

As this excerpt from my field notes also highlights, the textures used in the clubs also contributed a lot to the aesthetic experience of the rooms. Drapes and curtains were used widely in the clubs, along with hanging material over the walls to give a softer effect to the furnishings. I found that this made the clubs feel cosier, intimate, darker and ultimately sexier.

Along with drapes and curtains, there were often either pictures hanging on the walls or mirrors. If pictures were hung, they were always images of women posing seductively or close up images of women's faces. The pictures tended to be of dancers or ex-dancers who did or had worked in that club. These images or mirrors tended to be hung in large gold or silver coloured, antique style, frames. These frames stood out for their theatrical opulence and as they contained either images of dancers or mirrors, which enhanced the viewing potential of dancers within the club. I felt that they facilitated a hall of fame style décor and, more importantly, both symbolised and signalled to customers, that this was a space where women should be viewed, admired and consumed for their physical attributes.

Where images were used, they contained flawless, airbrushed portrayals of women so, although they in some sense, idolised the dancers, they simultaneously displayed the standards of feminine beauty that customers could presumably expect while they were inside the club and raises the question of how dancers experience, manage or compensate for any discretion between expectations of customers and the reality of dancers own perception and presentation of their appearance.

The lighting within the clubs contributed hugely to the aesthetics and the overall atmosphere of each club. The most lit areas were consistently the bars and the stages, which as mentioned above formed the focal points of the room, and the lighting certainly contributed to the experiences of these areas.

The lighting of the bars tended to be very similar across the clubs, being backlit with white lighting and displaying bottles of alcohol. This meant bars would stand out because a glow of light was coming from them and they provided a display of the drinks that were on offer at the club. The displayed drinks would consist of the more expensive drinks sold at the club such as champagne and spirits which added to an atmosphere of indulgence, wealth and temptation. Similarly, stage areas were lit in such a way that encouraged customer's attention to be drawn to it, and the performances taking place upon it. Like the bars, the lighting on stages emphasised the temptation and indulgent atmosphere of the club, but this time the temptation and indulgence of women rather than drinks. The following passage describes the stage lighting in Champagne which had one of the larger stages I observed during the fieldwork:

We were 100% encouraged to look at the stage, the whole room was centred around it. The stage stood about one metre high, about 3 metres diameter and was in the middle of the room making it a 360 degree performance area. It was octagonal shaped with a pole running from the centre of the stage to the ceiling. The sides of the stage were plain black and at the top of the sides was a ledge wide enough for customers to put their drinks on even though there was a silver bar running around this ledge. On the other side of the ledge, the stage floor was below the level of the ledge by about half a foot which allowed space for the white spotlights which were positioned, equally spaced around the inside of the ledge, lighting up the stage floor. The stage floor was a dark charcoal colour and made from marble appearance tiles, meaning that the stage floor was extremely smooth and had quite a shiny appearance. Smoke was also pumped out from the edge of the stage onto the stage floor at certain points in the music. From above, the stage was lit with pink spotlights on the ceiling positioned around the point

where the pole went into the ceiling and then yellow spotlights positioned, again around the pole but outside of the pink ones, forming a wider circle of lighting.

Crucially, the areas that were lighter contributed to the contrasts between lighter and darker areas within clubs. That is to say, with the light being focused toward the bar and stage areas, the rest of the club was dark by comparison which gave a more intimate feel to the space and more so, any seating areas that were located within nooks of the room were increasingly dark and increasingly intimate. For example, in Puma some of the seating was located under the stairs into the club and this area was noticeably darker and provided an intimate setting for dancers and customers to interact by way of contrast to the brighter stage area located relatively close by.

Aesthetics of dancers

During my observations it became clear to me that on the one hand, I could see many differences in the appearances of individual dancers in terms of their outfits, their body shape and their body stylization, however it also became clear to me that the variation occurs within tight parameters and that the variation I was seeing was marginal in comparison to the variation present in day to day life or other, more mainstream, organizational settings.

Moreover, I suggest that the aesthetic variation of lap dancers is also bound up in the development skills within their work, and the competitive nature of the work. The following section will explore these observations and ideas further.

Starting with the outfits dancers wore, I saw plenty of variation in the themes, colours and styles worn, however I also felt that there was very much a standard outfit of a bra and G-string combined with a mini-skirt over the top. This outfit would vary in colours and styles, and additions to it would be made such as a corset over the top or a longer flowing skirt or the

addition of hold-ups or long socks. In Champagne, one dancer wore a tight mini dress and I noticed her outfit in particular because she seemed to be more covered up than other dancers despite it still being a revealing outfit.

Some outfits were themed while others were more like lingerie, incorporating lace and satin. The themed outfits had more of a fun and flirty style. One such outfit was an eighties inspired Fame style outfit where the dancer wore high waisted brief knickers with a cropped top saying Bondi Beach in bold font across her chest. The themed outfits were worn less by dancers and therefore stood out more when being worn.

However, the variations in outfits were fairly superficial and they all portrayed heightened forms of sexuality, were revealing of the body and indicated, within this context, that the body the outfits revealed was to be watched, admired, scrutinised and consumed.

The way in which dancers stylized their bodies was interesting because it seemed to signify how experienced they were as a dancer and how skilled they had become in their work because of the amount of time, effort and money they had invested in their bodywork.

Aspects of body stylization that seemed common during my observations were tanning, makeup, hair extensions, hair colour and breast augmentation. That is not to say that all dancers wore a large amount of make up or had heavily coloured hair, rather it was these elements that appeared within the club context to relate to the status of the dancer in the club. Therefore, dancers who appeared to invest increased time and money in body stylization by wearing more make-up, having expensive hair extensions and a deep tan presented within the club as 'old school' dancers with a higher status than other dancers which was indicated to me as an observer and an ex-dancer, by the way they would be louder on the club floor and approach customers before other dancers.

Moving away from what body stylization meant for dancer status in the club, the stylization itself is significant in the way it was heavily trending toward modifying the physical appearance rather than embracing 'natural' beauty and this raises an interesting question of what this means for the experience of ageing in this industry. On the one hand it would suggest that beauty can be modified and so perhaps dancers could work for longer while appearing to be younger than their chronological age but on the other, it sends a message that they must appear to be younger for longer and therefore ageing is not 'allowed' in this context. The implications for the lived, embodied experience of this will be explored in the following chapter.

There was variation in the body shape of dancers to the extent that some bodies were more toned than others, some were curvier than others, some showed clear signs of cosmetic surgery, others didn't. However, the parameters within which this variation lay were distinctly narrow. The acceptable body type was clear, not too thin and not too fat. It didn't matter how much you exercised or if you didn't as long as one way or the other the dancer's body fell into the parameter of acceptability.

Pace of the space

Having set the scene of the layout of the space in the club and the aesthetics of both the club and the dancers, this section will examine the pace of the space inside the club and how this varied throughout observations, and what factors contributed to the way in which the pace of the space in the club shifted.

A large influence on the pace of the clubs was the number of customers in it at any one time. The Den and Peak were quiet clubs overall and on one visit to Peak there were no customers other than myself and my companion throughout the entire observation. Going to a quieter

club or going on a quieter weeknight made for a slower pace in the club overall and reminded me of the long periods of waiting around and boredom that the work entails. On these slow nights, changes in pace were present but remained relatively subtle as my field notes from Peak describe:

We were in the club on a very slow night, even though it was a Friday, so overall the pace was slow but there were still plenty of changes in the pace of the club. The club was very slow paced when all of the dancers were stood or sat around the bar and we were sitting at our table, at these moments there was literally no pace, we were at a complete standstill. At some moments all of the dancers (about seven all together) would be staring at their phones and not interacting even with each other. It was quite a bizarre sight to behold, seven semi-naked women around a bar, all independently engrossed in social media of some form or another. The atmosphere of the space would change however, even when the dancers would interact with each other and set off some laughter. Also there was usually movement of some kind somewhere in the club, be it dancers popping to the dressing room, going for a cigarette or just chatting to each other.

From my perspective as a customer during these observations, I found the quieter times in the clubs felt quite awkward because I felt very conspicuous, particularly as I wasn't the typical male customer and also because I felt that dancers would be relentlessly trying to sell dances to us and with that comes a sense of guilt for being in the club and not being a big spender. I was exactly the type of customer that I would have hated as a dancer myself. For this reason, a significant change of pace on a quiet night was the arrival of other customers and along with

this a sense of relief that the focus of the dancers attention would be elsewhere. I experienced this sense of relief during an observation in The Den:

The pace noticeably changed when new customers would arrive, this was especially the case because the club was so quiet, I would say on average, as well us (2) at any one time there was only two or three other customers in the club, therefore any arrival of customers immediately boosted the atmosphere and pace of the club. In particular, there was a period of time when myself and my companion were left as the only customers in the club. This situation made me uncomfortable because I knew we were the inevitable target of the dancer for getting dances and after a while it gets a bit embarrassing saying no to having them. When three customers entered the bar area I literally felt relief at the change of pace in the club, the extra voices made a difference and the way the bar girl leapt into action, from her usual stance of resting her elbows on the bar, on the arrival of any customer increased the movement and energy of the place.

In contrast, during a busier observation the pace of the space would be fast, exciting and energetic. During a busy time in the club stage performances would create a ripple of energy through the space, particularly if the dancer was performing impressive pole tricks and when they first went on the stage a dancer would often grab the attention of customers by performing a spin around the pole, which would also lift the pace of the room.

It was not only individual dancers who performed on stage, some clubs include special stag dances where a stag party can buy a dance for their stag and it is performed on stage in front of all the customers in the club. The following field notes document a stag dance in Champagne:

For the stag dance, the DJ called the stag to the stage and two dancers placed a chair onto the stage and put the stag on the chair. The dancers had put on white corsets over their underwear to indicate that it was a special stag performance and that they were half-heartedly dressed as brides. The dancers then performed a topless double dance for the stag while he sat on the stage and the rest of the room could watch the performance. Following this dance, the stag, instructed by the DJ who could only be heard through the speakers, I never actually saw him, was required to first of all, get onto his knees and have the girls shake their boobs in his face, then hold onto the pole and bend over while the dancers used belts to spank his arse and finally, the stag was instructed to get on all fours while one dancer put a belt around his neck and led him around the stage and the other dancer used a different belt to spank his bum. The DJ reminded the dancers not to spank him too hard to make sure they didn't leave any incriminating marks for his fiancée to find.

This dance created a buzz among the club and increased the pace of the space as it became louder and the stags loyal friends moved around the cub to get a better view of the proceedings.

Another method through which the pace of the club was somewhat manipulated to become faster was by having happy hour style events. For example this two dances for the price of one offer created an immediate increase in the pace of the club and simultaneously provided an opportunity for dancers to sell dances, even if they would make less money from them:

When the DJ announced that it was two for the price of one on dances there was a very noticeable change in pace and quite a buzz was created. All the dancers seemed to leap up and start moving around the room, collecting customers and making their way

towards the bar area where presumably any customers who wanted dances would head because they had to go upstairs for dances.

This specific scenario raises the question of how dancers experience this process of de-valuing, in monetary terms, their performance of dances and if and how it impacts on the performance of their sexuality during a dance.

In contrast to the previous examples of the slow and fast paced atmospheres within the clubs, I think that a crucial part of my observations was the middle ground between these two paces that made up the majority of the time spent in the clubs. The general pace, and the real essence of a lap dancer's work, was the time they spent systematically working the room, moving from customer to customer, more often than not being rejected in their offer of a dance but nonetheless persevering to the next interaction, continuing to work and go for the next opportunity to make money. From my perspective I see this as a demonstration of strength of character of the dancers to work in the face of rejection and simultaneously attempt to hide how this may or may not be making them feel as a person. This identifies a further question surrounding the embodied experience of dancers of how they manage and negotiate the feelings they experience while working day to day and throughout their working life course.

Dancers in the club setting

The role of a lap dancer, generally speaking, requires women to present their body and appearance in such a way that it represents an ideological image of sexualized femininity, as has been described and explored above. However, the role also requires a great deal of other skills including social, physical and emotional ones. These skills are all demonstrated through

the behaviour of dancers in the club setting and it is this complex skillset that I turn my attention to next.

Dancers spend the majority of their time during a shift on the main club floor, ultimately attempting to sell dances and/or sit downs to customers. Although this process has a relatively simple goal, the process is far more complex and dancers utilise their skills in both similar and varying ways. For example, personas appeared to be used by all dancers however, the working dancer persona could vary greatly from dancer to dancer.

During the time spent in the main club, dancers would move around the space interacting with customers or looking for customers to speak to. The women would move through the room carrying their bodies with a feminine grace, often it seemed as though dancers were almost prowling through the room, always looking for an opportunity to engage with a customer. This excerpt from my field notes illustrates how dancers in Champagne circulated the room and used this process to strike up interactions with customers:

Dancers would circle the room around the stage, walking gracefully for a few steps and then stopping for a while, perhaps striking up conversation with a nearby customer or watching and cheering on the dancer on the stage, or waiting for a customer to speak to them. Cheering on or interacting with the dancer on stage was a technique used to strike up conversation with nearby customers, one dancer stood by herself behind a customer who was in the front row watching the stage, and whooped at the dancer on stage and winked suggestively at her, she then commented to the customer in front of her 'that's my friend' to start a conversation up with him. When dancers were moving between customers they would sometimes take this time to make an impromptu comment to other dancers. For example, two dancers were in ear shot of us and

walking towards a group of customers and one said to the other, 'its dead tonight isn't it?' but they maintained their graceful stance during this time, as if knowing that customers may be admiring their appearance and that their body would continue to be consumed even when they weren't entirely focused on the customers.

This process of working the room occurred with dancers either working individually or in pairs. Most dancers worked alone throughout this process but those working in pairs would tend to work together for the entire shift and this raised the question for me of whether these dancers always work together and if not, what factors contribute to whether or not they work alone or with a companion and this question will be returned to in the following chapter.

However, what emerged from my periods of observation was that, depending on whether dancers were working alone or in pairs, the way they socialised and interacted with customers varied. Dancers working alone spent more time invested in a single customer by sitting with them for longer, chatting and flirting and building a rapport with them. This style of work carried out by dancers involved the use of flirtatious body language, social skills and emotional investment.

Dancers who were sat with customers would be leaning in closely to them, sometimes with an arm around them or perhaps touching their arm or knee while they spoke. Dancer's bodies would tend to be facing directly towards the customer, appearing to signal an availability, which I interpreted as physical, sexual and emotional. These dancers would use their social skills to be attentive toward the customer, making eye contact, laughing when they were trying to be funny and maintaining a flow of conversation and flirtation to the best of their ability. These bodily and social skills indicated to me that dancers were making an emotional investment, or performing emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983) by creating a display to the

customer which indicated that they were attracted to him in such a way that they would take pleasure in performing a dance for him, more so than any other customer in the club.

In contrast, the dancers who worked in pairs would typically rely more heavily on physical and aesthetic elements of their appearance to sell dances and interact with customers. In these cases, the interaction with customers were shorter, dancers would tend to remain standing throughout the interaction and would drift more quickly from one customer to another. The style was to approach a customer, or a group of customers, ask if they would like a dance shortly after introducing themselves, spend a little time trying to persuade a customer to have a dance if the initial response was no, and then if still unsuccessful, they would move on to another customer or group of customers. This style of selling, therefore, was fast paced and reliant on a 'if you like what you see you will have a dance' attitude.

Interestingly, in one respect dancers were undertaking less emotional labour because they were less invested in the customer as an individual, however on the other hand, they were performing a more overtly sexualized persona and/or an alternative form of sexuality, in order to get a faster sell. That is to say, dancers working in pairs encouraged customers to have double dances where they would perform a dance together, undressing each other and interacting with one another's bodies through kissing, spanking and licking. I watched as two dancers attempted to sell a double dance to a customer in Puma:

The dancers stood in front of the customer, who was sat right next to us, they had their arms around each other and they each playfully caressed the others body as they spoke to the customer, they asked him, 'are you ready for us to give you a dance now? Please we really want to dance for you, we love this song' as they spoke they moved to the music, as if giving the customer a taster of the dance to follow.

In this case, the dancers were performing heightened sexuality in an attempt to entice the customer to go for a dance by demonstrating sexual attraction to both the customer and the dancer they were working with. In this respect the sexualized emotional labour is potentially strenuous. Although the notion of the 'lesbian' double dance may seemingly contradict with the heteronormativity of the lap dancing industry (Brooks, 2010; Pilcher, 2012) (discussed in Chapter Five), this example serves to illustrate the double dance as an example of heteronormativity. This is because, although the dancers are performing a lesbian interaction with one another, they remain sexually available to their audience. Moreover, as the dancers and customers are not supposed to touch, according to the licensing conditions, they are able, through double dances, to express their performed sexual desire for the customer while maintaining a distance from them that they are comfortable with.

These two alternative styles of selling demonstrate the variation of dancers' physical, aesthetic, sexualized and emotional skillset and how they can be used in different ways to, ultimately, create a working persona. The question remains about how dancers adapt their persona, how often, whether it is on a night to night basis, a customer by customer basis, whether it evolves over the working life course or throughout the ageing process or is dependent on other factors altogether. Further to this, there remains a question about how much a dancer feels that they are portraying a persona or how much of their everyday self they feel they use during their work and their working life course. These questions will be returned to in both Chapters Seven and Eight.

Developing the notion of dancers having a working persona, the role of the dancer requires them to perform stage shows (in those clubs which had stages) throughout the night and these performances and the stage personas will be examined next.

As mentioned above, the stage performances are an opportunity for dancers to stand out to customers, gauge the audience, see who they are most likely to be able to sell dances to and finally, in some clubs, earn tips while on stage. Stages consisted of a pole at the centre and space around it to perform floor work. Dancers' behaviour on stage would vary a lot in terms of the style of dancing and the level of pole tricks performed but all performances showcased the dancers performance of sexuality.

Some dancers would keep their performance simpler in regard to tricks but more laborious in terms of connecting with the audience, including less pole tricks and more eye contact and flirtation with individual customers. Overall these dance performances were slower and more sensual. It felt to me that dances of this style built up sexual energy between the dancer and her chosen audience members and a coy sexuality was portrayed by the dancers using eye contact and facial expressions including flirtatious smiles and directing their dance toward individual customers throughout the performance.

At the other end of the spectrum were dancers who performed advanced stage tricks, climbing the pole and providing a more theatrical performance. I documented the most memorable and entertaining stage show of this kind in my field notes:

One dancer who performed on stage and stood out for capturing the audience's attention, and got the most tips out of all the dancers I saw that night, was a dancer who by all accounts was one of the 'plainer' looking dancers. By this I mean that she didn't stand out as some of the others did for having a particularly impressive tan or overly dyed hair or a body shape that stood out for being particularly flawless, muscular, thin, toned or fat or a really 'stand out' outfit on. When she was walking around the club she wasn't eye catching in comparison to other dancers but once she was on stage

she went for it in her performance and in my opinion this was her time that she utilised to get noticed, get tips and sell dances.

She was very skilled on the pole and performed many pole tricks and could climb it really well but so could many of the other dancers. I think she stood out in the way she became very animalistic in her performance, especially when she was performing floor work (performance of dance that occurs on the stage floor rather than on the pole). At one point she was writhing around on the stage floor in a raw feline fashion, she rolled over onto her front and crawled across the stage in a way that was seductive but also aggressive, she looked like she could have been in the west end performance of The Lion King and her facial expression matched this, she almost had a growling look on her face. She prowled over to the edge of the stage, picked up a customer's bottle of Corona, tipped her head right back exposing her neck and drank from the bottle for a good few seconds before prowling off, returning to the pole and continuing her performance. The display was fabulously suggestive with the bottle being so phallic and her demonstrating an unrestrained confidence to take from the customer his bottle and drink from it knowing he couldn't stop her and as she drank from it, some of the contents ran from the corners of her mouth down to her neck....there was no doubt about it, this girl was sexual!

Both styles of stage performance were overtly sexual and captured the audience's attention but in slightly different ways. Many dancers performed on stage in a style somewhere in between these two more extreme examples and therefore catered for a wide range of customer expectations and desires.

What was very interesting about the way in which dancers behaved in the club, and this emerged as a recurrent theme, was that they would have an informal gathering point which would remain relatively fixed throughout the night. Gathering points would usually be close to the bar but would always be a position which was a good vantage point over the main club. There were always dancers at the gathering point, however the dancers there would be constantly changing as dancers came and went from the group.

This informal gathering point appeared to be used as a base for dancers to return to between jobs as it were. Dancers would often go to this point before or after performing on stage or after leaving a customer and it seemed as though it was a space where dancers could talk to each other about the type of night they were having and about the customers they had met. I felt that this was the case from the way the dancers would alternate between hushed discussions and looking around the room. In one club when I was doing an observation I was aware when the group was discussing, or seemingly discussing, me and my companion from the way in which they alternated between talking and looking over at us.

The way in which dancers used this informal gathering point felt to me like it was a way for dancers to provide support to one another throughout the night and perhaps, partially switch off from the persona they were portraying and it raises the question of if and how dancers support, or feel supported by one another in the lap dancing context and this will be explored further in the following chapter.

Customers in the club setting

Generally, customers would spend the majority of the time either seated in the club watching the stage performances or at the bar. In both locations dancers would interact with the customers and the atmosphere would be very sociable. At the same time there would often be

customers moving through the club, either going to use their phone, have a cigarette or have a dance. In this respect the behaviour of customers was very similar throughout the club, however, there were also some noticeable differences between customers which I will turn to next.

The way in which customers behaved seemed to vary according to their age and group size. Younger customers (in their twenties or below) seemed to enjoy the experience because it fed into an aspect of their macho masculine identity and allowed them to interact with women in a way which gave them a sense of self importance and status. One group of young customers stood out for this reason:

One group of guys who to me looked really young but were probably late teens early twenties made me laugh because they were sitting in a relatively large (about eight of them) group to our left. After a little time passed and they had settled into the club, got drinks and been approached by dancers, I looked over and it made me laugh that these young guys were all in their little suits leaning back on their chairs, some with their arms round dancers chatting. They just looked like the cats that got the cream. It was like they were having a chance to play at being the men they wanted to be, it just made me smile watching the whole thing. In this case the dancers were feeding into their fantasy and allowing them to indulge in a world where they could play at being the men they wanted to be.

Larger groups tended to be more raucous and exude more confidence in the lap dancing club setting. They stood out because they made more noise, occasionally a cheer would happen somewhere in the club and it would often be because a member of a larger group of customers was going for a dance and the rest of the group responded accordingly.

Typically, customers were in smaller groups of two or three and slightly older, appearing usually to be between their thirties and fifties. For these customers the experience seemed more about enjoying the interactions with dancers, watching the stage performances, buying dances and tipping. They were there because they enjoyed being there, not because it made them feel macho and gave them a badge of honour among their friends.

During observations it was only possible to observe the more obvious differences in customers and therefore it raises the question of how dancers perceive differences among customers and how they experience and negotiate these differences throughout their working life.

Conclusion

This chapter has undertaken an examination of the situated context in which the lap dancing industry is embedded by exploring its geographical location, the materiality of the setting, the aesthetics of the setting and the dancers and the behaviour and interactions of both dancers and customers.

By exploring these aspects of the industry, an understanding of how the socio-materiality of the setting facilitates an environment where women, and their bodies, are to be watched and consumed, where boundaries are blurred and ambiguous and where youth is valued and prioritised.

What has yet to be explored is how the perceptions and expectations of the lap dancing industry is embodied, experienced and negotiated by those working in it. This chapter highlighted questions that are yet to be considered such as how do dancers experience and embody working in a marginalized industry? How do dancers manage the expectations and perceptions of customers within the embedded context of the lap dancing club? How does the division of space and the club layout impact upon the dancers lived experience of the industry?

How do dancers experience different types of customers and how does this impact upon the way in which they work? How do dancers manage their aesthetic appearance, bodywork and behaviour in a context that places value on youth and ideological images of sexuality? Relating to all of these questions is how does the embodied experience of both becoming skilled at their work and growing older in the workplace affect their experience of it? The following chapter will address these questions in detail by analysing how the lap dancing industry is embodied and negotiated by those working in it.

Chapter Seven

Enacting and embodying work: The lived experiences of a lap dancer

The previous two chapters have explored how the lap dancing industry is encoded and embedded within the contemporary sex industry. Chapter Five emphasized the way in which heteronormative images of sexuality, along with ambiguities and expectations surrounding the exchange relationship between dancers and customers are encoded into the online advertising material. Overall it was suggested in Chapter Five that the organizational landscape (Gagliardi, 1990) of the lap dancing industry places value on heteronormatively prescriptive images of sexuality and facilitates an arena of ambiguity within which the exchange between dancers and customers must be negotiated. Chapter Six focused on the socio-materiality of the lap dancing industry in order to explore how the industry is embedded in its situated context. The findings presented in Chapter Six suggested that the socio-materiality of the setting facilitates an environment in which women's bodies are to be watched and consumed, where boundaries are blurred and ambiguous, and where youth is valued and prioritized.

As both the website analysis in Chapter Five and the analysis of the participant observations in Chapter Six have shown specific performances of sexuality have value placed on them so that the exchange relationship between dancers and customers is a relatively ambiguous one. This raises important questions about how dancers negotiate their lived, embodied experiences of working in the lap dancing industry. Key questions raised include: How do dancers manage the expectations and perceptions of customers within the embedded context of the lap dancing club? How does the materiality of the dancers' working environment, such as the division of space and the club layout, impact upon their lived experience of the industry? How do dancers experience different types of customers and how does this impact upon the way in which they

work? How do dancers manage their aesthetic appearance, bodywork and behaviour in a context that places value on youth and heteronormative images of sexuality? Relating to all of these questions is that of how the embodied experience of both becoming skilled at their work and growing older in the workplace affect the women's experience of it.

This chapter seeks to address these questions surrounding the lived, embodied experiences of lap dancers by drawing on the data collected through semi-structured interviews with dancers (see Appendix Two for details about the dancers that took part in interviews). Thematic analysis was used to code individual interview transcripts and was then conducted across transcripts in order to identify the broader emerging themes. This thematic analysis provided the basis for theoretical understanding of the data. For a more detailed account of the analysis process see Chapter Four above.

The chapter will be structured as follows. The first section of the analysis will focus on the process of becoming and being a dancer and will explore how the work is experienced during recruitment, and in their everyday working life, as well as throughout the working life course. Following this, an analysis of the exchange relationship between dancers and customers will be developed, focusing on how dancers experience their interactions with customers and negotiate the expectations of the exchange. The final section of the chapter will examine the performance of emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour, placing emphasis on how dancers embody and negotiate these performances. A theme running throughout the chapter is the lived experience of ageing which emerged as an intrinsic element of each subsection.

Becoming a lap dancer: How dancers experience their work

The work of a lap dancer involves socialising and mixing with customers in the club, performing stage shows and selling lap dances and sit-downs. A sit-down is when a customer makes a payment for the dancer to be their companion for a set period of time. These are usually sold in blocks of fifteen or thirty minutes. During this time the dancer tends to sit and drink with the customer, socialise with them or dance for them at their request or the dancer's suggestion. Lap dances tend to be performed in a private dance area and involve the dancer moving to the music whilst undressing in a seductive manner for the customer. Along with individual lap dances, double dances can be purchased during which two dancers perform together undressing one another for the customer. The cost of a lap dance tends to be twenty pounds per dancer so a double dance incurring a cost of forty pounds with each dancer being paid twenty before the deduction of commission.

The stage shows consist of a pole dancing performance lasting on average for two songs at a time. These performances act as an opportunity for dancers to catch the attention of customers, earn tips and increase the potential for selling a dance or a sit-down to them, however dancers are not paid by the club to perform their stage shows.

While dancers in this study didn't earn a fixed wage so earnings weren't guaranteed, the set up in which dancers would earn as they sold dances and sit-downs and earned tips meant that the earning potential provided an appealing lure into working within the industry:

There was potential to earn a lot of money... better than a bar job (Analisa).

For each of the dancers interviewed the earning potential and financial incentive formed a key reason for entering the industry and the comparison Analisa makes above between dancing and the earning potential of bar work or supermarket work was often drawn.

In Analisa's case, she found that although the earnings weren't as high as she had been led to believe at her audition, she could still earn more money than if she had been doing bar work: [She was told by management] 'You'll be making up to a grand a night all you girls' but it wasn't as good as they made out it would be (Analisa).

Similarly for Katy, she emphasised that the speed and ease of earning money through dancing was far more appealing, and less time consuming than working in a supermarket:

It was a very easy way of making money because you could work in a supermarket and you'd have to work three times the hours to make the money that you would do in a night of dancing (Katy).

Overall, becoming a dancer started with a very money-oriented rationale, however the fun and social side of the work was also emphasized as a key factor in making the job appealing.

It is quite a sociable job and it's quite a nice job where you get out and socialise with the girls, so it's quite a fun job (Katy).

While the social aspect of the work was initially an appealing element, over time the social side emerged as an increasingly important reason for why dancers remained in the industry. Analisa summarized the initial perception of an improved social life: 'My social circle widened straight away' (Analisa).

To the point where the social side became more appealing than the work itself, which occurred later on in her working life as a dancer:

It became more important socially than about the money, I loved coming in and seeing the girls, I loved getting dressed up and doing the hair and makeup, loved dancing on the pole, I didn't like going and talking to the customers, that ruined the night! (Analisa).

While the rationale for becoming a dancer was predominantly financial with a perception of the social style of the work being appealing, over time the rationale for remaining in the industry, although money remained a fundamental reason for going to work, became more about socialising with other dancers and the value dancers placed on the friendships formed within the clubs increased dramatically.

Recruitment

Once the women had made the decision to become a dancer, they were required to audition for the role within a club. As Chapter Five illustrated, lap dancing club websites tend to be permanently advertising for new dancers to audition so all the dancers interviewed found it easy to arrange an audition. Kitty explained what she had to do during her audition:

Audition, so, there were two parts. First part, I had to do a pole dance for one song, take off an item of clothing so I was in my underwear, & then pole dance for another song. Second part, I had to do a lap dance on one of the bouncers (Kitty).

Kitty's experience of an audition emerged as the standard format experienced by each of the dancers interviewed, with the requirements being to demonstrate their pole dancing skills, appearing topless or nude during this performance and then performing a lap dance, usually for a member of staff at the club. As was found in Chapter Five, no previous experience was

necessary but this resulted in the audition process being a nerve wracking experience for dancers, particularly as they were aware of the expectation to perform a specific image of sexuality, Mimi explains how she felt during her audition:

I was just like on the stage with this pole trying to do something sexy and felt like an idiot (Mimi).

For Katy, the nerve wracking experience of the audition along with the expectation to portray herself in a 'sexy' demeanour led her to hold expectations of her own body's ability to perform which meant that she then found it difficult to act out the expectations she held for herself, as she explained:

I was panicking and just really awkward. In my head, before I got on the stage, I had these moves that I thought would look really good and then (starts laughing) when I got up there and did them they were really shit (Katy).

As Katy's description highlights, becoming a dancer involves an embodied process of learning how to use their body to portray the image of sexiness that both the industry and the dancer themselves expects, or wants, to perform. This embodied sexualised labour will be explored in more depth later in the chapter.

Returning to the recruitment process, the website analysis conducted in Chapter Five indicated that the majority of lap dancing clubs are permanently recruiting dancers. One reason why clubs may continue to recruit dancers regardless of how many dancers already work at the club is because the club has nothing to lose from there being more dancers working there and only stands to gain financially if extra dancers are working a shift, particularly if the club charges a house fee to dancers. A house fee refers to a fee that dancers pay to the club in order to work

there for the night. House fees vary between clubs and between nights of the week with weekend nights generally holding a higher fee than weeknights due to the higher earning potential of dancers on busier nights. Lily explained why the house fee system encourages clubs to continually recruit dancers:

It doesn't really matter to the club how many girls are working because they're getting paid forty pounds house fee at weekends for each girl so if they've got fifty girls or if they've got sixty girls they're just going to be making more money so I think they'll carry on recruiting because it's more money for the club (Lily).

As Lily explains the permanent recruitment found on the websites, and discussed in Chapter Five, may result from the reasoning that the club can only benefit financially from having a higher number of dancers working within a club.

A further rationale for the permanent recruitment of dancers that emerged from the interviews is that the industry has a high turnover of dancers generally: 'We very rarely have people stay longer than four weeks' (Katy).

Of key interest within the interview analysis, and to develop the website analysis findings, was to gain an understanding of how the permanent recruitment in the industry is experienced and negotiated by dancers themselves. Lily explained how she experiences the high turnover of dancers in her club: 'You always feel replaceable because there will always be somebody else there to do your job' (Lily). The sense of being replaceable seemingly contributes to the discourse of lap dancing being a job for younger women: 'I think it's more, it's something you do in your late teens and early twenties' (Analisa).

A combination of the high turnover of dancers and feeling replaceable encourages dancers to perceive their work as something they can do only when they are younger, or can present themselves as younger, a topic that is discussed further below.

The high turnover of dancers was related to a divide that emerged from the data between old (have worked at the club longer) and new dancers. For new dancers this divide had to be carefully negotiated and unspoken rules were to be kept to before new dancers could forge relationships with the older dancers. Texas explained her experience of negotiating the unwritten rules for new dancers:

It's difficult but as long as you can be quite quiet, they don't like people that are too loud when you first start and obviously don't get up and go to the customer sort of straight away, wait for the other girls to go first so you don't tread on anybody's toes (Texas).

While new dancers seemingly have to learn quickly the unwritten rules among dancers, once they make 'old dancer' status the sense of membership within a circle of friends provides a support system for them, Roxy describes her experience of new dancers coming to the club:

I've got my circle of friends and the new girls kind of come and go so it's kind of, you get used to it, you don't really notice it in the end (Roxy).

The shared history of working within the club emerged as a reason for dancers becoming close and Lily suggests that friendships develop through the amount of time spent working in a particular club:

In the end you hang out with the people that have been there longest because you know they're more likely to stick around and then you just get close (Lily).

It emerged during the interview analysis as well as the interviews themselves, that dancers wanted to emphasise what they enjoyed about working as a lap dancer. This emerged as being particularly important due to a tendency for discussions surrounding dancers and dancing more generally to focus on the more negative aspects of the work:

I think when you ask dancers about their job, it never sounds like a fun job because you talk about the bad bits quite a lot and I think, I dunno, it IS a fun job, you know, but sometimes it's hard to get that across. The more outrageous things stick in your mind. And often they are bad (Texas).

The enjoyable aspects of the work were predominantly that it is a fun and sociable job and this made it stand out from more mainstream types of employment: 'It is a nice, fun job, there's not many jobs you can sit there with a glass of wine and talk to your friends, so that's a big thing' (Texas).

The fun and social aspects of the job didn't only apply within the club and work setting but manifested as a lifestyle culture for the dancers:

I have to say that was probably one of the best times of my life working there. Not just inside the club but the social aspect outside of work as well. We used to have such a laugh. I was just going out so much more (Analisa).

This social culture associated with the lap dancing industry may provide some insight into how that aspect of the work becomes important for dancers and even, to a certain extent, keeps them in the industry.

The excitement of working in a taboo industry was also something that dancers enjoyed about their work: 'I enjoyed the taboo-ness of it' (Mimi). Mimi particularly enjoyed working within an

industry that was fascinating to people outside of it: 'I was doing something that a lot of people couldn't really understand the appeal of and yet were really interested in' (Mimi).

In this respect the sense of doing work that intrigued people outside of the industry appealed to the dancers and they experienced a sense of excitement from working in such an industry. Specifically, having an identity that not everyone knew about was exciting and Texas even likened it to being a secret agent: 'You've got a new identity, a new name, a job nobody really knows about, so it's quite exciting because it's like being a secret agent' (Texas).

On the one hand, working in a private, taboo industry was exciting and dancers enjoyed the secrecy of their work. However, associated with this excitement and taboo is the underlying reason of why the industry remains relatively private and the dancers interviewed tended to refer to the lap dancing industry as being stigmatized due to an association with prostitution. This aspect of the industry was something that dancers were required to negotiate throughout their working lives: '[about public perception] They just see things in the newspapers and they just assume that people that dance are prostitutes' (Texas).

Given this perception dancers have about opinions towards dancers, the dancers would manage this by being careful about who they would disclose information to about being a dancer in case they felt judged by the people that they told:

I wouldn't tell them about the dancing. Unless I got to know someone quite well then I'd say oh yeah I also work here. I wouldn't want people to judge me differently because they know me in a certain way (Analisa).

This illustrates that there is a social taint experienced by dancers which is associated with others' perceptions of dancers rather than their own. The complexities of working within a

tainted industry are also demonstrated as the different layers of gaining pleasure from working in a private, exciting role and simultaneously being potentially judged by people around them meant that dancers perceived this as exciting but also felt it was unfair to be tainted for their working role. To clarify this point, it was not found to be the case that the dancers enjoyed the excitement and disliked the taint, but rather that both aspects of their work tended to be experienced as simultaneously 'good' and 'bad'.

A similarly multi-faceted aspect of the work was the confidence experienced by dancers.

Dancers perceived their work to be confidence building in many respects. Analisa describes how dancing impacted on her confidence:

It helped my confidence, massively, because I was bullied at school for my looks, I was really insecure, felt ugly for years, so to then all of a sudden become a stripper and all these men want you, you can imagine what that then does to your self- esteem (Analisa).

As this comment from Analisa demonstrates, however, the confidence gained would often be experienced through affirmation from the male customers they interacted with. Therefore, this type of confidence was gained through a complex gendered dynamic between dancer and customer. It emerged from the interview analysis that the confidence gained from receiving compliments from customers, or a sense that the dancer was desired by them inflicted a more fleeting confidence boost compared with the insults from customers, which dancers highlighted as a down side to the job, which had more of a lasting effect:

You can have 10 people say how beautiful you are and then it takes one customer to say 'you're so ugly' and you feel sad for the rest of the night (Katy).

As this quote illustrates, the confidence and lack of confidence experienced by dancers is intrinsically embodied through the gendered interactions with customers and the confidence would create a short term boost while insults would have a longer lasting effect on the dancer.

So far this chapter has discussed the key motivators for entering the lap dancing industry and remaining in it, as well as how the recruitment process is experienced by dancers and what they tend to enjoy most and least about their work. Next the chapter will focus on analysing the lived, embodied experiences of the exchange between dancers and customers in order to further understand, and explore, the negotiation of ambiguities and expectations within the industry.

Exchange relationships in the lap dancing industry

Of the skills that dancers need to master in order to perform their work well, being competent at interacting with customers emerged as being key, and is a skill that is largely acquired through experience:

The socialising part is the difficult bit, knowing what to talk about and how to ask for dances and how often to ask for dances and everybody's different so it differs from customer to customer...you just learn through time (Texas).

Ultimately, the skills dancers develop for engaging with customers determine how successful they are at selling dances. However, during the time spent interacting with, and dancing for, customers, dancers must negotiate a dynamically related series of expectations and boundaries that customers and dancers have of one another.

When dancers described their experiences of a typical customer it became clear that dancers felt that the public opinion of customers is that they are sleazy, but they suggested that this

wasn't the norm in their experience, although they acknowledged that they did encounter sleazy customers on occasion. Dancers tended to emphasise the difficulty in describing a typical customer, as there is such variation. However, types of customers tended to be perceived as falling into distinct categories, as Texas summarises:

Customers come in just for a bit of fun, stag parties, and just people that want some companionship more than anything and I think that people just think of it as sleazy straight away when it's not (Texas).

Whatever the type of customer the dancers are interacting with, underlying it is a complex gendered power dynamic that makes up an area of ambiguity within the exchange relationship. The interview analysis suggests that the power dynamic between dancers and customers is fluid and precarious. Lily summarised how both dancers and customers experience feelings of empowerment simultaneously within the club setting:

in real life they couldn't just get a girl to take her clothes off but they can walk into this club and there's fifty girls there that will take their clothes off so I think they feel quite empowered but wrongly so because they'll end up spending a lot of money and in the end it's the girl who's the one that's empowered, not them because she's the one laughing at the end of the night going home with all the money (Lily).

Within the power dynamic was a tension about who was in control during the transaction. Customers felt empowered and in control because they were able to see the dancers' bodies and dancers behaved as though they wanted to undress for the customer. Dancers often reconciled the customer's sense of control by emphasizing that they were working and gaining the monetary reward for the dance gave themselves a sense of control:

I always make sure I make them feel like they are so important to me and that I really fancy them, they just like being in control I think, they're controlling but I'm dancing for them and they're paying for it (Roxy).

In this respect, the perception of who holds power and control within the interaction makes up an ambiguous area of the exchange relationship and this dynamic tends to be highly subjective and fluid.

The work of a lap dancer involves the negotiation of many different forms of boundary, and the work of a dancer to sell dances involves effectively breaking down boundaries with a customer to get them to want a dance with them but then maintain the boundaries within a parameter that is considered acceptable according to the club and the dancer themselves and these parameters may be formally or informally enforced and may not be fixed either from customer to customer, club to club or throughout the dancers working lifecourse.

Initial rapport building with customers doesn't always occur via a face to face interaction but rather the stage performances of dancers may be used as a tool for initially breaking down the social boundary and building rapport with them:

It's also something that you do to promote yourself because often you'll get off stage and that's the best time to go and get dances, you're in people's mind, especially if you can, it's good if you can make eye contact with people and make them feel like there's a bit of a connection when you're on stage (Mimi).

As Mimi suggests, breaking down barriers with customers and forging connections with them while on stage potentially makes selling dances to them an easier task. Generally dancers used approaches such as making eye contact to engage with a customer and make them feel as

though the performance was for them, specifically, invoking a feeling with the customer that they are somehow 'special' to the dancer.

Making customers feel as though they are special, and more importantly, desired by the dancer, continues in the face to face social interactions as a selling technique. The manner in which dancers interact with customers was consistently referred to as flirting by the dancers that were interviewed.

You're flirting with people to get their money so it's like just keep flirting until they part with some cash (Christina).

Flirting is embodied by the dancer through their use of language and tone of voice and their body language. As the observation analysis showed, dancers often lean in towards customers while they talk, have a hand on their leg or sit on their lap. This type of flirtatious behaviour is designed to signal to the customer that the dancer is attracted to them and would like to dance for them. This embodied process of flirting simultaneously involves play with both physical and emotional boundaries between each party involved. During this part of the exchange process the dancer is encouraging the customer to believe that she has some desire or sexual interest in the customer. Perhaps it is understandable then that a key boundary between the performance of sexual availability and being sexually available, must be negotiated by dancers during the interaction. This often manifests through requests from customers to meet dancers outside of the working environment.

The analysis showed that dancers experienced these requests from customers often and it emerged that the most important element of negotiating these advances was not to directly

refuse the request: 'Obviously you don't just want to say no because then they're not going to have any more dances' (Katy) .

By flat out refusing or ruling out the option of interacting outside of the club the potential of further financially lucrative exchanges would be minimised so within the club it makes little financial sense for dancers to immediately shut down the option of at some point meeting up with the customer. Instead, dancers tend to use the request to their advantage, ultimately as a tool for selling more dances. Kitty negotiated this situation by agreeing to meet the customer after work and then relying on security staff at the club to move them on if they attempted to hang around the premises after closing time:

You kinda just played on it, you know? If they wanted to meet you, say 'oh yeah sure' then if they waited for you outside, the bouncers would sort them out (Kitty).

Similarly, Analisa used a customer's request to meet up as a negotiating tool to sell a sit down. In this case she made an arrangement with a customer to make money during her working shift and gave the impression that she would compromise the boundary between her working life and private life. However, she never intended to honour the arrangement:

I was trying to talk him into a sit down one night, he said look I'll have a sit down with you if you come meet me at the Red Lion on Monday, I was like yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah, so obviously he's gone and I haven't turned up (Analisa).

Bindel (2004) has discussed how easy it is to arrange to meet up with lap dancer's outside of work when she conducted covert observations and argues that this suggests lap dancing is directly associated with prostitution (e.g. Bindel, 2004). However my findings indicate that this is predominantly a sales strategy. While most dancers that were interviewed acknowledged

that they thought some dancers did meet customers, it tended to be to pursue personal relationships rather than to sell sex as a commodity.

When the exchange of a lap dance takes place the negotiation of physical boundaries between the dancer and the customer becomes a particularly interesting dynamic. As the dancer performs, they are naturally moving closer and further away from the customer, and in this respect there is a fluid physical boundary. The interview analysis showed that the issue of customers wanting the dancers to touch them during dances added a further dynamic to the boundary negotiation. Customers trying to touch dancers emerged as commonplace within the exchange relationship and Roxy summarised the rationale for this: 'They just get very excited and wanna touch'.

Customers' touching the dancers breaks the formal rules of the majority of lap dancing clubs and dancers discussed how they dealt with customers who tried to touch them. What makes this process particularly interesting is that dancers are reprimanding the customer whilst maintaining the performance of finding them sexually desirable. One technique dancers would employ is physically moving the customer's hands themselves:

Just physically get their hands and move them and then you don't have to say anything so it's not awkward because you don't have to say I don't want you touching me, you can carry on dancing whilst you do it but just slowly grab their hand and move them out the way and they'll get the message (Katy).

If moving the customer's hands didn't work, dancers could also use the materiality of the club setting to maintain their boundaries. For instance Katy would sometimes use the cameras in

the club to retain the sexualised performance of the dance but maintain physical boundaries she was comfortable with:

I try and make it out that I don't mind but there are cameras so I say I'm really sorry but the cameras are watching me and I'll get in trouble (Katy).

On occasion adhering to the no touching rule within the club gets taken to the extreme as it becomes such a habitual element of a dancer's work:

I was once doing a dance for a guy and I was extremely drunk. I fell over whilst I was naked half way through and he tried to catch me. I was really angry looked him in the eye and said no touching! (Katy).

Generally dancers found that customers wanting to touch them or trying to touch them was understandable given the exchange relationship. Mimi explained her understanding of it:

People do often do the wandering hands thing and um as I understand it that's often not a deliberate thing. [Customers] found it really difficult not to touch when someone was doing that to [them].

Touch wasn't always directly physical and customers often attempted to blow on dancers as a way around the no touching rule:

And there was the blowing...Yeah um quite a lot of guys would when you were leaned over in front of them would like to blow in between your legs as a way of legally touching you (Mimi).

This type of contact between dancers and customers was invisible to members of security staff but a way to intrude on the dancer's personal space, and in the way Mimi described, make

intimate contact with dancers. Overall, touch emerged as being an important part of the work of a lap dancer and specifically, the negotiation of touch was perceived by dancers as being an everyday part of their work. Merleau-Ponty's (2002) embodied phenomenology helps us to understand the dancers' negotiation of touch as his analysis frames the dancer's body as the medium of interaction and therefore, exchange. As Merleau-Ponty (2002) suggests, we live in and through our body, hence a dancers' body is both the medium of exchange and the mechanism through which touch is negotiated. This point will be returned to in the theoretical analysis in Chapter Eight.

Throughout the exchange relationship there is a tension between formal and informal rules of the club. This tension is omnipresent within the landscape of the industry as has been demonstrated by the way advertising material on websites emphasises ambiguous boundaries and expectations to build an image of a mysterious industry of debauchery along with the formal rules which are displayed physically within the club setting itself. This tension then has to be negotiated by dancers when they interact with customers and dancers experience this as a grey area of their work.

I think the rules in clubs are very difficult because there's so many grey areas, they need to be there, but some girls abide to them more than others and so it's difficult (Texas).

In some instances even the formal rules and contracts created by a club would be contradictory as Katy explained from her experience:

It says they're not allowed to touch you and it says you're not allowed to offer any extras to the customer and you're not allowed to meet the customer outside of work

but then it also has in our contract that we have to have a dancer Twitter account to speak to our customers outside of work (Katy).

Social media has impacted greatly on the boundary between the working life and personal life of dancers and this is something dancers have to negotiate carefully, particularly because the industry is marginalised. Having contractual obligations to promote yourself as a dancer on social media sites means that keeping a working identity private becomes more complicated, as Katy found:

It's like a secret job so nobody knows about it, then if you've got a twitter it's more out there. I mean really anybody could search for my twitter (Katy).

In this section so far, three important findings have been discussed in relation to the exchange relationship in the lap dancing industry. First, dancers are required to negotiate customers who attempt to meet with dancers for extras; second, it is a routine part of a lap dancers work to manage touch; and third, inconsistencies in rules can make the work tricky to negotiate. For example incorporating social media into the work of a lap dancer means that they are expected to interact with customers outside of work via this medium, which sits in contrast to rules stating that dancers are not allowed to form relationships with customers outside of work. These findings reflect the expectations that customers hold regarding the exchange relationship, which are set up through both the websites and the club setting itself (see Chapters Five and Six). This knowledge has implications regarding the regulatory framework of the lap dancing industry because it highlights the importance and relevance of incorporating licensing conditions that manage how the exchange relationship is presented on marketing material for the club, and in the club setting. This is because, as it stands, the deliberate ambiguity surrounding the exchange relationship, that is present on club websites and in the

club setting, must be self-managed by dancers through negotiations of touch and boundaries. Moreover, as lap dancing clubs begin to make use of social media to promote the club and dancers working there, it is vital that regulatory frameworks are developed to meet these changes and ensure the safety and privacy of dancers, as well as ensuring that consistency is maintained across the formal rules of the club.

Another interesting boundary dancers negotiate throughout their working life is between their own emotions and the performance of emotional labour. Within the exchange relationship, as discussed above, dancers are required to perform in such a way that indicates they are attracted to the customer. However, in each interaction the dancer may be actually attracted to the customer to greater or lesser degrees and in some cases they may develop feelings towards a customer and this in turn impacts upon their embodied experience of the work: 'I can get butterflies in my tummy if I really fancy a customer' (Roxy).

In Roxy's case the boundary is an emotional one, where dancers develop feelings for a customer, however, a slightly different boundary, which may be negotiated and is often fluid is the amount of sexual pleasure gained by the dancer from the interaction. To illustrate the varying experiences of dancers, two examples are outlined. However, any point in between these two polarities has the potential to be experienced by dancers throughout their working lifecourse and from customer to customer. Mimi describes the sexual enjoyment she experiences when dancing for customers within specific parameters:

Lap dances I sexually quite enjoy, as long as the customers behaving reasonably well, it's quite a fun dynamic just sort of teasing, getting as close as possible without touching them, and the movements come naturally to me, so I guess it's a bit like sex but with certain restrictions (Mimi).

In contrast, Katy describes how she feels when she dances for a customer and is sexually disengaged from it. In this case the performance is perceived as very much a job that comes as a second nature and doesn't require conscious thought to perform: 'It is such a routine I can be thinking about anything from the Tesco shopping to my daughter's homework' (Katy).

So far this chapter has explored how dancers' experience their work and develop the skills required to perform the role of a lap dancer as well as the various boundaries that are negotiated by dancers and customers throughout the exchange relationship. The following section of the chapter will examine how and why lap dancers perform emotional, aesthetic and sexualized labour within their working role and how each of these forms of labour inter-relate.

Emotional labour

Considering that, as discussed above, flirting with customers makes up a large part of a lap dancer's work, it is perhaps unsurprising that dancers tend to become highly skilled in the performance of emotional labour, as Katy summarises: 'You have to keep your emotions in check' (Katy).

It emerged from the interview analysis that the notion of keeping emotions in check, or performing emotion work, became particularly strenuous when dancers received negative feedback from customers on their appearance, when dancers were struggling to sell dances which was often associated with a feeling that their timing was 'off' or a dancer was feeling less confident which was sometimes a consequence of customer feedback or poor timing.

It became clear from the interviews that dancers would consistently have customers telling them either how beautiful they were or why that customer didn't consider them to be beautiful which would sometimes take the form of quite offensive insults. What was particularly

interesting for the dancers I interviewed, was that in the context and environment of the lap dancing industry, some comments tended to stick with the dancers more than others. It tended to be that compliments on a dancer's beauty gave a more fleeting boost in confidence to a dancer while a more cutting insult would stay with them more. Through emotional labour, dancers could become better at not letting it show that the insults affected them emotionally. However, dancers tended to still listen to the insults more than the compliments. Katy explains her experience:

If you got upset every time anybody said something nasty you'd spend a lot of the time being upset but then what you've got to think is like all the times customers say nice things to you, you don't really take it in (Katy).

The key function of the performance of emotional labour for lap dancers was as a tool to disguise from customers that they were having a bad day, weren't feeling confident or that a comment from a customer had upset them. It emerged that fundamentally, if dancers didn't hide this from customers then it would become much more difficult to sell dances: 'If you're having a bad day you've got to try not to show it, it's really difficult but if you do show it no one wants a dance from you' (Mimi).

Some dancers found that by creating a persona while they were working they were better able to perform the emotional labour required to do their job. In particular, this was a strategy that assisted dancers with their flirtatious interactions with customers. Analisa explained why creating a persona was so important for her:

I think to be good at the job you really had to get into a character because if I'd gone in feeling like Vicky I'd have done a crap job. You have to go in and in your head be this

sexy amazing girl, just switch to Analisa and it made it so much easier. You need to kind of distance yourself from who you are and become this other person it makes it a lot easier to do whereas I felt like Analisa was very confident, quite cocky with the customers but I'm, me naturally, I'm very very shy (Analisa).

Aesthetic labour

The performance of aesthetic labour is an extremely important part of the work of a lap dancer. Dancers perceive their image to be an important aspect relating to how successful they can be as a dancer and therefore they tend to invest in aesthetic labour to maintain and develop their dancer image, as Christina suggests: 'Image is everything'. The strong focus on image within the lap dancing industry highlights the performativity of the role of a lap dancer. Judith Butler's (1988, 1990) notion of performativity refers to the stylised repetition of acts that become meaningful elements of an individual's performance. The aesthetic labour performed by dancers illustrates the performativity of the role and is explored next.

Some of the aesthetic labour performed by dancers is enforced by the rules of the club they work in, in some cases clubs would take photographs of dancers when they were recruited and then suspend them from work if they put too much weight on, as judged by the management staff within the club. More day to day aesthetic standards enforced by club regulations such as dancers having to have big hair or wear long dresses or hold-ups for a specific duration of the shift:

One of the rules at Seduction is you have to have big hair, so you have to like fluff your hair up and sometimes I have it curly and then other times I'll just backcomb the top and then before one o'clock we wear long dresses (Katy).

As well as being driven by the rules of the club, other aspects of aesthetic labour emerged as being very much part of the lifestyle of a lap dancer. Dancers would invest time and money in maintaining many aspects of their appearance and presentation for work:

I have massive hair and then I have, I wear quite a lot of make up some girls tone it down a bit I have my makeup really heavy and flamboyant I'm actually a qualified makeup artist as well so I've done that on the side, so I do that and then I always make sure I have my nails done, have my fake tan on and I like really big shoes as well (Roxy).

Within the lap dancing culture, aesthetic labour becomes an enjoyable part of the work for dancers and was often perceived as getting dressed up and representing precious bonding time, and a somewhat ritualistic process, getting ready with other dancers.

What seemed to be particularly interesting with aesthetic labour performed by dancers was that it related simultaneously to a feeling of closeness with other dancers, for instance as 'girl' time getting ready for the shift but also very much related to strong aesthetic competition within the industry, as the performance of aesthetic labour could set the dancer apart from other dancers and catch the attention of customers. As Roxy explains, if you don't work hard maintaining your image and appearance there is an increased risk of struggling to sell dances, 'otherwise you get kind of stuck in the background, people don't notice you so much'.

As well as dancers experiencing forms of more surface aesthetic labour such as tanning, make up, hair and nails, being important, they also tended to acknowledge that a shift has occurred in the types of aesthetic practices which are becoming more common within the industry. Increasingly more intrusive forms of aesthetic labour such as surgical procedures and botox are being undertaken as relatively routine practices:

I think it's getting more common definitely a lot of dancers I think nearly everyone has their boobs done and more and more people are asking me now about my botox and where I go (Roxy).

While this is reflective of cosmetic surgery procedures and botox being more accessible within the social context generally, it has implications for how lap dancers experience the ageing process in their specific workplace. First, it tends to make dancers feel as though they should have some of these procedures in order to keep up with the trends and practices of their friends and co-workers and as dancers age, procedures such as botox and breast augmentation become normalised, particularly when younger dancers are having similar work done, as Katy explained:

I'm only twenty eight but I feel like I'm one of the older ones there and I think that puts pressure on you a bit as well 'cause there's like twenty two year olds having Botox and then there's me! (Katy).

Second, the accessibility of more intrusive forms of aesthetic labour mean that in some cases dancers are able to work for longer in an industry that values youth provided that they can present themselves as youthful and as though they 'look after themselves'. In this respect, the chronological age of dancers becomes less relevant than the (aesthetic) age they are able to present themselves as: 'I guess if you've kept your figure, look after yourself, you don't look too old you could probably do it well into your thirties' (Analisa).

Sexualized labour

The sexualized labour performed by dancers has been intrinsically present in the previous discussions of emotional and aesthetic labour as, within this specific industry, the emotional

and aesthetic labour is in many ways sexualised. For instance, where emotional labour for more mainstream interactive service workers may involve being friendly toward a difficult customer, within the lap dancing industry the task is often to be not only friendly but portray sexual availability to a customer. Similarly the aesthetic labour that has been discussed involves dancers working towards developing an image of sexuality which is valued within this specific sexualised context.

The interview analysis illustrated some of the ways that dancers themselves felt like they sexualised their performance to the customer, portraying themselves as sexually available to them. A recurring theme throughout the interviews was the use of eye contact with customers to sexualise a dancer's performance. As mentioned above, eye contact was used on stage performances to get a customer's attention and make them feel special or singled out by the dancer but also within one to one lap dances eye contact emerged as a key ingredient of a performance of sexualised labour:

I think the main thing is to keep eye contact because customers really like that and it makes it feel like a really personal dance (Katy).

As well as using eye contact to sexualize their performance, dancers use more sexualized language and body language to perform sexualized labour. Along with the material setting within which this sexualized labour occurs, as examined in the previous chapter, the expectation for sexualized labour to be performed is enhanced. Kitty explained how she sexualizes the interactions with customers:

You talk to guys like they are the most handsome man ever, call them honey, darling, things like that. Flirt with them, make them think you really fancy them, you know. Act sexy with them (Kitty)

The process of flirting, the term dancers tended to coin for making customers think they really fancied them, could also involve dancers paying compliments to customers and sitting close to customers or on their knee in some cases while they spoke to one another. To assist dancers in performing sexualised labour, in some cases they would imagine the customer was someone else or look for something they found attractive about the person such as their eyes and focus on that part of them.

Intertwining emotional, aesthetic and sexualized labour

From the analysis above, it has been established that dancers are expected to simultaneously perform emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour to provide customers with the experience they are expecting and, as Mimi summarised: 'They don't like to feel like they're just wallets'.

However, what was really interesting about the interview data was the various ways in which emotional, aesthetic and sexualised forms of labour would inter-relate within the dancers lived, embodied experiences and some of these will be examined next.

The dancers interviewed tended to find that if an aspect of their aesthetic labour was below their usual standard then their confidence at performing emotional and sexualised labour decreased:

There'll always be days when you're having a bad day and your hair isn't going how you want it to and everything's going wrong and you don't feel like going to work, you feel tired and when a night doesn't start well it usually, it's hard to pick it back up again. If

you don't do those first few dances in the first three hours you don't feel so good, you end up not really pushing for dances and not going to customers so much and then you do feel less confident (Texas).

As Texas explained, if dancers are unhappy with their aesthetic labour then it had the potential to impact upon their whole night of work, particularly as selling dances early on in the evening boosted their confidence for the rest of the night. This highlights the performativity of the role in the sense that the aesthetic labour becomes a meaningful element of the performance and if a dancer is unhappy with it, they feel they no longer have the capacity to competently perform the role and meet the expectations of their audience. Hence, dancers are driven by their perception of the normative expectations compelling and constraining particular performances: In other words it is their understanding of these expectations that brings particular ways of being a lap dancer into the exchange relationship in a performative sense (Butler, 1988, 1990).

On the other hand, when dancers are losing confidence in their skills with performing emotional and sexualised labour, which is often signified to the dancer by being unable to sell dances during a shift, then they may use aesthetic labour to boost their confidence:

A lot of the time I think right, I I'm feeling a little bit down, I've not made any money, there's still time to make money, I think maybe what I need to do is take myself to the changing room and change my outfit because then that's a fresh start, you can change what you're wearing and then that signifies that I'm doing something different and I'll try again kind of thing. So that's what I'd probably do first thing, change my dress. (Katy)

As can be seen in Katy's account, aesthetic labour can be used to create 'fresh starts' within a shift to give the dancer a new confidence to interact with customers and makes up a tactic for renewing the energy the dancer will put in to her interactions.

In other instances dancers found they could compensate for a lack of skill or confidence in the performance of one type of labour by excelling in another. Mimi gave an example of a dancer who didn't meet the archetypical image of a lap dancer aesthetically but who could perform sexualised labour in an alternative way to become successful at selling dances:

She wasn't particularly what people would expect from a stripper, she was really lanky and quite sarcastic but she just looked at everyone like she wanted to fuck them and that worked well. (Mimi)

The notion of, in a sense, compensating for one form of labour with another was also relevant to the lived experience of ageing as a lap dancer. As discussed above, with developments in the accessibility of cosmetic surgery and procedures dancers have more ways in which they can work on their aesthetic labour. However, as dancers grow older the aesthetic labour they perform tends to become more strenuous. In some cases dancers would adjust the type of emotional labour they performed, often targeting the older customers and providing them with an interaction more akin to the 'girlfriend experience', a service performed within the sex industry by escorts that provides a more romantic and intimate experience than a purely sexual encounter (see Huff, 2011), than more fast paced selling of dances:

I worked better with older guys, they preferred someone who seemed a bit more real, they just wanted something different from what they had when they were younger (Mimi).

An important aspect of the lived experiences of lap dancers that emerged during the data analysis was how dancers would rely on and provide their friendship group with support whilst they were working. This support usually occurred when a dancer was, for whatever reason, struggling with the performance of emotional and/or sexualised labour. The double dance was a key tool for supporting another dancer or receiving support from co-workers, as Analisa explained:

If they saw you were having a bad night and you weren't doing any dances, they'd come over and say look do you want to come and do some doubles with me? And that quite often got you a dance because even if the guys didn't like you, if they like the other girl they'll pay for you both. Then if other customers saw you dancing, they say can I have that as well please, come over here. So I think double dances is a good way of getting your night started, especially if you're not very confident (Analisa).

This section of the chapter has outlined the many processes through which dancers perform and embody emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour. It has also teased out some of the key ways in which these three forms of labour interact and co-exist fluidly within the lived experiences of dancers.

Taking first the inter-relatedness of emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour, the website analysis demonstrated that, within the lap dancing industry, the expectations of dancers to perform sexualised labour are bound together with expectations of performing emotional and aesthetic labour. That is to say that for dancers to perform sexuality and sexualised labour in the heteronormatively prescriptive way that is deemed desirable in this industry, emotional labour will be intrinsically associated with the expected performance of sexual availability

required to 'cater for all [the customers] needs' and similarly aesthetic labour is consistently bound together in the very specific images of sexuality produced on the websites.

This theme emerged from the observational analysis of the lap dancing context in the respect that the space in which the sexualised interactions occur provides the coordinates of possibility that compels the performance of emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour. We can think of the coordinates of possibility as the intersection of the social and physical context. At this intersection dancers are conditioned and compelled toward specific performances because they are bound by the coordinates of possibility and as such there is no other way to occupy the space in which they are situated. This shifts the emphasis from considering the context as a passive arena in which performances of labour occur, to understanding that the context is richer and more active in performances of labour. Therefore, considering an embodied labour incorporating the active role of context and the inter-relatedness of emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour will provide a richer and more rounded empirical and theoretical understanding of performances of sexuality in the workplace. This is evident predominantly in the layout and lighting of the space which encourages the closeness of the interaction and make dancers bodies more visible in some spaces than others, for example on stage. Therefore in order for dancers to become sexually desirable to customers they become skilled in the embodied performance of emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour within the sexualised terrain of the space in which they are situated. This manifests in an ongoing and dynamic negotiation between embodied labour and the sexualised space whereby the environment and its conditions of possibility, and bodies within it, mutually inform one another to produce heightened performances of sexuality.

The interview analysis demonstrated that dancers experience and embody emotional, aesthetic and sexualized labour relationally rather than as separate categories of labour. At times dancers would use one form of labour to compensate for another such as working on aesthetic labour to boost confidence to perform sexualized or emotional labour. For example if dancers were feeling unconfident in performing sexualized labour they would often engage in aesthetic rituals such as applying fake tan products which would provide a type of mask over the skin and boost the dancers confidence. Alternatively, it was found that intuitively utilizing the performance of each type of labour could create 'fresh starts' and re-energize them throughout a shift, for example with an outfit change, application of perfume or a re-application of make-up.

Currently, the literature on sexualized labour is relatively sparse, therefore these findings contribute to developing a richer understanding of the relationship between sexuality and labour and how it dynamically inter-relates with the performance of emotional and aesthetic labour. While Warhurst and Nickson (2009) acknowledge associations between the three types of labour, these findings highlight the way in which workers may simultaneously perform each type of labour but also fluidly move between engaging in one more than the other in order to successfully perform their work.

In terms of the lap dancing literature specifically, previous literature has suggested that the work requires the performance of emotional and aesthetic labour however, these findings add to the current literature within this field by explicitly examining how emotional and aesthetic labour become sexualized in this setting and how the three forms of labour cannot be separated in the lap dancing context.

To summarise, these findings make two important contributions to the literature on emotional, aesthetic and sexualized labour. First, it builds on Warhurst and Nickson's (2009) typology by emphasising that the organizational landscape (Gagliardi, 1992) and context play dynamic roles in shaping the way that labour is performed and becomes meaningful. For example, the lighting and staging of the lap dancing club setting, along with the expectations of dancers' appearances portrayed through the websites, mean that dancers perform aesthetic labour through practices such as applying fake tan in order to meet the expectations of the role in the environment in which they are situated. Second, the thesis contributes to the literature on emotional, aesthetic and sexualized labour by beginning to tease out the ways that each type of labour inter-relates. For example, compensatory relationships have emerged from the data, which are illustrated when dancers are feeling less confident in their ability to perform emotional labour, they engage in aesthetic practices such as changing outfits or re-applying make-up to boost their confidence and compensate for their perception of a lack of skill or capacity in their performance of emotional labour.

Overall, this chapter has discussed the key emerging themes from the interview analysis including motivations for becoming a lap dancer, the embodied experience of the audition process, the many forms of boundaries that must be negotiated when performing the work of a dancer, and the dynamic relationship between emotional, aesthetic and sexualized labour.

Underpinning the data has been an emphasis on youthful and heteronormatively prescriptive images of sexuality which are valued in the lap dancing industry. This becomes evident when exploring the embodied practices lap dancers engage in, particularly as they age chronologically and (aesthetically) within the industry.

Drawing together the previous three chapters, Chapter Five analyzed data from lap dancing club websites and provided an account of the semiotic framing of the industry and how the organizational landscape within which it is situated contributes to specific heteronormative ideologies and expectations surrounding it. Chapter Four analyzed observation data to examine how the materiality of the lap dancing club setting facilitates an environment where women's bodies may be watched and consumed, and where boundaries are seemingly ambiguous. Chapter Seven has developed the previous two chapters by exploring the processes through which dancers negotiate, embody and experience the ambiguous landscape and materiality of the lap dancing industry to perform their work successfully.

The following chapter will provide a discussion of the findings that have been outlined in the previous three chapters, to embed the analyses in the current literature and relevant theoretical concepts. It will also provide an in depth discussion of the key contributions to knowledge this study has made.

Chapter Eight

Embodying ambiguity: Theoretical discussion and analysis

Chapters Five, Six and Seven have examined respectively how heteronormative, youthful sexuality is encoded, embedded and embodied in the lap dancing industry. Chapter Five explored how a youthful, heteronormatively prescriptive sexuality is encoded into the industry through its online presence and found, through semiological analysis, that the website material plays an intrinsic role in shaping and reinforcing an industry with heteronormatively prescriptive images of sexuality and age, and a deliberately ambiguous exchange relationship. Chapter Six examined the situated context in which the industry is embedded and argued that the socio-materiality of the setting facilitates an ambiguous environment where women and their bodies are to be watched and consumed. Chapter Seven explored the lived embodied experiences of dancers as they perform emotional, aesthetic and sexualized labour and negotiate boundaries in this ambiguous industry that promotes and values heteronormatively prescriptive images of sexuality and youth. This final substantive chapter will first provide an empirical analysis of the key themes that have emerged across Chapters Five, Six and Seven which are (i) the staging of sexuality and ageing, (ii) the setting of sexualized labour, and (iii) the situated, embodied performativity of sexuality and ageing. Chapter Eight focuses on how this performativity is experienced and enacted through the negotiation of ambiguity particularly in relation to the theme of touch. The second part of the chapter will provide a theoretical analysis of the relationship between staging, setting and embodied performance as discussed in the previous three chapters respectively. It does so drawing from Merleau-Ponty's embodied phenomenology and Butler's performative theory of gender, and her critique of heteronormativity. By drawing from both Butler and Merleau-Ponty, this theoretical analysis

will serve to develop an understanding of the processes through which the performativity of the role of a lap dancer are perceived, experienced and embodied. Finally, the chapter will integrate the key contributions of the study into previous literature on the sex industry, and the lap dancing industry specifically.

As noted above, the first key theme to be explored is the staging of sexuality and ageing which refers to the dynamic processes through which expectations surrounding performances of sexuality and ageing and customer interactions materialise and constitute an atmospheric staging of the lap dancing industry. In practice this involves a combination of the websites, lap dancing clubs, and embodied performances of dancers, combining to produce a particular sense of expectation underpinning the exchange relationship. Through this staging process the sensory perception of lap dancers, of lap dancing clubs and of the lap dancing industry more generally, is established. This 'atmospheric staging' is what shapes the lived experiences of lap dancers, particularly, as will be discussed below, their negotiations of sexuality, ageing and ambiguity.

Staging sexuality and ageing

Throughout each phase of analysis, heteronormatively prescriptive images of sexuality were produced, reinforced or embodied. Tying together the findings from each phase of analysis is the conceptual notion of staging and it is the staging of sexuality and ageing that makes up the first key theme. The concept of the staging of sexuality and ageing incorporates staging in the many forms it took in the data analysis therefore, at a conceptual level, staging includes material staging such as physical stages within the club setting, metaphorical stages such as the body being a stage and semiotic stages such as websites staging particular expectations within the industry. Each form of staging has been included within this analysis of the staging of

sexuality and ageing because although they are slightly different, they are entangled as interconnected levels, making up the sum of a broader, atmospheric staging of the lap dancing industry as a whole. As indicated above, this notion of staging refers to the context and backdrop within which the performance of the role of a lap dancer takes place and conditions the way in which the role is experienced and embodied. This performative approach to the working role draws from Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical account of the self in everyday life. Goffman (1959) emphasized the processes surrounding the staging of scenarios and how staging produces and controls behaviour in specific social interactions. This theme explores how the lap dancing industry is staged and how this conditions and compels particular behaviours and perceptions. An important element of the staging of the lap dancing industry includes Gagliardi's (1990) organizational landscaping which is considered here to be the semiotically staged, multi-levelled backdrop compelling perceptions of, and behaviours within, the industry. Gagliardi's work on the landscaping of corporate artefacts highlights the importance of understanding the processes through which material organizational artefacts, such as bodies, shape the values and beliefs surrounding an industry. As Gagliardi (1990: 26) puts it 'artifacts evince and reflect social and cultural dynamics...if there is a dominant vision, this will be faithfully reflected by the artifacts'. However the staging of the lap dancing industry is not merely an examination of a specific type of social interaction, it is also a *commodified* interaction which holds what Böhme (2003) terms staging value in his discussion of the aesthetic economy. Böhme suggests that within the aesthetic economy 'commodities are treated in a special way: they are given an appearance, they are aestheticized and *staged* in the sphere of exchange' (Böhme, 2003: 72) and thus the attractiveness and atmosphere of an exchange has a specific value, a staging value.

Within the lap dancing industry the staging is particularly important because the aesthetic labour performed not only enhances the atmosphere of the exchange of a commodity but the dancers performance itself is the commodity and therefore it is important to understand how particular forms of aesthetic labour and performances come to be valuable in the specific context and landscape of the lap dancing industry.

The lap dancing club websites provide a landscape within which the expectations of the industry are shaped and reinforced, as discussed in Chapter Five. The semiotically staged components encoded into the websites contribute to the broader staging of the industry. Taken together, websites dynamically build and shape how sexuality is staged semiotically, perceived, ingested and exuded in this context. The valued images of sexuality are showcased on websites and both dancers and customers can come to understand what they can expect, and what may be expected of them, through this carefully staged forum. For example, data analysis found the repetition of toned, youthful, slim bodies throughout the websites, along with the type of language played an important role staging the values of the lap dancing industry. In particular, the ideological heteronormative images of sexuality portrayed predominantly but not exclusively, through images and language on the websites, sets a stage for customer expectations and what is expected from dancers in their performance of sexuality while working in the industry.

The staging of sexuality was also present in the observational analysis in the respect that the materiality of the industry may be thought of as the material staging of the performance of sexuality within the setting. One important aspect of this was the physical staging in the clubs, which provides the coordinates of possibility in the space. In other words the space compels dancers within it to perform their role in such a way that is consistent with the values held in

the industry. Therefore, this didn't simply facilitate an environment for consuming women's bodies but through the dynamic socio-materiality of the setting, there is no other way for dancers and customers to be, the space permeates the bodies within it and the bodies within it permeate the setting. The specific type of staging (discussed above) emphasized the importance of becoming skilled in the performance of sexuality as dancers' bodies are under close scrutiny during their stage performances. As well as this however, the staging of the space more broadly, including the sectioning of space and the creation of lighter and darker areas was also integral to the enacting of the staging of sexuality through more subtle manipulations of the staged atmosphere contributing to the dynamic of the sexualized encounter between customers and dancers. This highlights a key aspect of the staging of sexuality, that the sum of its parts is greater than each individual element. In other words, the space without the dancers and the lighting etc. would not create the same atmosphere, and vice versa. Rather, each element provides a layer of the atmosphere and together they form a coherent, staged, atmosphere.

From the interview data analysis, the corporeality of staging emerged through the processes, and work on the body, dancers do in order to give the embodied performance of sexuality that they are compelled to give within this context. In this respect sexuality is absorbed into the body from the setting, as discussed above, but dancers' bodies also, through the practices and aesthetic processes they engage in, exude sexuality back into the staged atmosphere within the space, thus reinforcing the sexually charged environment. Dancers learn the expectations of the industry from other dancers, customers, marketing and social perceptions.

In terms of ageing specifically, the theme of staging highlights ageing as being performative.

This theme encapsulates thinking about ageing being defined in relation to an embodied, youthful norm which was found to underpin the lap dancing industry. The website analysis demonstrated the presence of youthful sexuality and the processes through which youth was deemed desirable and valuable. Similarly, the interview analysis revealed the pressures to remain youthful and the aesthetic labour lap dancers engage with as they age in the lap dancing industry. The embodied youthful norm found within this industry represented an aesthetic quality of ageing according to which you become too old when you look or feel too old. This performativity relates to the materiality of women's bodies as they age but also to what women's bodies in this context symbolize and signify such as their capacity to embody an industry ideal.

Previous literature on sexual identities has illustrated that within organizational settings particular sexualities become valued while others are marginalized (Jackson, 2006; Riach & Wilson, 2014; Ward & Winstanley, 2004). This is evident predominantly through the prioritization of heterosexuality as the way dancers are compelled to be, therefore marginalizing other forms of sexual identity. The staging of sexuality and ageing theme suggests that organizational contexts not only place value on heteronormative, youthful, sexualities but also provide the contours through which workers are compelled toward heterosexuality and associated subjectivities desired by the organization, and industry. In this respect the organizational staging of sexuality and ageing plays a constitutive role in the performance of heterosexuality in an organizational context. However the staging of sexuality and ageing raises an important question of what this means for the performance and experience of sexualized labour within the lap dancing industry, a question which is addressed in the next theme of 'setting sexualized labour'.

Setting sexualized labour and ageing

The second key theme to emerge addresses the question of what the staging of sexuality and ageing means for the experience and performance of sexualized labour because it emphasizes that performance and lived experience cannot be separated from the context within which it is embedded and embodied. This is because context is not neutral but a constitutive element of how labour is lived, experienced and embodied, therefore it is particularly important to consider the *setting* of sexualized labour and ageing in order to understand the embodied performances and lived experiences of those who work in the lap dancing industry.

Indeed, the significance of the context within which emotional, aesthetic and sexualized labour is performed emerged as an important theme throughout each phase of analysis. As described in Chapter Five, the website analysis emphasized the processes through which the semiotic landscaping of an industry contributes to the staging of the expected forms of emotional, aesthetic and sexualized labour surrounding it. Similarly, the observational analysis in Chapter Six highlighted how the socio-materiality of the setting compels performances of each type of labour. Finally, the interview analysis reinforced these findings as dancers would engage in embodied practices and performances of emotional, aesthetic and sexualized labour which were shaped by the expectations surrounding the industry and the materiality of the setting. For example the act of using self-tan met the expectations of dancers being tanned, flawless women, an expectation that was encoded in the websites. Self-tanning made dancers feel more confident under the unflattering lighting surrounding the stage in the club setting and consequently it emerged as an embodied aesthetic practice that dancers engaged in, in order to feel confident and competent in performing their work.

This theme builds on Warhurst and Nickson's (2009) typology of emotional, aesthetic and sexualized labour by suggesting that a comprehensive consideration of the organizational context within which performances of these forms of labour occur can provide a richer understanding of how interactive service work is experienced and embodied by workers. In addition, it illustrates how the specific context and setting not only enable and value performances of particular forms of emotional, aesthetic and sexualized labour but it forms an integral part of the labour itself. In other words, the space encourages the bodies within it to use it and exist within it, in a specifically sexualized way. For example the layout of the space facilitates watching bodies, stages mean bodies will be watched and compels them to meet the heteronormatively prescriptive images of sexuality and age that are deemed desirable by the industry. Simultaneously however, the bodies within the space also exude sexuality onto the context, therefore it is important to incorporate this active process into an understanding of how labour becomes embodied. That is to say the space and context actively shapes labour by enabling and encouraging desirable performances of sexuality and age to be embodied.

This theme has important implications for ageing in sexualized occupations, and ageing more generally because it highlights that ageing can be thought about in terms of temporalities and context rather than merely a chronological process. The interview data analysis illustrated this by suggesting that dancers began to perceive themselves as, feel and be considered older at an age that would be considered young within other, more mainstream, organizational contexts. The website analysis demonstrated how the semiotic landscaping of the lap dancing industry values a specific, sexualized, youthfulness and therefore not only makes the industry accessible for certain people but makes dancers feel as though they may be, or be perceived to be, too old for the industry at a relatively chronologically young age. The observation analysis

highlighted that the materiality of the context facilitates an environment for watching, consuming and potentially scrutinising bodies. Therefore, this embodied awareness of scrutinisation leads to workers feeling out of place in the industry if they feel their body no longer has the capacity to meet the expectations of the environment.

Longevity also plays a role in thinking about ageing as progression in the lap dancing industry. The data analysis found that experienced dancers were admired by less experienced dancers for their accumulation of skill and often engaged in some form of training or advising newer dancers. However, longevity and experience goes alongside an embodied concern for seeming a bit 'tired' or 'past it', again after a relatively short career compared with more mainstream industries. This is also indicative of the importance of considering the specific context within which ageing is embodied and experienced as the lap dancing industry emerged as an intense, accelerated context, one in which time progresses in a very compressed way which is perhaps most poignantly demonstrated in the compressed amount of time the transactions take to move from initial greetings to an intimate interaction.

Within the lap dancing literature, these findings build upon studies emphasizing the emotional and aesthetic labour dancers perform by drawing attention to how the staging and setting of the industry play a crucial and dynamic role in shaping the performance of emotional and aesthetic labour. For example, aesthetic practices such as outfit changes, use of hair styling and make-up (Mavin & Grandy, 2013) which have been written about in previous literature may now be understood as the embodied performance of a heteronormative, aesthetic ideology which is conditioned through the staging and setting of the industry and would seem out of place in alternative contexts.

Sexualized labour as a negotiation of ambiguity

The third main theme to have emerged from the data relates to the significance of understanding sexuality and ageing, as they are staged and set in the lap dancing industry as a situated, embodied, performativity that is shaped by a constant negotiation of ambiguity. Sexualized labour within the lap dancing industry is characterized by ambiguity because the commodification of heteronormative, youthful sexuality is staged, set and situated in a way that promotes such ambiguity. This ambiguity can be discerned particularly in the way in which the industry exploits the desire to get more from the dancer, for example through selling VIP experiences that promise a more intimate experience for customers that are willing and able to pay more. This has implications for the situated, lived experience of boundaries in the industry as the characteristic ambiguity means that boundaries are being continuously negotiated during interactions between dancers and customers. The notion that ambiguity is a condition of sexualized labour and the lived experience of boundaries within the lap dancing industry will be explored next.

The website analysis indicated that the landscape of the industry sets up ambiguous expectations and uses this ambiguity as a marketing tool for clubs. The socio-materiality of the setting also contributes to this ambiguity as the space is designed to be conducive with the suggestive nature of the industry and dancers' performances of sexuality within the space are underpinned by the performance of suggestion or as Adorno and Horkheimer (2007) put it, the promise by which they refer to the illusion of the spectacle because all it actually confirms is that 'real point will never be reached' (Adorno & Horkheimer, 2007: 37). This manifests particularly within the lap dancing industry in the way in which dancers make customers believe they are 'special' while simultaneously ensuring that the dancer and the club are making

money. Relating to the performance of sexuality and suggestion is the ambiguity surrounding the task of dancers to simultaneously break down boundaries with customers by being suggestive and flirtatious but also maintain them at a place that the dancers themselves are comfortable with, whether that is in-keeping with the formal rules of the club or not.

As discussed in Chapter Seven, the interview analysis demonstrated that dancers negotiate a number of different boundaries within their work and throughout their working life course and this embodied experience is intrinsically linked with the ambiguity that is characteristic of the industry. The negotiation through these blurred boundaries requires an accumulation of a specific set of skills which have been discussed above in more detail. Previous literature on the lap dancing industry has acknowledged that dancers compromise normative boundaries (Wesely, 2003) and flirt with customers (Deshotels & Forsyth, 2006). However, what has been less understood, and is emphasized here, is that these behaviours occur through the accumulative development of the very particular skillset required to negotiate and thrive in the ambiguous landscape and socio-materiality of the lap dancing industry. Moreover, the staging and setting of the lap dancing industry plays an active role in shaping and perpetuating the ambiguity. For example, the VIP experiences advertised on the websites and experienced within the club setting promise the deliberately ambiguous and elusive notion of customers experiencing 'something more' when they indulge in a VIP experience.

Connecting each of the three themes, focusing respectively on how sexuality and ageing are staged, set and situated in the embodied performance of sexualized labour in the lap dancing industry is the theme of touch. It is through touch, and perceptions and expectations associated with touch, that the ambiguity and the negotiation of boundaries discussed above, was experienced and enacted. In practice, this means that if work in the lap dancing industry is

characterized by the negotiation of ambiguity, touch constitutes the site on which this negotiation is played out and is a theme to which we now turn in more detail.

Touch

Touch of the body represents the site at which the negotiation of ambiguity, heightened performances of sexuality and the exchange relationship between dancers and customers, meet. For this reason touch makes up a conceptually interesting and particularly crucial aspect of the analysis of embodied performances of sexuality and ageing.

The themes that have been examined so far have emphasized the characteristic ambiguity of sexualized labour, and the lap dancing industry specifically, in its commodification of the 'promise' of something more, in the VIP experience for instance. The staging of sexuality and ageing may be thought of as the process which frames the commodification of this promise, and which maps out the coordinates possibility within an industry characterized by ambiguity. In other words the staging shapes the physical and social possibilities within the exchange relationship on which the industry is based. In the lap dancing industry the coordinates of possibility mean that dancers are compelled to perform youthful, heightened and prescriptive images of heterosexuality while negotiating the highly ambiguous terrain of touch.

There are many forms of interactive service work that involve touch (for example beauty therapy and hairdressing (Hancock et al, 2015; Sanders et al, 2013; Sullivan, 2014)). However, these forms of work tend to involve mutual, consensual touch or explicitly de-sexualized touch. For example, Oerton (2004) provides an account of how massage therapists de-sexualize their work as a compensatory measure for the assumption that massage therapists will provide 'extras'. In contrast, the context and interaction in the lap dancing industry is explicitly sexualized, as the data analysis demonstrated, the material setting invites touch in the respect

that it is sensually inviting and the websites set up an enticement to touch by incorporating suggestive and ambiguous language partnered with enticing images of women. Particularly interesting here, and the key element that makes the industry relatively unique, is that all clubs within the analysis had formal no-touch rules while selling an ambiguous enticement of touch. This enticement to touch creates ambiguity in the respect that touch is formally forbidden in the interaction but ambiguity is also an inherent part of the enticement because it allows customers to believe that touch is possible and maintains the performance of intimacy. This reinforces the notion that the lap dancing industry is defined by ambiguity but also suggests that the site at which this negotiation of ambiguity takes place is the dancers' bodies in the negotiation of touch. Therefore, this paradoxical inviting of touch and touch as a forbidden entity must be carefully and skillfully negotiated by dancers as part of their work and is a key element of the work they do.

Within the interview analysis many references to tanning were made and this emerged as an important aspect of touch within the industry. In some respects tanning the skin formed a mask over the body and could not only hide industry-defined 'imperfections' but was perceived by dancers to form an important boundary between their body and the customer. Elsewhere, it has been found that sex workers use condoms as more than a physical barrier separating themselves from customers with them instead forming a psychological barrier (Brewis & Linstead, 2000; Sanders, 2004). Tanning in this context provides a similar barrier to enable dancers to perform their work more skillfully however, in contrast to the use of condoms in sex work, tanning products penetrate the skin so the barrier becomes part of the dancer's body making this boundary, appropriately for this context, permeable and ambiguous. Therefore, this mask could only work in a visual capacity and when a dancer's body is touched, the barrier

breaks down instantly. Therefore for dancers, non-consensual touch in this industry crosses an important boundary and pushes lap dancing further away from sexualized labour and towards sex work. It also requires dancers to continually scan for, and negotiate, breaches of the 'notouch rule' whilst also enticing touch. Importantly, it is necessary to appreciate that touch doesn't happen in a vacuum and therefore understanding the context in which women working as lap dancers experience and perceive touch raises important theoretical questions and issues which will be explored in the following section of the chapter.

To recap on the chapter so far, the staging of sexuality and ageing emerged as a key theme and highlighted the way in which the coordinates of possibility manifest in the lap dancing industry and play a constitutional role in compelling dancers to perform heteronormatively prescriptive, heightened portrayals of sexuality and sexualized youthfulness. The setting of sexualized labour and ageing emerged as the second theme and emphasized that the performance and lived experience of sexualized forms of labour and how people age within it, cannot be separated from the context in which they are embedded and embodied. Therefore, considering an embodied labour incorporating the active role of context will provide a richer understanding of performances of sexuality and ageing in the workplace. The third theme was sexualized labour as a situated, negotiation of ambiguity, underpinned by a commodification process that situates the industry in an exchange relationship whereby the implication is you move away from dancing towards sex work when you no longer look at the body but you are able to touch it. That is to say that as customers are enticed to touch, the interaction moves along the blurred boundary or continuum between sexualized labour and sex work. In sum, connecting each of these themes, touch emerged as a conceptually important aspect of the analysis of embodied performances of ageing and sexuality as the body becomes the site at which negotiations of the

ambiguity and enticement to touch which are characteristic of the lap dancing industry, take place.

Each of these themes make up separate but connected aspects of how the work of a lap dancer is experienced. For instance, the staging of sexuality and ageing constitutes the coordinates of possibility for how to perform in the industry and compels dancers to be a particular way which leads to a perception of not belonging in the industry if they no longer have the capacity to meet the ideals of the industry. The setting plays an active role in shaping dancers perception and experience of whether they have the capacity to meet the ideals and expectations of the industry. Running through each theme is ambiguity which requires dancers to develop a skillset to negotiate specific, idealised images of sexuality and ageing as well as the ambiguous exchange relationship whereby they must simultaneously sell, manage and negotiate an enticement to touch. In sum, staging, setting and performativity are dynamically inter-related and embodied by dancers working in the lap dancing industry and, crucially, the body, and touch of the body emerges as the site at which each of the themes are played out during interactions between dancers and customers.

This analysis raises important questions such as how do heteronormatively prescriptive images of youthful sexuality come to be performed and valued in the lap dancing industry? Why has it been argued that boundaries tend to be fluid within the lap dancing industry? And how are sexuality, ageing and boundaries experienced by dancers working in the industry? To understand how these themes are connected and made sense of, I will now draw from Butler's theory of gender performativity and Merleau-Ponty's embodied phenomenology. Butler's theory of gender performativity will be drawn on as it provides a useful framework for demonstrating and understanding the performativity of dancer subjectivities. Furthermore,

drawing on Merleau-Ponty's (2002) phenomenological perspective better enables us to understand the body as 'simultaneously the subject and object of our perception' (Merleau-Ponty, 2002: 239). I will draw on this insight as a framework for understanding and interpreting perceptions and experiences in the lap dancing industry.

Lap dancer performativity

Butler (1990) conceptualizes the processes of sex, gender and sexuality acquisition as a heterosexual matrix within which the biological sex assigned to an individual determines the set of binary social categories within which normalized expressions of gender and sexuality lie. These categories are reinforced by both the cultural and linguistic distinction that is made between what it means to be male and what it means to be female. Butler (1990) argues that these processes form the heterosexual matrix because, when biologically determined as female, the binary category of a feminine gender and hetero-passive sexuality are culturally and linguistically normalised. Consequently these constructions of gender and sexuality become mainstream due to the social and cultural pressures to conform. Butler (1990) argues that the binary categories of feminine expressing female and hetero-passive sexuality and masculine expressing male and hetero-active sexuality compel individuals towards a compulsory practice of heterosexuality as anything other than the sanctioned heterosexuality fall outside of the socially ingrained set of processes which signify a dominant socially acceptable portrayals of sexuality.

Butler (1990) also argues that the performance of masculine and feminine gender and sexuality is a 'performative accomplishment' (Butler, 1990: 192). The distinctions between sex, gender identity and gender performance are demonstrated not least through drag acts which 'in imitating gender...implicitly reveals the imitative structure of gender itself' (Butler, 1990: 187).

In other words the performativity of gender and sexuality is revealed through parodies of gender such as drag acts.

Not only is the performativity of gender revealed but the role of the body in the performance of gender which is, for Butler, is 'a surface whose permeability is politically regulated, a signifying practice within a cultural field of gender hierarchy and compulsory heterosexuality' (Butler, 1990: 189). Therefore the body is the site at which meaningful performances of gender and sexuality are produced.

However, performances of gender and sexuality do not happen in a vacuum, rather as Butler (1990) argues, they are situated in a time and a space (for example websites and clubs) that compel and constrain the possibilities of the performance. As Butler has suggested, gendered bodies can be thought of as 'styles of the flesh' and Butler emphasizes the importance of time and space when suggesting that 'these styles all never fully self-styled, for styles have a history, and those histories condition and limit the possibilities' (Butler, 1990: 190).

For Butler, gender and sexuality are intentional and performative and Butler defines performative as a 'dramatic and contingent construction of meaning' (Butler, 1990: 190), therefore, through performances of gender and sexuality, the body comes to bear meaning as the possibilities of performativity are temporally, spatially and historically conditioned.

The body comes to bear meaning through, Butler argues, a stylized repetition of acts.

Repetition is a key element of Butler's theory of performativity because through repetition acts become social rituals and once an act is repeated it is a 'reenactment and reexperiencing of a set of meanings already socially established' (Butler, 1990: 191). For this reason individual performances of gender and sexuality take on collective meaning through mundane bodily

gestures and enactments such as repeated website images, décor and dance routines. Drawing together the performativity of the body and the conditions of possibility for performativity, for Butler, gender and sexuality is 'an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a stylized repetition of acts.' (Butler, 1990: 191).

Butler's theory of heteronormativity and performativity provides a useful framework for analyzing the work of lap dancers because it emphasizes the performativity of dancer subjectivities and the processes through which they are constituted in the heightened, heterosexual context in which they are situated. A theoretical analysis of the performativity of lap dancers will be conducted next.

Within the lap dancing industry there is a very specific constituted social temporality that reinforces prescriptive images of heterosexuality. For the women in this study, they came to the belief that if they could not perform to the heteronormatively prescriptive images of sexuality desired by the audience (those within the industry and customers) then there was no longer a place for them in the industry. As dancers age they perceive themselves as losing the capacity to embody the role of a lap dancer. Therefore they work hard to accumulate the skills required to perform both the working role and a youthful sexuality that forms a key element of the requirements of the working role.

As Butler suggests, performative accomplishment is 'compelled by social sanction' (Butler, 1988: 520). For women working in the lap dancing industry, stylization of their bodies is an important part of the work they do. The repetition of acts such as tanning, applying make-up and changing outfits as well as a commitment to anti-ageing enactments and procedures become meaningful as they actively interact with the staging and setting of the industry. In other words, dancers' subjectivities are performative.

Drawing from Butler's (1988) notion of performativity, the theme of staging in the lap dancing industry may be thought of as the staging of performativity which, in the lap dancing industry in particular, materializes as a compelled heteronormativity. As discussed above, the staging of expectations in the industry place heteronormatively prescriptive images of ageing and sexuality as desirable. This is evident in the semiotic staging of the websites where heteronormatively prescriptive images are repeatedly used and compel dancers to perform sexuality in this way by shaping their own, and customers' expectations of them. The setting of the lap dancing clubs encourage the performance of heteronormative sexuality as it makes up an integral part of the labour rather than simply a backdrop for labour to occur within. That is to say that as dancers interact with the space in order to perform their role, the space compels them to perform in a heteronormatively prescriptive way because there is no other way to be. Therefore, the staging of sexuality theme suggests that organisational contexts not only place value on heteronormative sexualities but also provide the contours through which workers are compelled toward heterosexuality and associated subjectivities desired by the organization, and industry. In this respect the organizational staging of sexuality plays a constitutive role in the performance of heterosexuality in an organizational context. In this respect the staging of performativity materializes in a compelled heteronormativity.

The ambiguity associated with the role of a lap dancer has interesting implications for the performativity of their role. As their role is situated in a position of ambiguity, the performativity is being continually tested, managed and negotiated by dancers. That is to say, dancers are performing an enticement to touch but simultaneously managing boundaries within their performance to discourage customers from physically touching them. To accommodate this, dancers accumulate performative skills to maintain distance (keep the

performance element of their role) but also ensure customers are satisfied that the dancers performance meets their performative expectations and desires. Butler argues 'the act that one performs, is, in a sense, an act that has been going on before one arrived at the scene on the scene' (Butler, 1988:526), therefore, as dancers tend to learn these skills from more experienced dancers, this reinforces, and continues, an industry rehearsed performativity of heteronormative roles. Implicit to this performance is the negotiation of touch because the websites and the materiality of the setting condition ambiguous expectations surrounding boundaries and touch which are then played out during the exchange between dancers and customers and dancers acquire the skills to incorporate this negotiation into their performance of the role of a lap dancer.

Touch is an important aspect when considering the performativity of a lap dancer because the performance is one of heightened sexuality and enticement, however the performative skills accumulated by dancers are rooted in a position of not being touched and managing the prevention of touch. Therefore when dancers are performing heteronormatively prescriptive and heightened images of sexuality and age and are touched, the body becomes the site at which the performance breaks down. As the stylization of the body and the performative enactments dancers engage in are rooted in enticement to touch, once they have been touched the performance loses its direction as it is at this point that customers will be prevented from touching. It is also at this point that dancers employ specialised skills to attempt to maintain the promise or enticement of touch, for example by using the setting to say it's not them that doesn't want to be touched but the security cameras will see and they will potentially lose their job if they let the customer touch them.

Overall, the terms of performance (Butler, 1988) manifest through the coordinates of possibility within the physical and social space laid out by the staging and setting of performativity actively interacting with one another and the embodied performance of the dancers through which the dancers bodies come to bear cultural meanings as they materialise the heteronormative sexualities prescribed and valued by, and within, the industry. Touch is problematic in performances of sexuality founded on an enticement to touch because the enticement dissipates leaving only the act of touching left. This relates to Adorno and Horkheimer's (2007) notion of the illusory promise of something more within the culture industry. As lap dancers performances are underpinned by an illusory promise of touch, this means that when dancers are touched the performance breaks down because they are no longer enticing and thus, the inducement to keep paying for the enticement dissipates.

So far, Butler's theory of gender performativity has been used to argue that lap dancers' subjectivities are performative. The following section will use Merleau-Ponty's embodied phenomenology to consider how performative dancer subjectivities become part of their perception and embodied performance, beginning with an overview of Merleau-Ponty's theory of embodied phenomenology.

Lap dancer embodied perception

In his critique of both the empiricist thought of Descartes and Kant, and traditional intellectualist theories, Merleau-Ponty sought to develop an embodied approach to understanding how we experience the world. For Merleau-Ponty (2002: xviii) 'the world is not what I think, but what I live through', suggesting that all understanding is lived and that we come to know the world as we live in it (as we are situated in it, from our own perspective). Therefore, all knowledge is embodied and situated. Moreover, he places the body as not

merely central to how we experience the world but constitutive of it. That is to say we can only be 'in the world through our body' (Merleau-Ponty, 2002: 239), thus placing the body as both subject and object of perception. This emphasises that the body is not a passive recipient of experiences or the outside world but embodied perception is constituted in and through perceptions of the external world. Therefore, for Merleau-Ponty (2002), we exist and encounter the world through our embodied subjectivity. This approach combines with Butler's emphasis on performativity framing subjectivity as a situated, embodied performance.

Central to understanding Merleau-Ponty's notion of the phenomenological world is acknowledging that perception and meaning comes to be through inter-acting with others and the world around us. That is to say that our perceptions don't occur in isolation but are embedded in an inter-subjective social materiality (Dale, 2005). That is to say that the social world is not pre-given but rather is made sense of through our own, and others' experience. Therefore, perception and meaning making manifest 'when our own experiences and those of others intersect with each other' (Merleau-Ponty, 2002: xxii). This means that because of our embodied subjectivity in the world, we are embedded in social relations with the bodies we encounter in our situation and crucially, our bodies provide the site on which we perceive other people and things. But the body is also the site that situates us in other people's perceptions. Thus our embodied interactions form an important aspect of our experiences and perceptions of the world.

While our interactions with other bodies are constitutive of our own and others' perceptions, so too is the situated context in which we exist. For Merleau-Ponty, the context of perception is key because we can only perceive things in the environment, or phenomenal field

(Merleau-Ponty, 2002: 60), in which we are situated. Merleau-Ponty suggests that we don't merely occupy our world, rather, we inhabit it.

Taking all this into account, according to Merleau-Ponty we embody our world within our perceptual field where our experiences, interactions and situation intersect to build our perceptions and others' perceptions of ourselves. Our task then is to understand the layers of perception and meaning such as our body, experience, world and others, which forms a 'synthesis of horizons' to bring into being a world in which an 'indefinite multiplicity of relationships are of reciprocal implication' (Merleau-Ponty, 2002: 82). In other words, through our experience, situation and the people we interact with, we come to understand and perceive our world, through our body, in a meaningful way.

The body becomes crucial as the material site at which we interact with the world and others and forms a site for perception, meaning-making and understanding. Our subjective gaze occurs through our body as we have no other way to be and consequently the body becomes the site of encounters with others. Merleau-Ponty (2002) suggests that dispositional tendencies are acquired through body schemas. A body schema refers to a system of social possibilities that compel and constrain our embodied inhabitation of the social world and through which bodily boundaries, skills and capacities are shaped (Merleau-Ponty, 2002). These body schemas are conditioned by both the social situation we are in and our perceptual field then expressed by dispositional tendencies, therefore we do not merely experience our body but we experience our body 'in-the-world' (Merleau-Ponty, 2002: 164). In this respect body schemas are a 'third term' (Merleau-Ponty, 2002: 115) between self and other. That is to say, our body is our 'general medium for having a world' (Merleau-Ponty, 2002: 169). In other words, our body schemas are the 'rules' that govern how we should be in and through our bodies.

Drawing from this embodied phenomenology, lap dancers bodies are simultaneously subject and object of their perception meaning that they are neither passive recipients of their world nor a projection on to it. Rather, the objective world of the lap dancing industry is brought into meaningful existence by perceptions of it but at the same time, the perceiving subject is constituted in and through perception of the external world. For example, in the lap dancing industry, the objective world or setting of the lap dancing club is brought into meaningful existence by dancers and customers perceptions of it but at the same time the dancer is constituted in and through the lap dancing club setting. Therefore the dancer embodies the sexualized setting but simultaneously sexualizes the setting as they inhabit it. The setting facilitates a world for watching women's bodies and therefore women must have the capacity to be seen in such a way that is appropriate according to their perceptions when they inhabit that context. That is to say that, drawing from Merleau-Ponty's (2002) embodied phenomenology, dancers' are simultaneously subjects and objects, their subjective perception of the lap dancing context materializes objectively through their body as they physically engage with their external world.

Perceptions of the lap dancing industry are not only formed from the materiality of the setting but also form the broader landscape of the external world which has been illustrated by the processes through which websites condition the expectations of the industry. That is to say that the websites and clubs impart bodily schemas, the websites communicate them and the clubs materialize them, ultimately conditioning and shaping the dispositional tendencies of dancers. If embodied subjectivity means we experience our own body as adopting forms of behaviour to inhabit a particular world, it is our body that perceives the body of another and situates us in other people's perception. For lap dancers, specific embodied performances become

normalised through dancer's perceptions of the dancers around them. For example anti-ageing procedures such as botox enables them to perceive themselves as having the capacity to perform the work. Similarly, dancers interact with one another and embody heightened performances of sexuality and youthfulness because they perceive dancers who are skilled in embodying this performance as successful and likewise, dancers' who accumulate these skills are perceived as having the capacity to inhabit the lap dancing industry.

The situation or context of the lap dancing industry also conditions what is normal or natural within the environment. This is illustrated in the finding that expectations of the lap dancing industry, such as how dancers will look and behave, shaped by the semiotic landscape and the materiality of the setting compel dancers to embody these expectations and inhabit their environment in this way. Therefore, the expectations of the industry condition what is natural, normal and desirable in the context of the lap dancing industry. In other words, dancers are compelled towards these body schemas which are exaggerated within the lap dancing industry.

Dancers' perceptions of the lap dancing industry, the expectations of the work, and themselves, are conditioned by their embodied subjectivity, interactions with others and their situation. The lap dancing industry is a sexualized and ambiguous industry with a set of expectations encoded into it, which are shaped and constituted through exaggerated, heteronormatively prescriptive, body schemas within the lap dancing industry. These exaggerated body schemas may provide useful insights into a more general pattern of pornification in contemporary culture (Walter, 2010). This is reflected in the experience of lap dancers as they are compelled towards images of youthful sexuality because that it is the only way they perceive themselves as valued and skillful in the work they do. When they feel their body no longer has the capacity to portray the desirable images, they feel increasingly out of place as they no longer have the capacity to

embody industry ideals. The staging of sexuality and ageing maps out the social possibilities compelling and constraining embodied inhabitation but importantly, this intersects with the socio-materiality of the space creating a context for scrutinisation of women's bodies. The embodied awareness of scrutinisation means dancers have heightened awareness of their capacity to fill and fit into the environment in which they are situated.

Dancer's body schemas become sexualized through interactions with others, the materiality of the space they situate and the landscape of expectations which are specific to the lap dancing industry. Dancers continually negotiate a sexualized landscape, exchange relationships and ambiguity which are produced and reproduced through website material, the socio-materiality of the space and interactions with other dancers and customers. Therefore, embodied subjectivity is situated in Merleau-Ponty's phenomenal field and is situated in its environment and understanding of lived experience is not possible without understanding of the phenomenal field as the body is tied to its context. The body and the context are in continual mutual interaction and together shape and reproduce perceptions and experiences, as well as perceptions and experiences shaping the interpretations of each. That is to say, the ambiguity of the lap dancing industry is embodied and performed through the distinctive body schemas of dancers.

Taking Merleau-Ponty's (2002) suggestion that the body is the site of encounters with others, we can understand that touch takes on significant meaning as the site where body schemas are played out. As Merleau-Ponty suggests, we are conscious of the world through the medium of our body and this manifests in the experiences of lap dancers through touch. Within the lap dancing industry touch takes on heightened meaning because it is through touch of the body that dancers become conscious of boundaries and ambiguity as well as the vulnerability of

selling an enticement to touch. Therefore, the negotiation of the terms of the exchange, the ambiguity of which is embodied through dancers' body schemas, is played out through a negotiation of touch.

So far this chapter has undertaken a theoretical analysis of the key themes emerging from the study which are the staging of sexuality, the setting of sexualised labour, the situated, embodied performativity of sexuality and age. Tying these themes together is that of touch, as the site on which the ambiguity that characterises the lap dancing industry and the work of a lap dancer in particular, is negotiated, lived and experienced. Following this, insights from both Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity and Merleau-Ponty's embodied phenomenology were considered in order to emphasise how lap dancers' subjectivities are performative and embodied through their situated, perceptual field and the bodily schemas shaping this field, which is negotiated through touch. The following section will integrate the key findings of this study with previous research into the lap dancing industry, sexuality and ageing, emphasizing the empirical, conceptual and theoretical contributions of the study.

Four key findings that contribute to previous literature emerged from this study. First that the staging of the lap dancing industry compels the women working within it towards heightened, heteronormatively prescriptive performances of a youthful sexuality. Second, that the sexualised labour performed within the lap dancing industry is deliberately ambiguous. Third, that ageing in this industry can be understood as something that is experienced and performed rather than merely chronological and finally, that touch of the body forms the site at which performances of youthful sexuality and the deliberate ambiguity are played out. This section will discuss each of these key contributions individually, integrating them into the relevant previous literature and will then tease out how each contribution is inter-related.

Key empirical contributions

The first key contribution the findings make to previous literature is that the staging of the lap dancing industry compels women towards heightened, heteronormatively prescriptive performances of youthful sexuality. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the concept of staging incorporates a consideration of the semiotic staging of the website material, the material staging of the setting and the staging of dancers through their performance of the role of a lap dancer. By acknowledging the staging of the industry as being multi-levelled and active in shaping perceptions and performances within it, we can enrich our understanding of the processes which compel dancers towards the specific performances of youthful sexuality that they embody.

This contribution builds on previous literature that has focused on dancers performances of sexuality in the lap dancing industry (Barton, 2007; Deshotels & Forsyth, 2006; Mavin & Grandy, 2013). For example, Barton (2007) found that dancers use personas to perform a sexualised character to meet both the customers and dancers own fantasies, Deshotels and Forsyth (2006) suggest dancers flirt strategically to perform sexuality and be skilled in their work and Mavin and Grandy (2013) highlight the work on their bodies dancers engage in to portray a heightened femininity and perform the role of a lap dancer.

By incorporating staging and context into the analysis of performances within the lap dancing industry, we can build an understanding of the processes that compel dancers to embody performances of youthful sexuality that have been previously identified within the literature and outlined above. By incorporating staging and setting, our understanding of the embodied performativity of dancers is enriched because we can understand how the semiotic landscape, and space in which dancers perform compel dancers towards idealised enactments of

heteronormative, youthful sexuality which can be found in the industry. To illustrate this, the aesthetic practices Mavin and Grandy (2013) briefly identify in their study of lap dancers such as applying make-up, the outfits they wear and styling their hair, are shaped by, and shape, the expectations of how a lap dancer will appear portrayed through the repetition of images of lap dancers portrayed on the websites. Further, the setting of the lap dancing clubs facilitates an environment for watching dancers' bodies which encourages dancers to place value on the aesthetic practices they engage in because their bodies are under particular scrutiny within that specific setting.

The second key finding and contribution to the literature is that the sexualised labour performed in the lap dancing industry is characteristically and deliberately ambiguous, and dancers are in continual negotiation of this ambiguity. The deliberate ambiguity is produced and reinforced through the use of ambiguous images and language on the websites as well as the setting which materialises ambiguity through club layout, staging, lighting and music as examples.

Previous research has tended to focus on an examination of boundaries within the lap dancing industry and has suggested that dancers bodily boundaries become compromised during interactions with customers. For instance Wesely (2003) argued that dancers go to, and through, bodily boundaries that they held prior to becoming dancers. While my findings suggest that managing physical boundaries with customers is an intrinsic aspect of their work, particularly through a negotiation of touch, we can develop Wesely's (2003) account of a simplistic compromise of boundaries by incorporating the deliberate ambiguity created through websites and the materiality of the setting and suggest that as there is a lack of clear terms of exchange between dancers and customers, it falls to the dancers and customers to

negotiate these terms during the interaction itself. Therefore, I suggest that a conceptualisation of bodily boundaries as being situated along a continuum would be more appropriate as dancers continually negotiate physical as well as sexual, emotional and aesthetic boundaries, moving along the continuum in both directions as they perform their work.

This finding builds on Colosi's (2013) critique of the current licensing conditions of SEV's (discussed in Chapter Three) because there is a tension between the deliberate ambiguity underpinning the industry and the unambiguous terms of the licensing conditions, which state that no touching should occur during the exchange relationship. Consequently, it falls to dancers to self-manage the deliberate ambiguity and this supports Colosi's argument that currently dancers' well-being and working conditions are not considered under the Policing and Crime Act 2009. This issue may be improved through a consideration, and licensing of, how the exchange relationship is portrayed in promotional material and within the club setting.

However, it is not only bodily boundaries, or negotiation of touch, that dancers continually negotiate within their work. As Egan (2006) has suggested, dancers must negotiate a boundary between authentic and counterfeit intimacy during interactions with customers and Barton (2007) has also suggested that a boundary between dancer persona and their 'authentic' self. My findings are in support of Egan's (2006) and Barton's (2007) suggestions as I found that boundaries are experienced in many different forms such as physical, emotional and sexual. I suggest that boundary negotiation is an inevitable and implicit element of the work of lap dancers as they embody a deliberately ambiguous working role. I suggest that this is the case because of the way in which the industry is semiotically and materially staged to facilitate an ambiguous exchange relationship which is experienced by dancers and customers through a continual negotiation of boundaries.

The third contribution this study can make is in regard to how ageing is experienced and performed within the context of the lap dancing industry. Through their lived experience of the industry, dancers would feel and perceive themselves to be out of place within the industry as they age within it. This lived experience of ageing is intrinsically linked with its performativity. Within the lap dancing industry youthfulness is a performance which can be worked at and while dancers feel as though they have the capacity to perform youthfulness then they perceive themselves as having the capacity to perform the role of a lap dancer.

As discussed in Chapter Three, research into ageing in the lap dancing industry is relatively sparse, with Ronai's (1992) study of lap dancers making up one of the few studies to place age and ageing at the centre of the research. Ronai (1992) proposes that youth is valuable in the lap dancing industry and suggests that ageing for a dancer means that 'she is no longer persuasive sexually' (Ronai, 1992: 309). My findings support Ronai's argument by suggesting that youthful sexuality is valued within the lap dancing industry and if dancers perceive themselves as unable to perform youthfulness, they perceive themselves as lacking the skills required to perform their work successfully.

Importantly, by developing Ronai's study some twenty-four years later, my findings highlight some key changes in the way in which dancers age in the lap dancing industry. While Ronai (1992) argues that dancers develop niches for themselves as they age in the industry, my study demonstrates the scope for the way in which dancers age, and perform age, has shifted with wider social shifts in accessibility of anti-ageing procedures and cosmetic surgery. This means that although dancers accumulate skills for standing out to customers and selling dances, their priority as they age is not solely focused on carving out a niche but more on maintaining the capacity to embody a youthful performance of sexuality. Within the current 'anti-ageing

culture' dancers have more scope to perform youthfulness although the pressure to perform it increases as they age. These findings suggest that the context in which we age, and our capacity to embody and perform the age that is deemed valuable within a specific context, is important for enriching our understanding of how people experience ageing and emphasises that a shift away from thinking of ageing as a merely chronological process is necessary, specifically in relation to the literature on sexualized labour.

The final contribution to the literature is the significance of touch within the lap dancing industry. Touch of the body represents the site at which sexuality ageing and ambiguity are played out and in this respect is an umbrella theme linking each of the previous contributions discussed above.

The characteristic ambiguity of the lap dancing industry is played out through touch as the role entails the performance of an enticement to touch but simultaneously a prevention of touch, therefore situating lap dancing as an ambiguous occupation. Therefore, boundaries within the industry are negotiable and fluid but it is this ambiguity which makes the industry appealing and frustrating to both customers and dancers as they engage in playing with, and negotiating boundaries.

Touch is also significant in the performance and lived experience of sexuality and age in the lap dancing industry because the heightened performance a youthful sexuality is exactly that, a performance, so when a dancer is touched they perceive their performance to be less convincing as the customer has touched the person rather than the performed character they are portraying.

By incorporating an analysis of the staging and setting of sexuality and ageing in the lap dancing industry, the broader socio-cultural landscape within which the work takes place can be understood. For example the characteristic ambiguity of the lap dancing industry encoded into the websites and materialises within the setting and is then played out during the exchange relationship through a negotiation of boundaries and touch. This means that, rather than examining the relationship between dancers and customers alone, we are incorporating an understanding that interactions are not occurring within a vacuum but are part of many social processes feeding into the exchange and compelling people to behave in specific, heteronormatively prescribed ways, as these are the only acceptable ways to 'be' within the industry. This develops the inroads already made on the regulatory and political context (Colosi, 2013; Hardy & Sanders, 2015; Sanders & Campbell, 2013; Sanders & Hardy, 2014), and the urban geography of the lap dancing industry (Hubbard & Lister, 2014) by adding a phenomenological understanding of the socio-material and cultural context.

Moreover, by exploring the socio-cultural landscape and materiality of the setting, the inter-relatedness of dancer performativity, the style of exchange relationship between dancers and customers and the performance of aesthetic, emotional and sexualised labour to be understood as integrated elements of the embodied performativity of the role. That is to say that a consideration of how organizational landscape (Gagliardi, 1990), context and performances within it, dynamically intersect to produce specific, valued performances of sexuality, age and ambiguity can develop our understanding of the lived experiences of lap dancers.

This chapter has provided an analysis of the empirical themes that emerged across each of the three data sets of website analysis, participant observations and interviews. Three key themes

emerged which were (i) the staging of sexuality and ageing, (ii) the setting of sexualized labour, and (iii) the situated, embodied performativity of sexuality and ageing. The final theme focused on how this performativity is experienced and enacted through the negotiation of ambiguity particularly in relation to touch. The next part of the chapter drew from Merleau-Ponty's embodied phenomenology and Butler's performative theory of gender, and her critique of heteronormativity to develop an understanding of the processes through which the performativity of the role of a lap dancer are perceived, experienced and embodied. This theoretical analysis suggested that lap dancers' subjectivities are performative and embodied through their situated, perceptual field and the bodily schemas shaping this field, which is negotiated through touch. The final section of the chapter integrated the key contributions of the study into previous literature on the lap dancing industry and suggested that a consideration of the staging, setting and deliberate ambiguity of the lap dancing industry can enrich our understanding of embodied performances of sexuality and age within it. It also suggested that ambiguity is played out through the negotiation of boundaries and touch during the exchange relationship between dancers and customers.

Conclusion

'Lap dancing messes with your mind. The whole thing can be stressful but saying that there are so many good times and laughs. I have had some of my best times at work. I do believe people get stuck in it, after so many years it's hard to get out. It's one of those can't live with it, can't live without situations.' (Katy)

This conclusive chapter will first provide a summary of the thesis as a whole. It will then provide an account of the contributions made. Following this, limitations of the study and future directions for further research will be discussed and evaluated. The final section will provide reflections on the research process as a whole.

Chapter One examined the social ontology of sexuality to explore what sexuality is and how it is positioned and experienced in the contemporary social world. It was suggested that sexuality forms a ubiquitous element of our social world and underpins our experiences within it. The chapter went on to conduct a critical analysis of sexuality within work and organization studies, with a focus on interactive service work, which evaluated the processes through which sexuality is entwined with organizational life. In doing so, the chapter emphasized that sexuality has become an intrinsic part of organizational life and is utilized by management and workers within mainstream organizational contexts. It also highlighted that particular forms of sexuality tend to be deemed more valuable than others such as heterosexuality and youthful sexuality. Therefore the chapter raised the questions of how sexuality in organizations is experienced within more explicitly sexualized occupations such as the lap dancing industry and how ageing is experienced in occupations that value youthful sexuality.

Chapter Two went on to explore ageing within the organizational context, starting by addressing the question of what is ageing? The chapter began by examining the social ontology of ageing in order to understand how ageing intertwines and manifests within the social context. The chapter then examined how social perceptions of the ageing process are reflected in organizational life and how this may manifest itself in the lived experience of working life. Finally, the chapter discussed important gender differences in how people age differently according to heteronormative gender ideology. The chapter suggested that youth is normalized and idealized in both the social and organizational contexts and as a consequence, ageing becomes a process to be transcended and managed. It emerged that, particularly for women, there is both social and organizational pressure to transcend age in order to be perceived as productive and 'successful' in both society and organizations.

Chapter Three focused on reviewing literature that has addressed sexuality and ageing within the contemporary sex industry, and the lap dancing industry specifically. The chapter provided an overview of the sex industry and a brief history of erotic dance before critically evaluating previous research surrounding the lap dancing industry and sex industry more broadly. The chapter ended with an analysis of previous literature that has focused on sexuality and ageing in the lap dancing industry and found that this has been a relatively neglected area of interest. Taking Chapters One, Two and Three into account, empirical gaps in the literature and research questions were identified. Specifically, a gap in the literature was identified for an exploratory study into the lived, embodied experiences of boundary construction and negotiation in relation to, and throughout, the ageing process. The research questions raised were how and why do performances of sexuality come to be valued in the lap dancing industry? Why do

boundaries tend to be fluid within the industry? And how are sexuality, ageing and boundaries experienced and embodied by dancers working in the industry?

Chapter Four provided an account of the methodological approach taken to explore the research questions. The chapter gave an evaluation of the methodological framework for the study which incorporated three phases of data collection: website analysis, participant observation and semi-structured interviews. These phases of data collection were selected to focus, respectively, on understanding how the lap dancing industry is encoded, embedded and embodied. Ultimately, this aimed to provide an in-depth understanding of the industry and how sexuality and ageing are encoded into, and landscaped through, its online presence, how the industry is embedded in its situated context and finally, how this is reflected in, understood, and embodied by, women working in the lap dancing industry.

Chapters Five, Six and Seven have examined respectively how heteronormative, youthful sexuality is encoded, embedded and embodied in the lap dancing industry. Chapter Five explored how a youthful heteronormativity is encoded into the industry through its online presence and found, through semiological analysis, that the website material plays an intrinsic role in shaping and reinforcing an industry with heteronormatively prescriptive images of sexuality and age, and a deliberately ambiguous exchange relationship. Chapter Six examined the situated context in which the industry is embedded and argued that the socio-materiality of the setting facilitates an ambiguous environment where women and their bodies are to be watched and consumed. Chapter Seven explored the lived embodied experiences of dancers as they perform emotional, aesthetic and sexualized labour and negotiate boundaries in this ambiguous industry that promotes and values heteronormatively prescriptive images of sexuality and youth.

Chapter Eight provided a theoretical discussion and analysis of the key findings, emphasizing the three key themes that emerged which were (i) the staging of sexuality and ageing, (ii) the setting of sexualized labour, and (iii) the situated, embodied performativity of sexuality and ageing. The final theme focused on how this performativity is experienced and enacted through the negotiation of ambiguity particularly in relation to touch. The chapter then drew from Merleau-Ponty's embodied phenomenology and Butler's performative theory of gender, and her critique of heteronormativity to develop an understanding of the processes through which the performativity of the role of a lap dancer are perceived, experienced and embodied. This theoretical analysis suggested that lap dancers' subjectivities are performative and embodied through their situated, perceptual field and the bodily schemas shaping this field, which is negotiated through touch. The final section of Chapter Eight integrated the findings with previous literature on the lap dancing industry, highlighting in particular that the staging, setting and deliberate ambiguity of the industry contributes shapes, and is shaped by, performances of sexuality and age. Moreover, the deliberate ambiguity that is staged, set and performed within the industry is played out through the negotiation of boundaries and touch during the exchange relationship between dancers and customers.

Contributions

This research highlights the importance of incorporating an analysis of the staging and setting of an industry to gain a more developed understanding of the lived experiences within it. This is because the landscape and situated context, demonstrated here through the analysis of the lap dancing industry, play constitutive roles in conditioning lived experiences.

In addition, the staging and setting compel lap dancers to perform heteronormatively prescriptive images of sexuality and ageing which manifest through performances of emotional,

aesthetic and sexualized labour. Moreover, this highlights ageing as something that is experienced and performed, thus making a shift away from considering ageing as a merely chronological process and towards a socio-material understanding of ageing as a context specific lived, embodied experience. Considering ageing as something that is experienced and performed is a theme that is neglected in the literature on sexualized labour to date but could enrich our understanding of the socio-materiality of ageing, particularly within sexualized working environments.

By incorporating the organizational landscape, staging and setting into the analysis, the characteristic ambiguity of sexualized labour within the lap dancing industry, where labour is underpinned by the illusory promise of touch which never arrives, has been recognized. Furthermore, the processes through which this ambiguity is played out in the performance of the role of a lap dancer and during the exchange relationship, in the negotiation of boundaries and touch has been developed. Therefore, by taking a broader approach to understanding interactions within the lap dancing industry we can begin to understand the social processes, landscape and setting of customer and dancer encounters and acknowledge that these processes play an active role in shaping how the industry is embodied and experienced.

Overall, this thesis builds on previous literature that has focused on licensing, empowerment and exploitation debates, risk and boundaries within the lap dancing industry by providing a phenomenological approach to understanding the experiences of lap dancers. In this respect, it develops an understanding of perception to offer 'an account of space, time and the world as we 'live' them' (Merleau-Ponty, 2002: vii), particularly, by providing an analysis of websites and the setting while retaining a central focus on how the work experienced by women working in, and negotiating, the industry. By taking this methodological approach of incorporating website

analysis, observations and interviews into a retrospective auto-ethnographic study, the understanding of the social and physical context of the industry was enriched.

Theoretically, this research contributes an analysis of the performativity of the work of lap dancers, arguing that lap dancers subjectivities are performative and they are compelled by a youthful heteronormativity. This becomes part of their perception and embodied performance through their situated, embodied perceptual field and is negotiated through touch.

Practical implications

This thesis highlights a tension between the deliberate ambiguity underpinning the lap dancing industry, present in the websites and the club setting, manifesting in the negotiation of touch during the exchange relationship and the clarity of licensing regulations surrounding the touch permitted. It is suggested here that these findings build on literature arguing that current licensing regulations for SEV's fail to prioritise the working conditions and instead criminalise those working in the industry (Colosi, 2013). Therefore, in order to make working conditions of dancers a central aspect of licensing and policy-making, it is necessary to consider how the exchange relationship is presented on both websites and within the club setting. In doing so, clubs will take an increased amount of responsibility for managing the exchange relationship, which currently falls to dancers to self-manage.

Reflections and limitations

Limitations

While this research builds upon literature suggesting that valuable insights can be gained from developing an understanding of the landscape, context and space in which labour becomes sexualized and aestheticized (e.g. Chugh & Hancock, 2009; Riach & Wilson, 2014; Tyler, 2012)

and suggests that this conditions and compels workers to perform sexuality and age according to heteronormatively prescriptive criteria, it is not without its limitations. The following section will provide a discussion of some of the limitations of the study, the steps that were taken to minimize the impact of these limitations on the research process and some suggestions of directions for future research.

With this study being a doctoral research project, it had time and resource constraints associated with it. The issue of financial resource constraints manifested particularly because of the industry I was researching. As the lap dancing industry tends to pride itself on the exclusivity of the club settings and club clientele, there tended to be entry fees and relatively expensive drink and dance prices. This somewhat constrained the number of clubs that I visited to conduct periods of participant observation. Given this, during observations I felt aware of personal financial constraints and had I had limitless funds to undertake the research I would have immersed myself in the environment of the club setting by spending more and visiting more clubs. Instead, I had to balance a line between managing my budget without being conspicuous in an indulgent setting which, at times, cut my observations slightly shorter than I would have liked.

Again, without resource and time constraints, I could have drawn wider comparisons across the industry, incorporating regional comparisons as well as comparisons between different cultures within the lap dancing industry. For example, it is widely discussed and understood by dancers that the experience of working in London clubs is different to working in more regional club settings. Therefore, a comparison of London and regional clubs may have provided insights into how geographical location and space, different cultural expectations, and differences in organizational landscapes (Gagliardi, 1990), condition embodied experiences of the work itself.

As such, this would be an interesting area for further research. Moreover, by drawing comparisons between lap dancing industries in different countries, there would be scope for gaining insights into how broader cultural landscapes shape expectations of a sexualized industry. Thus enabling culture and ethnicity to be brought in to an analysis of gender, sexuality and ageing.

The auto-ethnographic element of the study had some implications for the research. For example, the use of snowball sampling for the interviews resulted in a relatively homogeneous sample. Consequences of this sampling technique were that I tended to interview relatively experienced dancers and a sample which contained more variation in the length of time dancers had spent in the industry could potentially have enabled useful comparisons to be drawn between more and less experienced, and older and younger dancers.

My role as a doctoral researcher with a primary interest in exploring sexuality and sexualized forms of labour meant that throughout the research process I sought to position myself within literature on sexualized labour because this was where I wanted to be for my future career as a researcher. As such, I may have inadvertently steered my focus away from ageing and consequently neglected the sociology of ageing literature somewhat. Therefore, there is scope for this area to be further developed in the future. That being said, I hope to have provided a foundation for further exploring ageing and sexuality as concepts that are dynamically entwined with, and constituted through, landscape and context. By taking this into account, we can better understand how sexuality and age are embodied in organizations.

The auto-ethnographic aspect of the research also meant that it would be the lap dancing industry that would be studied. While the lap dancing industry makes up an interesting industry for exploring performances of sexuality and age in an ambiguous industry, it is not the only

form of work to be situated on the fringes of, or in a grey area of, the sex industry. For instance occupations such as chat line or sex line workers would also make up interesting and useful sectors for empirical investigation. Particularly so because the space in which the labour takes place is physically distant from the clientele and the implications for how this work is embodied, perceived and negotiated in terms of performances of both sexuality and ageing would be potentially very insightful.

Despite the limitations discussed above, my own role and experience within the lap dancing industry meant that I was able to gain insights and access that I otherwise would have not been able to get. That is to say that the benefits of my own auto-ethnographic positioning can be deemed to outweigh any limitations that this positioning has imposed.

Reflections

Conducting this research has taken me on a very personal journey because of the retrospective auto-ethnographic element. I feel lucky to have been able to study an industry that holds so much meaning for me and that I have been able to feel connected to my research throughout the process. It has definitely helped to keep me motivated and focused and it has also meant that along the way I have found myself in some unusual and, I think, interesting situations, a few of which I will reflect on in the following section.

When I first started my PhD studies, I was unsure whether I was going to disclose that I had worked previously as a lap dancer as it's something that I have become used to keeping very private, a habit acquired when working in the industry to protect my close personal relationships. Because I was undecided on whether I was comfortable with being open about the auto-ethnographic style of the study, when I first presented my work I made no mention to

the audience that I had personal experience of the industry. After this first presentation I knew that I would have to be open and honest about my relationship with, and experience of the lap dancing industry. Other than the overwhelming sense of shame I felt about not being open about my experience, I realized just how central it was to my research, it was the reason I was doing it and moreover, as a researcher, if I am asking for honesty and openness within it, I surely had to be honest and open about it.

Having made this decision, I found presenting my work first of all, felt like a bit of a 'coming out' process. I felt nervous about 'confessing' that I have been a lap dancer to academic audiences and presenting filled me with anxiety for this reason. However, I always felt more comfortable about being honest than when I hadn't. Over the course of my research, as I presented more I have become much more comfortable and confident in my position in the academic world as an ex-lap dancer-come-researcher and I think has been a core part of my personal journey through the process.

I found applying for ethical approval to undertake this research one of the most interesting experiences of the process and found it reflected underlying heteronormative assumptions.

Applying for permission to go into lap dancing clubs where I felt very comfortable seemed odd in itself however, I understood that the university has a duty to keep their researchers as safe as possible however, I hadn't anticipated the gendered assumptions that would be bound up in the process. I gained ethical approval to conduct participant observations in clubs provided I was accompanied by someone who would have my best interests and personal safety at heart. I was told this was because I was a young woman researching a 'dodgy' environment. The person who became my assigned companion for observations was my partner, Paul. The assumption was made by both my supervisory team and within both our social circles that Paul would jump

at the chance to spend his evenings in lap dancing clubs and that it would be treated as a perk of being with a researcher. As it turned out, while I felt at home during observations, Paul struggled far more with the scenario and we found ourselves in what we would now consider funny situations as a couple but at the time made me reconsider who and how people around me would be impacted by the research. This experience reflected Butler's heterosexual matrix as the focus throughout the ethical approval application was to protect me as the young woman and the mutual assumption emerged that a man would be capable, and willing, to do so. Moreover, it was assumed that a man would, of course, find the environment of a lap dancing club appealing.

Overall, the auto-ethnographic element of the research underpinned many of the limitations and reflections. Despite this, the auto-ethnographic positioning was what made it possible for me to conduct the research at all. Particularly as it helped with gaining access to the industry and, in my view most importantly, it built rapport with the dancers that I interviewed as it meant that they were founded on a shared understanding of many of the complexities that are embedded in the lived experiences of lap dancers. Moving forward from this thesis, directions for future research (mentioned above) include developing cultural comparisons, regional comparisons and developing a broader age range of dancers to draw comparisons on their perceptions, and experiences, of and within, the industry.

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Appendix One - Clubs

Club name	Website analysis	Observations		
		Size of club	No. of observations	Total hours spent observing
All things nice	[Symbol]	Large(More than fifteen dancers)		
Champagne	[Symbol]	Large	1	5
Elegance	[Symbol]	Large		
Nirvana	[Symbol]	Large		
Peak	[Symbol]	Small (Less than fifteen dancers)	1	4
Puma		Small	1*	5
Seduction		Large	1	3
Sinful	[Symbol]	Small		
Sovereign		Small	3*	9
Spirit	[Symbol]	Small		
Stars	[Symbol]	Small		
The Den	[Symbol]	Small	2	6
Total	9	5 large/7 small	9	32

*Note: Venues I have worked in so knowledge of club gained from both observations and experience.

Appendix Two - Dancers

Name	Age	Number of clubs worked in	Number of years' experience	Number of interviews
Analisa	35	1	9	2
Christina	30	1	2	1
Katy	29	3	6	3
Kitty	25	1	1	1
Lily	32	3	10	1
Mimi	33	2	1	1
Roxy	24	2	4	1
Texas	20	3	1	1

Analisa is thirty five years old and danced in the lap dancing industry for nine years. She stopped dancing when she was thirty because she was getting older and wasn't earning as much as she used to because of new clubs opening up in the area. Alongside her lap dancing work, Analisa has a career working for a bank. She is in a long term relationship with a Spanish man and divides her time between the UK and Spain. She felt that it was important to talk about her work as a lap dancer because, 'I think people have this idea in their head about what lap dancing is, they just assume its prostitution. I think a lot of people think that but its rubbish. Most of the girls that I knew are lovely girls, just normal, its normal girls. I mean don't get me wrong, there were some girls that I think were going home with customers but you'd get that anywhere. You'd get that in a bar job.'

Christina is a thirty year old ex-lap dancer. She worked in the industry for two years. Dancing was her only job for a while but then she got a day job working in an office. She worked both jobs for about nine months before leaving the lap dancing industry and continuing with her day job. She has a passion for yoga and has recently become a qualified yoga teacher. She enjoys

travelling around the world and does this as much as possible. She says the weirdest part of dancing was working in the same club as her sister.

Katy is a twenty nine year old lap dancer with six years experience working in the industry. She is married with two children. She currently only works a couple of nights a month on average but increases this if she feels like working more or wants to save up money for something specific. Earlier on in her career as a lap dancer, Katy was required to work three to four nights per week but she found that over the years clubs allowed her more flexibility with her working hours and now she can pick and choose when she wants to work. She says she will stop dancing when she stops enjoying it or gets too many comments from customers about her age. When Katy was asked what she would tell people about her job she said, 'I'd say my job isn't for everyone but it is the most fun job you could have. I feel like I've got quite a lot of life experience because I've spoken to so many different people, I've met so many people and I've danced for all these people. I think that's a massive thing, there's not many people that would just randomly dance for somebody and take all their clothes off.'

Kitty is twenty five years old and spent one year working as a lap dancer when she was in her late teens. She now works as a dental nurse and she gained her qualification for dental nursing while working as a lap dancer. Kitty classes herself as having an 'alternative' image and has a passion for tattoo art and fetish modelling. During the course of the ethnography, Kitty got engaged to be married but met another man while on her hen do and has now lived in Norway for a year with her new partner. When reflecting on her time spent dancing Kitty said 'Working at the club, I saw it as a job, you know. I felt very neutral about it. I didn't think OMG I'm a stripper or anything. It was fun, I'll give it that. The tackiness of the club made me laugh, it still does! It was an experience!'

Lily is a thirty two year old dancer and with ten years experience she had spent the longest amount of time working in the lap dancing industry of all the dancers in the study. During the day she runs her own antique shop and nowadays she works as a dancer as and when she wants to although she does feel like her career as a dancer has run its course now so she is working there less and less. She recently got married in Vegas to her long term partner. When reflecting on her experience of work as a lap dancer she said, 'It's a good way to make money and I think it's a good short term job. I think you've got to be...if you've got what it takes to do it, you should do it and if you want to do it you should do it but when you stop enjoying it you have to stop doing it then.'

Mimi is thirty three years old and spent just over a year working in the lap dancing industry before working as a prostitute for approximately eight years. She has also worked as a burlesque dancer. She is currently in the process of leaving the adult industry and pursuing alternative career paths. She does a lot of volunteer work and has a boyfriend. When reflecting on the impact a career in the adult industry has had on her, she said, 'Well I danced and that was how I got into hooking so my work has all been adult for nearly ten years, like most of my adult life so I think that's bound to have affected me but I can't really tell how. I think probably stripping made me even more confident in my body because people would compliment it many times a night. I still find generic compliments, you know generic physical compliments, fairly tedious in most situations.'

Roxy is twenty four years old, a qualified make-up artist and lap dancer. She has worked in two clubs in the four years that she has been dancing and loves her job. She tries to work as much as possible because she loves the dancer lifestyle, this means working on average about four nights a week. Roxy has an eventful love life and during the ethnography she was having an

affair with a man she met in the club she is currently working in and eventually ended her long term relationship. If Roxy could say anything about her job it would be, 'I absolutely love my job, I wouldn't change a thing about it. Every girl should have a go at doing it.'

Texas is twenty year old dancer who has been working for approximately a year. In that time she has worked in three different clubs and she tends to work four nights a week. She is single and she has no plans to stop dancing in the near future but she feels like if she meets someone she likes and they didn't want her to dance then she would stop. When reflecting on the interview process Texas said, 'When you ask dancers about their job it never sounds like a fun job because you talk about the bad bits quite a lot and it IS a fun job but sometimes it's hard to get that across. The more outrageous things stick in your mind. And often they are bad.'