



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

This is a repository copy of *Embodiment and abjection: trafficking for sexual exploitation*.

White Rose Research Online URL for this paper:

<http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/79557/>

Version: Accepted Version

Article:

Russell, AM (2013) Embodiment and abjection: trafficking for sexual exploitation. *Body and Society*, 19 (1). 82 - 107. ISSN 1357-034X

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1357034X12462251>

Reuse

Unless indicated otherwise, fulltext items are protected by copyright with all rights reserved. The copyright exception in section 29 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 allows the making of a single copy solely for the purpose of non-commercial research or private study within the limits of fair dealing. The publisher or other rights-holder may allow further reproduction and re-use of this version - refer to the White Rose Research Online record for this item. Where records identify the publisher as the copyright holder, users can verify any specific terms of use on the publisher's website.

Takedown

If you consider content in White Rose Research Online to be in breach of UK law, please notify us by emailing eprints@whiterose.ac.uk including the URL of the record and the reason for the withdrawal request.



eprints@whiterose.ac.uk
<https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/>

Boundaries of the Body; Embodiment and Abjection in Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation.

Amy M. Russell

Centre for Interdisciplinary Gender Studies and Leeds Institute of Health Sciences,
University of Leeds

Abstract

Research into human trafficking for sexual exploitation often conceptualises the experience through the lens of migration and/or sex work. Women's bodies are often politicised and the corporeal experiences of trafficking are neglected. The gendered stigma attached to women who have been trafficked for sexual exploitation is clearly evident across cultures and requires further analysis as part of wider societal responses to sexual violence.

Through the analysis of letters written by women who have been trafficked and sexually exploited from post-Soviet countries to Israel, this article argues that conceptualising women's bodies as bounded spaces allows an investigation of the transgression of those boundaries and opens up a thought-provoking framework for theorizing experiences of, and social responses to, sexual violence, stigma and social exclusion. It explores themes of pollution and dirt as ways to communicate social exclusion through references to boundaries crossed and spaces rendered abject.

Utilizing the theory of abjection, women's narratives of trafficking are examined and the embodied effects of sexual violence and body boundary transgression are elucidated. This analysis shows that the women in this study articulate an embodied narrative of trafficking that is experience in relation to body boundaries and expressed through motifs of dirt, smell, disgust and pollution.

Key Words: trafficking, abjection, boundary, pollution, dirt, disgust, transgression.

On no person do I wish what I went through. There were many more difficult things I went through but I'm trying to forget. Some of the wounds are so hard that I have scars for life ... Sometimes at night I have nightmares I can see all the ugly faces all the filth and the dirt.

- Alina.

Introduction

Trafficking for sexual exploitation (hereafter simply 'trafficking')¹ has remained undertheorized as gender-based violence.² The stigma attached to women who have been trafficked is clearly evident across many cultures (Andrijasevic, 2004, 2010; Poudel, 2011; Richardson et al, 2009) and the need for its further analysis, as part of a wider societal response to sexual violence, has been highlighted (Stephen-Smith,

2008; Zimmerman et al., 2006). Addressing these theoretical deficiencies, this article argues for a more nuanced understanding of how stigma is anticipated, embodied and articulated. More specifically, it seeks to illustrate how the themes of pollution and dirt can be utilized as ways to communicate social exclusion through charting the correspondences between boundary crossing and expressions of pollution. In doing this, the article not only contributes to current understandings of the experience of trafficking it also aims to transcend the confines of the legislation and policy oriented, disembodied research currently dominating trafficking discourse. Integrating the concept of 'abjection' (Kristeva, 1982) into the analysis of trafficking narratives, I argue, allows the focus to be returned to the body. It is proposed that identifying the interconnections between body boundaries and abjection in trafficking narratives will forge links between research agendas on trafficking and allow a gendered reading of embodiment theory that speaks to debates around bodily integrity.³ This will demonstrate the potential harm of the idealization of the notion of the closed off body for women who have experienced sexual violence. Rather than placing a focus on hetero-normative conceptions of sexual violence by emphasising boundary crossing and penetration (cf. Campbell, 2007), this article will both trouble theories of the body that argue for fixity of boundaries and the alternative position that highlights the fluidity and permeability of body boundaries. It will demonstrate that while a more fluid model may be a more accurate representation of embodiment, the gendered construction of the body prioritises the hetero-normative masculine impermeable idealized body which positions the body identified as female in society as an embodiment of failure to live up to this idealized norm. This experience of embodied permeability is nowhere more apparent than in the acute suffering and social exclusion of women who have been trafficked and sexually exploited.

This article focuses on representations of the embodied experience of trafficking by analysing women's descriptions of the time during which they were forced to sell sex. It identifies a series of boundary crossings that speak to the experience of abjection, the loss of bodily autonomy and the transgression and fragmentation of body boundaries. First there is an assessment of the notion of pollution as a way to express the conversion that takes place when a boundary is crossed and that which is inside the boundary is rendered abject. This leads the discussion to the articulation of pollution through notions of dirt, disgust and smell. The article concludes with an evaluation of the response women who are trafficked have when they feel the body is inherently polluted and its boundaries penetrated, and a reflection on what these insights might mean for further research.

Trafficking

To date research into trafficking for sexual exploitation with the narratives of female respondents at its core has either quantified the routes and experiences of women (Stephen-Smith, 2008; POPPY Project, 2004; 2006; 2009) and the health consequences (Zimmerman et al., 2003; 2006) or focused on the production of a politicised victim identity that denies women their agency (Andrijasevic, 2004, 2010; Kelly, 2003). Indeed, the dominant preoccupation in the fields of development studies and political science are often 'migration/asylum concerns' (Richardson et al, 2009:262).

'Trafficking' is a term that has emerged to define an experience which contains within it numerous complexities that are rendered invisible through the inherent presumption of homogeneity in the term 'trafficking.' Between the years

2000 and 2008 an exponential increase in interest in trafficking meant that ‘the parameters of the way in which it [trafficking] was being understood were being defined’ through the dialogues happening, particularly in the West, in response to media and political interest in the topic (Jobe, 2008:2). Agustín (2007:40) argues the definition of trafficking ‘expresses women’s presumed greater disposition (along with children) to be deceived, above all into “prostitution”, and their lesser disposition to migrate.’ Whereas Laczko (2002: para. 5) counters such claims suggesting that to ‘harmonise the approach’ to trafficking ‘a common definition has become vital.’ Thus the construction of ‘trafficking’ creates an ‘object of knowledge that can be subsequently governed’ (Aradau, 2008:15). Yet, by accepting and implementing this definition one may argue the inherent gendered reading of trafficking is now normalised, assumed and unquestioned.⁴ A more suitable term that represents the spectrum of experience, while still allowing legal and academic classification, currently eludes us.

Further debate has been generated in feminist circles which remain divided on the conflation of women who have been trafficked and sexually exploited with migrant sex workers (Agustín, 2006; O’Connell-Davidson, 2006) and the response to trafficking as a thinly veiled method for migration control (Andrijasevic, 2003, 2010; Aradau, 2008). While trafficking is clearly a form of gender based violence it has not been engaged with theoretically to the extent that other forms, such as rape during warfare, have been (Bracewell, 2000; Campbell, 2007; Diken and Laustsen, 2005). In even shorter supply is research into the stigma and the social exclusion experienced by women who have been trafficked [with the exceptions of Andijasevic (2010) who focused on gendered migrant identity and Richardson et al’s (2009:259) examination of citizenship] emphasising the contradictory position that ‘many aspects of sexual trafficking remain poorly understood,’ despite it being claimed to be ‘a priority issue for many governments’ (Richardson et al, 2009:259).

Body Boundaries

The body can be conceptualised as an idealized bounded space (cf. Longhurst 2000, McDowell, 1993, Rich, 1987, Shildrick, 1997). While the Western body is often conceptualised as ‘individuated and discrete’ (Ravenscroft, 2008:207), on a cognitive level, as Longhurst (2001:5) reminds us, the body will always be experienced within a framework of conceptions of inside and outside and troubled by ‘the liminal places where the exteriority and interiority of bodies merge.’ The transgression of women’s body boundaries has been articulated in numerous, often gendered, ways from Grosz’s (1994:xii) sense of ‘uncontrollable drift’ through to Shildrick’s (1997) ‘leaky bodies’ and Longhurst’s (2001) ‘fluid boundaries.’ As Knott (2005) points out the boundaries that are imposed upon the body are not simply those of the bounded flesh defined by skin but are part of the spatial ordering of the body in society. Transgression, then, is reliant on a pre-existent spatial division (Cresswell, 1994). This ‘spatial ordering’ of boundaries can be felt in purity and pollution behaviour (Douglas, 2002 [1966]), the demarcation of outside and inside (Anttonen, 2005) or in the creation of ‘complex cultural processes whereby the human body, psychic forms, geographical space and the social formation are all constructed within interrelating and dependant hierarchies’ (Stallybrass and White, 1986:2).

The body boundaries I will examine are socially policed and part of a woman’s identity. While the ‘male body’ is also subject to boundary marking regimes that men must also enact ‘in order to be seen as “normal”’ (Holliday and Thompson, 2001:5),

in contrast the ‘female body’ (a socially ascribed gendered embodiment) is conceptualised as a boundary under threat. This is rarely seen in discourse relating to heterosexual male bodies, but can be identified in relation to homosexual male bodies having the potential to corrupt and pollute (cf. Bersani, 1996; Elder, 1998) demonstrating the close associations between body boundaries and heteronormative boundaries of gender and sexuality. Indeed, to establish the boundaries of a ‘male’ body ‘the notion of hardness and impenetrability’ of the idealised normative heterosexual male body must be evoked ‘as a symbolic, phallic defence against homosexual anxiety’ (Llinares, 2011:139-40), the fear of penetration (Wooden and Parker, 1982) and, thus, the loss of control over boundaries (Connell, 1995). I suggest that combining an analysis of trafficking with an analysis of body boundaries facilitates the examination of the ways in which border crossings impact on body boundaries (Russell, 2010), whilst avoiding the error that would be treating ‘bodily margins in isolation to all other margins’ (Kristeva, 1982:69).

When women who are trafficked cross outside the boundaries of their countries other boundaries are transgressed and redefined; boundaries of national identity, boundaries of agency and control and boundaries of the body. While geographical movement and physical boundary crossing are important issues, this article concentrates on the boundaries of the body. Crossing from inside to outside is often experienced as an acutely felt boundary crossing. Some transgressions are set apart and forbidden, others are regulated through social taboos and ritualised behaviour (Anttonen, 2005; Douglas, 2002 [1966]). As will be detailed in this article, an examination of the nature of these transgressions throws fresh light on how an understanding of abjection can be a valuable insight into the embodied and social effects of trafficking and, more broadly, sexual violence.

Abjection, Kristeva (1982:4) asserts, is the breakdown of boundaries, being neither object nor other, that which ‘disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules.’ The abject provokes disgust because it is formless and ill defined and attempts are made to cast the abject out, to exclude it so it can no longer threaten the boundary it has transgressed (Douglas, 2002 [1966]; Kristeva, 1982). Kristeva’s use of abjection is engaged with here as it responds to the criticism that writing concerning the body neglects the fleshiness, the excreta and fluids of the human body (cf Longhurst, 2000). Kristeva returns the analytic attention to those very fluids as the substance of analysis. It must be remembered that responses to bodily fluids are so often culturally coded that any approach to the analysis of embodied narratives must be an embodied approach where both the physical and the social coalesce. This is done in this article through a psycho-social reading without losing sight of the very flesh and fluids of embodied experience. Thus this analysis combines Kristeva (1982) and Douglas (2002 [1966]) to explore connections between the body, psyche and society.

Method

This article is based on qualitative research undertaken for a broader project analysing twelve anonymised applications for a one year Right to Remain visa, made by women who have self-identified as ‘trafficked.’ The analysis focuses on the part in each application where the woman was encouraged to ‘tell her story’ in its entirety (referred to as ‘letters’ or ‘narratives’ in this article). One of the NGO employees

working with the women writing the applications described being unable to assist them in writing this section because the organisation had been warned that applications would be rejected if the letters section appeared too formulaic or showed signs of assistance. These sections often included childhood experiences, recruitment, assisted migration and exploitation as well as hopes for the future. The aims of the study were to explore the ways the experiences of human trafficking and sexual exploitation were articulated from an embodied perspective. It was from this analysis of embodied experience that the themes of this paper emerged.

The applications were from women from post-Soviet countries who were trafficked to, and forced to sell sex in, Israel. Israel is primarily a destination country for trafficking, unlike the other countries that border it (US State Department, 2006). The 1980s saw significant numbers (over 100,000) of people migrating to Israel from the former Soviet Union (Raijman and Semyonov, 1998). It can be argued that this migrant trajectory set a pattern of chain migration from the former Soviet Union to Israel (Raijman and Semyonov, 1998). Publications on trafficking from the two predominant gender and/or migration NGOs in the country (Chaikin and Safran, 2010; Levenkron, 2001; 2007) have provided the majority of research on trafficking to Israel to date.

The applications analysed in this article were obtained in collaboration with an Israeli NGO. Consent was gained by the NGO for the use of the applications for research into trafficking on the understanding participant confidentiality would be maintained. All identifiable details were removed from the letters including age and country of origin. Each woman's application was given a name (Lena, Anja, Magdalena, Hannah, Louise, Alina) and their letters are referred to by name to retain the personalisation of the data but to also protect the participant's identities. The applications were analysed with attention given to emerging themes. The data contained multiple expressions of boundary transgression both embodied and of territory. Themes of pollution and dirt reoccurred in the majority of the applications and were explored for their potential as expressions of the moral and social transgressions involved in trafficking as well as articulations of sexual violence and physical harm.

Women who have been trafficked and sexually exploited are an 'extremely vulnerable' group (POPPY, 2008). When conducting research, those organisations that support women who have been trafficked aim to avoid re-traumatising their service users and often take information from case files, pre-existent data and through discussions with Outreach Workers rather than interviewing women about their experiences (POPPY, 2008). In addition to the Right to Remain visa applications, semi-structured interviews were conducted with NGOs working with women who had been trafficked. To further contribute to the crystallisation of the data collected other representations of trafficking were thematically analysed including NGO webpages and an art exhibition created by women who had been trafficked. The applications highlight the suffering caused by trafficking, which is not unexpected in a visa application. What was unexpected was that much of the narrated damage of sexual exploitation was expressed through the language of boundary crossing, pollution and abjection.

Boundaries and Pollution

Body boundary violation and control exists throughout trafficking narratives. If dirt, pollution and smell are, as I argue, to be read as expressions of embodied experiences

of transgression it must first be established what boundaries are at work. Here, body boundaries are shown to be closely linked to the delineation of the physical outside of the body and to physical autonomy. This can be conceptualised in multiple ways. Schneider (1996:76), for example, describes this space as ‘zones of inviolability – a sociophysical space into which we do not intrude without permission.’ He goes on to demonstrate the link to bodily autonomy, between one’s status and one’s body boundaries, suggesting that ‘low status means that one’s zone is penetrable’ (Schneider, 1996:77). Yet one may only become acutely aware of their body boundaries when those boundaries are transgressed.

Pollution is an articulation of boundary crossing and the contamination of the inside of the boundary, the creation of the abject. Pain and pollution are often linked in the narratives. Anja writes that when she first found out what she was expected to do ‘I cried at night, I thought it would be painful and dirty.’ Her fears are both physical from the pain she will suffer and social from the expectation it will be dirty, interpreted to mean shameful and polluting. Pollution functions as both a metaphor and a reality in the lives of women who have been trafficked. Many women who are trafficked are forced to take part in unsafe sexual acts and contract a variety of STIs (Stephen-Smith, 2008:21). These illnesses come from outside the body but manifest within it, demonstrating that the body boundary has been penetrated and is not sufficient protection for the body. However, physical pollution is only one way of understanding the effects of trafficking on the body. The lasting effects of trafficking are often felt as a contamination of the self which may have physical symptoms but may not be an illness of the body (Bamber, 2008). The feelings of pollution mark the body boundary as transgressed and create a sense of the abject body, the other that is the ‘boundary to the healthy and normal selves’ (Hansen, 2008:470).

Magdalena’s narrative is littered with references to pollution, contamination and dirt. Twice she mentions oral sex and sex ‘without a condom.’ The use or lack of use of condoms is spoken about by Magdalena and Hannah, and is reported to be another common experience in trafficking for sexual exploitation (Stephen-Smith, 2008:5). Condoms function as a barrier method that continues to separate the penis from the vagina. While it cannot reduce the symbolic, emotional and social implications of rape it can lessen the actual physical pollution from illness and as such the more psycho-emotional responses to that type of pollution. Condom use is also a key negotiation tool for women who sell sex and one way they assert power (Cusick, 1998). It is also argued that condom use is a metaphorical barrier in itself that ‘demarcate[s] private from commercial experiences’ because, Cusick (1998:134) argues, ‘some symbol is necessary to separate one form from the other’ thus suggesting that sex without a condom is a marker of a private relationship. Thus commercial sex without a condom increases the emotional violation experienced by women who have been trafficked. Thus the condom is ‘an object which by itself confers meaning’ (Cusick, 1998:134).

While pollution naturally sits in contrast to purity (Miller, 1997:63, Douglas, 2002 [1966]) when we discuss ideas of the body becoming abject it is not a discussion that comes from a theoretical understanding of the ‘female body’ occupying some previously ‘pure’ or bounded state in lived experience. Rather abjection serves to trouble a symbolic understanding of certain boundaries that are seen to be immutable. As such, the space within these boundaries can be interpreted on one level as pure or without pollution because of the assumption made about the fixed nature of these boundaries. However, the notion that the inside of the boundary is pure or unpolluted is to neglect the way the boundary is always perceived as under threat. This

precarious status is that which enables the experience of the abjection as ambivalence and in a constant state of tension (cf Russell, 2010).

Menstruation taboos are common in many cultures (Miller, 1997). The idea that blood, which is understood as life-giving and necessarily internal for life to exist, to be experienced externally, appears to invert understandings of the human body and instils a sense of pollution. This can be seen in advertising for 'sanitary' products where a blue liquid is used to test tampons and sanitary towels because red liquid would evoke feelings of 'dirtiness, disgust and even death' (Longhurst, 2001:10). This is comparative with the late stages of pregnancy where the body created 'border ambiguity' which may, for others, become 'a threat to their own borders and they may react with feelings of loathing' (Longhurst, 2001:41). Such repulsion and loathing is an exercise in separating and distancing the self from the abject matter, in this example it is menstrual blood.

When women enter into these 'anomalous stages' of menstruation and the latter stages of pregnancy (Anttonen, 2005:195) they encounter the feigned notion of gender-neutrality in concepts of impermeability. Equally they problematise their own impermeability through the reality of their bodies, bodies that are not closed off and do not respect boundaries. The 'female body' is perceived to be a series of boundaries, made and remade, transgressed and restored. Damage is done to those boundaries when they are imbued with a symbolic sense of impermeability or entirely negated. Each pole of this dichotomy is equally destructive to embodied self identity. In this way women menstruating, women who experience sexual violence and women in the latter stages of pregnancy do not simply repel but they simultaneously attract and repel others creating a tension, an awareness of their own permeable boundaries which can be conceptualised as an awareness of the potential of the abject, within that person. This troubles other boundaries in other individuals, the community and the woman who is symbolically constructed in this way.

Louise comments 'They even made me work when I had my period, they didn't care about my health, girls were like machines for him' (my emphasis). Her statement is supported by Stephen-Smith's (2008:20) findings that ninety-one (77%) of women in her sample did not see a healthcare professional at any point during the time that they were trafficked. Louise is not alone in drawing attention to this practice and her use of the word 'even' resonates with the idea that this is unacceptable and if she were being regarded as human they would not make her do this but she is regarded as a 'machine' and thus has no taboos to transgress. Magdalena reports when she first arrived at the brothel 'I was left with the other girl, she had a period and she wasn't working yet.' However, later when she is moved to a new brothel she reports the trauma she felt when 'we were forced to work while we had our period.'

Louise also mentions 'health' as an issue when she is forced to sell sex during her period. This may be due to ideas that it is unhealthy (as well as unclean) to have sex during menstruation. It may also be based upon the idea that the flow can be two ways and while menstruating one is more likely to contract illnesses as one's body boundaries are open.⁵ Menstruation is commonly conceptualised as 'a chaotic disintegration of form' the 'result of necrosis, or death of tissue' (Martin, 1991:486). Martin's idea of formlessness echoes with notions of the breakdown of body boundaries, of menstruation subverting notions of inside and outside. Magdalena recounts how she is forced to work during her period and is made to insert a sponge into her vagina to stem the flow of blood so the 'client' does not know,

First time I had to put a sponge in, I was crying, I thought I wouldn't be able to pull it out. I was always afraid I would be pulling out something else, not the sponge.

There is a fear expressed in Magdalena's narrative that she will pull out something more than the sponge she is using to stem the flow of her period. Her fear could be read as simply a biological confusion. However it appears she fears the inside will be inverted and become the outside, that her inner organs, that which is internal to her will not only be damaged and abjected by this act but also exposed and expelled from her, as Ahmed (2004:86) reflects 'the abject turns us inside out, as well as outside in.' The damage that trafficking does to the perceived inside of a woman is expressed through motifs of pollution and the abject. For there to be a breakdown of inside and outside in this way the boundary must have been transgressed between the two and the inside polluted by this transgression.

Magdalena envisions her body boundaries as weakened and her confidence in those boundaries falters. She demonstrates feelings of helplessness and fear associated with her body. The term 'forced' is used only twice in the narrative, despite her constant coercion, once in reference to working during her period and once when a client forces her to have anal sex. Both acts are socially taboo and by using the term 'force' Magdalena is expressing the violence of the transgressive act. Her body becomes a site of contested values. This transgressive and taboo act requires her to state that she has been forced to make it known that she would not have willingly done something so socially taboo.

Behaviour toward menstruation can be considered boundary affirming behaviour as cultures construct taboos and spatial divisions in response to it. Equally, we can read women's distress at being forced to work/sell sex during their periods as distress caused by a transgression of these boundaries, forcing the body to act against the mind's culturally constructed understandings of appropriate behaviour. Selling sex means the menstruating body is exposed to the scrutiny of a stranger crossing the boundary between private and public. This humiliating scrutiny may be seen as a further step toward the alienation of mind and body (cf Russell, 2010). Menstruation, while cloaked in taboos, is also spatialised by the idea that it has a 'proper place' and is a 'private phenomenon' (Cresswell, 1994: 46).

Dirt

As the previous section has shown pollution is a way to articulate boundary crossing. Dirt is also an identifiable transgressive substance. It can often be associated with morality (in relation to actions or behaviour designated 'dirty'). In both contexts it carries a social and psycho-social meaning. When a boundary that is perceived as impermeable is troubled and transgressed the abject, as an object of transgression, is identified so that it may be cast out to restore the boundary. Dirt functions in the application letters as abject matter. However, the way dirt, and the preceding theme of pollution, are used in the letters suggests that the process of boundary restoration is not as simple as casting out abject matter. By its nature abject matter is never truly separate from the individual that attempts to cast it out. It remains as a constant reminder that the boundary is permeable. Dirt is conceptualised by Douglas (2002 [1966]) as 'matter out of place' yet when used in relation to women it 'takes on a more specific significance' (Cresswell 1994:44). Cresswell (1994:44) argues women are supposed to both keep the home and their surroundings clean and 'in addition they

are supposed to be the epitomes of cleanliness themselves' (emphasis in original). Two women, Alina and Magdalena, speak about the dirt in their own experiences,

Sometimes at night I have nightmares I can see all the ugly faces all the filth and the dirt ... I just feel like I'm a human of a lower state now, a lower level. I feel filthy (Alina).

Alina is expressing not only a feeling of pollution but a fear that her pollution will be seen by others. She is also articulating the power that her memories have upon her current perception of herself and how she is reminded of her interactions with men who buy sex, a memory which then further pollutes her. Her use of the idea of dirt is also important as she is expressing something which normally happens externally, to the skin, to reflect her internal disposition.

When Magdalena arrives at a brothel where she will be imprisoned her first comments are that it was 'an ugly grey building' where 'the walls were grey from cigarette smoke.' She also remarks about the working conditions, 'when we finished a shift we had to go and sleep on the same bed [where] we were receiving clients.' The bed is not a place to sleep in, it is a place of sex and one can also read into it that it isn't clean. The brothel creates an abject space within which she is confined. It is a space where men inevitably sweat and ejaculate, each demonstrating the 'fraudulence or impossibility of the 'clean' and 'proper' body' (Grosz, 1994:194). Through the multiple body boundary transgressions the spaces become liminal zones, 'these zones and their articulation in language, may cause us to feel uncertain, uncomfortable, confused and/or maybe repulsed' (Longhurst, 2001:131). The language of dirt, pollution and disgust allows for a description of the liminal spaces of trafficking while still articulating the feelings of repulsion inherent in their experience.

The need to be alone to wash is also denied to Magdalena;

Also the cashiers, were cruel to us. They would wake us in the morning and shout at us that there's already clients at the salon/living room/the reception and she didn't give a damn if we had a shower or not. She said you could take your shower with the client if you want. After shifts we usually wouldn't shower because we were too exhausted to move and in the morning again they didn't let us. We would get the shower only after the first client.

If we conceptualise the sex that takes place during trafficking as acts that render the 'female body' abject we can read attempts to wash and be clean as a way to reverse or limit this experience, a ritual restoration of boundaries and cleansing of the body. Magdalena's focus on her desire to shower can be read as both a practical desire to clean herself as well as a symbolic desire to be cleansed and fend off pollution. Washing can be seen as an agentic act in the face of reduced bodily autonomy. Raphael (2003:60) suggests, in concentration camps during World War II, 'women's acts of care for bodies – washing, holding and covering them – were acts of separative purification.'

In the narratives of women working in prostitution Cusick (1998:141) reports that when condoms break women make 'frantic efforts ... to clean themselves' while also expressing feelings of 'disgust and anger.' If dirt is abject matter, matter out of place, then washing is the separation of self from the abject, the reassertion of boundaries.

This process is done in private and cannot be done when the potential contaminant, that which would transgress (i.e. the client) is present as their mere presence is contaminating in the context of what should be the private ritual of washing. When we think of washing we imagine the surface of the body is touched, the outline of the body redrawn. Soap is then applied and the soap takes away any matter from the skin. Any dirt that may 'cling' or be thought of as remaining when it should have been removed can be seen as potentially attempting to sink into the skin (Grosz, 1994:194). Dirt may be perceived as 'sticky' and attract further substances which also problematise the impermeability of the skin (Ahmed, 2004:91). Through washing the skin is restored as the barrier through which nothing will pass and body boundaries are reasserted. The ritual cannot be performed if the agent of contamination is in proximity. A 'client's' proximity threatens the boundary and impedes attempts to reassert boundaries and remove 'matter out of place.' By their presence in the shower the men are matter out of place as they are contaminants in a cleansing space, they are watchful eyes where privacy should be and they are perceiving a sexualised body alone while she would reassert the embodied self through showering and reconnect with her embodiment through touching the body, washing it, maintaining and caring for it.

When Magdalena needs a towel to either place on the bed (to keep the sheets, where she then sleeps, clean) or to dry herself after a shower or possibly to clean a client she writes 'on the weekend there usually wouldn't be enough clean towels' and she would 'take a towel from the used ones and go to the client.' There is the unwritten suggestion that these towels and the sheets of the bed contain stale semen, bodily fluids that are not contained instead they contaminate everyone that touches them. One 'field report' on Punternet (2008: Report 84911) states 'no towels on the bed meant that we all used the same sheets ... The place was dirty no towel on the bed for each customer.' Rather than a concern for the woman involved this statement can be read as part of what Longhurst (2001:69) describes as 'a fear of (homosexual) contamination by 'circuits of fluids' ... men often fear being contaminated by other men's seminal fluid.' The male is seen as the 'active agent in the transmission of flows' (Grosz, 1994:201) rather than the 'passive receptacle' (Longhurst, 2001:72). However, if we assume that over half of trafficked women are unable to request condom use for every sexual encounter⁶ they become the 'passive receptacle' of male bodily fluids and become part of the contaminating 'circuit of fluids' (Longhurst, 2001:72). As such the status of the trafficked woman's body is lowered even further because disgust, caused by pollution and that which contaminates, 'is crucial to power relations' (Ahmed, 2004:89).

We must then ask, what it is about the body with broken boundaries that both attracts and repels at the same time? Prostitution, and with it trafficking, are stigmatising experiences in society and yet they are also highly visible in the media and prostitution is glamorised through narratives like *Secret Diary of a Call Girl*. Images of often objectified and sexualised 'trafficked women' accompany newspaper articles and appear on NGO websites. Their bodies are both sexualised and simultaneously taboo, alluring and potentially contaminating. Grosz (1994:194) suggests there is an order to things and fear and disgust comes from 'fear of being absorbed into something which has no boundaries of its own.' Ahmed (2004:90) analyses that which is sticky, it threatens to cling to you and yet it is only made sticky by contamination from something else in the past. The duration of the contamination effects all future interactions. She argues that by recoiling from the object of disgust one makes it a sign for disgust because 'disgust works performatively' (Ahmed,

2004:92). Thus the 'female body' with fragmented body boundaries can contaminate others through contact. She becomes a 'socially infectious body' (Russell, 2007:16) and must be excluded to inhibit her contaminatory potential because she has been rendered abject.

Disgust and Smell

The previous sections have explored expressions of boundary transgression and the identification of the abject in the trafficking setting and in the self. This section further develops the response to the process of abjection by arguing that smell is a way in which boundary crossing can be articulated. However, its close alignment with disgust positions them both as the detection and response to transgressive substances. I would argue that smell is a way the penetration of the body by the proximity of another can be articulated without communicating the experience of sexual violence. Disgust is the body's response to contamination and an attempt to restore body boundaries.

Smell is 'especially contaminating' and has the power to transform our conception of the thing that is smelt through the act of smelling (Miller, 1997:66-70). The website of the Helen Bamber Foundation (2007) quotes one woman as saying she remembers the bedroom where she was forced to sell sex,

I remember the smell. It was disgusting. We bought these little pine-tree cut outs 'to freshen the air.' It was cheap. We had to pay for it out of our 'pocket money.' The smell mixed with the stink of the men. I cannot bear that smell. It's toxic and it makes me vomit.

The contaminating smell of the room passes into her body and her reaction is to want to vomit, to expel the abject matter. Equally the smell she is reporting may include the smell of stale semen, 'the stink of the men,' which serves as a reminder of the sex act itself as well as the power of pollution from semen, especially if she is unable to request to use condoms. There is also a sense that through this speech act she is distancing herself from the 'circuit of fluids;' that which is disgusting by defining it as other (Longhurst, 2001:72; Probyn, 2000:131).

In the installation 'The Journey' (Bamber, 2007) visitors walk through a series of shipping containers that are made to represent the stages of the 'trafficking journey,' one of which recreates a multi-sensory bedroom in a brothel (complete with undulating squeaky bed). They experience the sight and the smells of trafficking and gain a greater understanding of trafficking as an embodied experience. One reviewer commented, 'An outstanding visual and sensory journey which allows you to experience the torture of sexual slavery. The smell of that room will linger with me forever' (Harris, 2007). The smell creates a further sense of the abjection of the space; bodily fluids that have been expelled and are as such abject remain and linger in the senses. Ahmed (2004:87) describes this idea as 'border objects' provoking disgust through their transgressive potential.

Smell is an important factor in experience. On an atomic level smell penetrates the boundary of the outside of the body and is experienced first in the nose and then interpreted in the mind. Smell is linked to ingestion, just as the smell of food can make one salivate, disgusting smells make one feel sick. While visual images are seen

and can 'imprint' upon the mind, smell is felt more intimately and can evoke memories that sights and sounds cannot. Tankink (2006: 3) reports the story of one woman who 'has hardly any memories of the rape she experienced, but she continues to suffer from the intrusive smell of her perpetrators, a mix of the sweat of unwashed men, alcohol and cigarettes that makes her very often vomit.' The smell has imprinted on her body in a way her mind has been unable to remove while the memory, the image, touch and sound have been repressed. While the memories are suppressed the body responds to subconscious stimuli, the body remembers when the mind will not and this causes the disjuncture between the two which remains after the violence.

Disgust links to the writing on dirt and pollution because 'anything which has had contact with disgusting things itself becomes disgusting' (Ahmed, 2004:87). Yet when reflecting on that which is sticky, and thus disgusting, Ahmed comments 'what sticks 'shows us' where an object has travelled through what it has gathered onto its surface, gatherings that become part of the object and call into question its integrity as an object' (Ahmed, 2004, 91). By touching the object one becomes part of its history, part of what made it dirty and disgusting. Abjection, as a breakdown of boundaries and thus the potential to be contaminated and to contaminate, functions to give an individual the ambivalent position of the polluter and the polluted. Thus through the identification of abject matter the writers of the letters are also identifying with abject matter.

If we are to conceptualise trafficking as an encounter where women's bodies are abjected we can better conceptualise women's own understanding of this process if we incorporate the notion of disgust. The spaces of trafficking are represented in the applications as abject, dirty and causing disgust. From their discussion of the smell of stale semen, dirty beds where sex takes place which must be slept in or unclean towels we can read feelings of disgust which are usually not articulated toward the individuals (men who buy sex and pimps) but to other material objects. Each association provokes feelings of disgust in the female narrator and links her to those 'border objects' (Ahmed, 2004:87) and spaces, contaminating her by her contact with the disgusting object. Both Grosz (1994) and Longhurst (2001) remark there is very little literature on men's bodily fluids and when they are discussed is it usually in the context of homosexual men and AIDS (cf. Strong, 2009), enabling men, as Longhurst (2001:67) argues, to 'retain their position as rational and untainted by the messiness of corporeal flows.' Thus by constructing the women who 'receive' these corporeal flows as polluted by them, the men involved are freed of their responsibility for their own bodily fluids and distance themselves from them by stigmatising and abjecting her.

Disgust is a socially constructed response (Ahmed, 2004) to a threat to body boundaries. The 'female body' is then constructed on a symbolic level in response to the potential pollution through the transgression of body boundaries. As such 'the feelings a thing arouses in us are spontaneously transmitted to the symbol that represents it' (Durkheim (1965[1912]:221) creating a collective notion of the 'female body' as both pure with closed off boundaries as well as liminal and precarious in response to threats of penetration and pollution. If we return to Ahmed's (2004: 91) statement that disgust calls 'into question its integrity as an object' we better understand that pollution can call fundamental boundaries into question causing a reaction in the self and others.

It is useful to note that in the two quotes about smell (Helen Bamber, 2008 and Tankink, 2006) each individual responds to the unwelcome smell by stating they want to vomit. There is a desire to cast out the abject matter that is troubling the boundary

of the body by entering through smell. Yet, if the individual believes they are inherently contaminated and thus have become contaminating then they cannot cast out the abject matter from the body. The solution is then to cast out the body from the sense of self. Patricia writes,

I got to a stage where my brain, my soul was separate from my body. I didn't feel what he was doing to my body. The pain, the humiliation, the shame without end caused me to feel as if I'm not on earth any more. I'm in hell and there's no way back from it.

When one loses freedom, choice and bodily integrity one returns to a contingent existence in the 'anarchism of pre-objectal relationship' (Kristeva, 1982:10). The solution many women employ is to reject the body that is fragmented and to reassert the bounded self of the incorporeal mind, thus removing the opportunity for further pollution but destroying a sense of embodied identity. This then means that the project of rebuilding the body's boundaries is rendered even more difficult when a woman exits trafficking, especially if she chooses to try to reconstruct body boundaries along conventional gendered understandings incorporating idealised impermeability.

Conclusion

Narratives of body boundary control and transgression have been shown to be articulated through notions of dirt, smell and pollution. The stigmatising incident is then experienced as a transgression of a boundary and the social exclusion it anticipates is articulated through ideas of disgust and a desire to expel the threatening object, reflecting how the authors of the letters anticipate their bodies will be socially constructed as polluting to social cohesion. Women who have been trafficked are both subject to fascination and condemnation; they simultaneously attract and repel, embodying the ambivalence and threat to boundaries that is a marker of abjection. The trafficked woman is both desirable as she has little control over her body or the sexual practices she is forced to engage in. Yet she is simultaneously a figure of disgust because the lack of control she has over her body and its boundaries means her body is perceived as contaminated and contaminating. This also speaks to the ambivalence of the social classification of women who have transgressed multiple boundaries. By rendering women socially contaminating, through stigma, this ambivalence is responded to and yet it is not acknowledged. Such a response is inherently gendered and relies on a particular construction of 'female body' boundaries to operate. While I have problematised the very distinction of a 'female body' this article has demonstrated that the constructions of embodiment that occur in trafficking (and in other forms of sexual violence) can have real and tangible effects on lived experience.

Due to the prioritisation of masculine notions of the closed off body (Longhurst, 2001) the 'female body' is constructed to always fail to achieve the impenetrable status of the 'male body' (for the few male exceptions see Elder, 1998; Sinfield, 1998). The juxtaposition of gendered bodies places the onus on women to maintain their body boundaries, allocating blame to them if they fail. Yet if this ideal of the closed off body did not have primacy in our understanding of body boundaries the taboos around transgression would not have the power to socially displace an individual and cause such levels of emotional harm to them. This analysis

demonstrates how the taboos around transgression operate to exclude certain 'female bodies' while rendering the role of the men who buy sex from women who have been trafficked as an 'absent presence' (Shilling, 1993) in their narratives. A clear focus on body boundaries, and the articulation of their transgression through the language of pollution, exposes the fallacy of the bounded body and the inherent gendered power imbalance that maintains it. When boundary crossing is reconceptualised through the concept of abjection it opens up a thought-provoking framework for theorizing experiences of, and social responses to, sexual violence, stigma and social exclusion. Future research can conceptualise sexual violence or any act of body boundary crossing (cf, Harris, 2009) through this framework. If we accept that the body understood as female by society, by its definition cannot and will not ever be the embodiment of closed off boundaries, then we can critique the prioritisation of impermeability that still remains part of the way society responds to bodies and conceptualises body boundary transgression.

Acknowledgements

The author thanks Prof Kim Knott, Dr Shirley Tate and Dr Nicola Hutchinson for their reviews of earlier drafts of this paper.

The author would like to acknowledge the contribution of the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) for their funding [Grant 122196] that made this project possible.

References

Agamben, G. (1995). *Homo Sacer. Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Agustín, L. (2006). 'The Disappearing of a Migration Category: Migrants who Sell Sex,' *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 32: 29-47.

Ahmed, S. (2004). *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Andrijasevic, R. (2003). 'The Difference Borders make: (Il)legality, Migration and Trafficking in Italy among Eastern European Women in Prostitution,' pp. 251-271 in S. Ahmed, C. Castaneda, A. Furtier and M. Sheller (eds), *Uprootings/Regroundings: Questions of Home and Migration*, Oxford: Berg.

Andrijasevic, R. (2004). *Trafficking in Women and the Politics of Mobility in Europe*, Doctoral Dissertation: University of Utrecht, URL, (consulted 16th January 2007): <http://igitur-archive.library.uu.nl/dissertations/2005-0314-013009/index.htm>

Andrijasevic, R. (2007). 'Beautiful Dead Bodies: Gender, Migration and Representation in Anti-Trafficking Campaigns,' *Feminist Review*, 86: 24-44.

Andrijasevic, R. (2008). 'Gendered Migration and Differentiated Inclusion,' *Re-Public*, URL (consulted 9th January 2009): <http://www.re-public.gr/en/?p=470>

Andrijasevic, R. (2010). *Migration, Agency and Citizenship in Sex Trafficking*, London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Anttonen, V. (1996a). *The Making of Corporeal and Territorial Boundaries: the Sacred as a Cultural Category*. Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.

Anttonen, V. (1996b). 'Rethinking the Sacred: Notions of 'Human Body' and 'Territory' in Conceptualizing Religion,' pp. 65-88 in T. Idinopulos and E. Yonan (eds.), *The Sacred and it's Scholars: Comparative Methodologies for the Study of Primary Religious Data*. Leiden: Brill.

Anttonen, V. (2005). 'Space, Body and the Notion of Boundary: A Category-Theoretical Approach to Religion,' *Temenos* 41 (2): 185-201.

Anzieu, D. (1989). *The Skin Ego*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Aradau, C. (2008). *Rethinking Trafficking in Women: Politics out of Security*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bamber, Helen. (2007). '7 Stages of the Journey,' Helen Bamber Foundation, URL (consulted 7th May 2007): <http://www.helenbamber.org/Sevenstages.html>

Bamber, H. (2008). Interview with Helen Bamber Co-Founder of the Helen Bamber Foundation, May 2008, London.

Bataille, G. (1988). 'Attraction and Repulsion II: Social Structure,' pp. 113-124 in D. Hollier, (ed), *The College of Sociology (1937-39)*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Bersani, L. (1996). *Homos*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bracewell, W. (2000). 'Rape in Kosovo: Masculinity and Serbian Nationalism,' *Nations and Nationalism*. 6: 563-590.

Buckley, M. (2009). 'Public Opinion in Russia on the Politics of Human Trafficking,' *Europe-Asia Studies*, 61, (2): 213–248.

Campbell, K. (2007). 'The Gender of Transitional Justice: Law, Sexual Violence and the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia,' *International Journal of Transitional Justice*, 1 (3): 411-432.

Chaikin, R. and Safran, H. (2010), *Immigration, Women and Prostitution: the Case of Women from the Former Soviet Union in Israel*, Haifa: Isha L'Isha – Haifa Feminist Centre.

Connell, R. (1995). *Masculinities*, Cambridge: Polity.

Cresswell, T. (1994). 'Putting Women in their Place: The Carnival at Greenham Common,' *Antipode*, 26 (1): 35-58.

Cusick, L. (1998). 'Non-use of Condoms by Prostitute Women,' *AIDS Care*, 10 (2): 133-146.

Diken, B. and Laustsen, C. B. (2005). 'Becoming Abject: Rape as a Weapon of War,' *Body & Society*, 11 (1): 111-128.

Douglas, M. (2002 [1966]). *Purity and Danger*, London: Routledge.

Durkheim, E. (1965 [1912]). *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, Trans K. E. Fields, New York: Free Press.

Elder, G. S. (1998). 'The South African Body Politic: Space, Race and Heterosexuality,' pp.153-164 in H. J. Nast and S. Pile *Places through the Body*. London: Routledge.

Ernout, A. and Meillet, P. J. A. (1967 [1932]). *Dictionnaire Etymologique de la Langue Latine*, Paris: Librairie C. Klincksieck.

Farley, M. (2005). 'Prostitution Harms Women Even if Indoors: Reply to Weitzer,' *Violence Against Women*, 11, (7): 950- 964.

Foxman, B., Aral, S. and Holmes, K. (1998). 'Interrelationships Among Douching Practices, Risky Sexual Practices, and History of Self-Reported Sexually Transmitted Diseases in an Urban Population,' *Sexually Transmitted Diseases*, 25 (2): 90-99.

Goffman, E. (1963). *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Grosz, E. (1994). *Volatile Bodies*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Hansen, L. (2008). 'Taking Trafficking Seriously: What the Abject Subject can Teach IR,' *Cooperation and Conflict*, 43 (4): 469-476.

Harris, M. (2009). 'Injecting, Infection, Illness: Abjection and Hepatitis C Stigma,' *Body & Society*, 15 (4): 33-51.

Harris, D. (2007). 'The Journey,' Helen Bamber Foundation, URL (consulted 25th September 2007): http://www.the-journey.co.uk/index.php?page_id=2

Holliday, R. and Thompson, G. (2001). 'A Body of Work' pp. 117-133 in R. Holliday and J. Hassard (eds), *Contested Bodies: An Introduction*. London: Routledge.

International Committee for Prostitutes' Rights, (1998). 'International Committee for Prostitutes' Rights World Charter,' in Delacoste F. and Alexander A. (eds.), *Sex Work, Writings by Women in the Sex Industry*, San Francisco: Cleis Press.

Jobe, A. (2008). *Accessing Services: Trafficking Victims'/Survivors' Experiences in the UK*, Newcastle: University of Newcastle.

Kelly, L. (2003). 'The Wrong Debate: Reflections on why Force is not the Key Issue with Respect to Trafficking in Women for Sexual Exploitation,' *Feminist Review*, 73: 139-144.

- Knott, K. 2005. *The Location of Religion. A Spatial Analysis*. London: Equinox.
- Kristeva, J. (1982). *Powers of Horror*, New York: Columbia University Press.
- Laczko, F. 2002. *Human Trafficking: The Need for Better Data*, International Organisation for Migration, URL: (Consulted 12th March 2008), <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/print.cfm?ID=66>
- Levenkron, N. (2001). *Trafficking in Women in Israel*, Tel Aviv: Hotline for Migrant Workers.
- Levenkron, N. (2007). *Deported and Dispossessed: Human Trafficking and the State of Israel: Between Economic Struggle and Systemic Dispossession*, Tel Aviv: Hotline for Migrant Workers.
- Llinares, D. (2011). *The Astronaut: Cultural Mythology and Idealised Masculinity*, Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholars.
- Longhurst, R. (2000). *Bodies: Exploring Fluid Boundaries*, London: Routledge.
- Martin, E. (1991). 'The Egg and the Sperm: How Science has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles,' *Signs*, 16 (3): 485-501.
- McDowell, L. (1993). 'Space, Place and Gender Relations: part II Identity, Difference, Feminist Geometries and Geographies,' *Progress in Human Geography*, 17 (3): 305-318.
- Miller, W. I. (1997). *The Anatomy of Disgust*, Cambridge – Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- O'Connell-Davidson, J. (2006), 'Will the Real Sex Slave Please Stand Up?' *Feminist Review*, 83, 4-22.
- Patterson, O. (1985). *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University.
- Phoenix, J. (2000). 'Prostitute Identities: Men, Money and Violence,' *British Journal of Criminology*, 40: 37-55.
- POPPY Project, (2004). *When Women are Trafficked: Quantifying the Gendered Experience of Trafficking in the UK*, London: Eaves Housing.
- POPPY Project, (2006). *Hope Betrayed: An Analysis of Women Victims of Trafficking and their Claims for Asylum*, London: Eaves Housing.
- POPPY Project. (2008). *POPPY Project Outreach Service, A Review of Work to Date: January – September 2007*, London: Eaves Housing.
- Probyn, E. (2000). *Carnal Appetites: Food, Sex, Identities*, London: Routledge.

- Poudel M. (2011). *Dealing with Hidden Issues: Social Rejection Experienced by Trafficked Women in Nepal*, Saarbrücken: Lambert Academic Publishing.
- Probyn, E. (2005). *Blush: Faces of Shame*. Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press & University of New South Wales Press.
- Punternet. (2008). Report 84911, Punternet.com, URL (consulted 9th September 2008): http://www.punternet.com/frs/fr_view.php?recnum=84911
- Raijman, R. and Semyonov, M. (1998). 'Best of Times, Worst of Times and Occupational Mobility: The Case of Soviet Immigrants in Israel,' *International Migration* , 36 (3): 291-312.
- Raphael, M. (2003). *The Female Face of God: A Jewish Feminist Theology of the Holocaust*, London and New York: Routledge.
- Ravenscroft, A. (2008). 'Breasts, Bodies, Canvas: Central Desert Art as Experience,' *Australian Feminist Studies*, 23 (56): 207-208.
- Rich, A. (1987), *Blood, Bread and Poetry: Selected prose 1979-1985*. London: Virago.
- Richardson, D., Poudel, M. and Laurie, N., (2009). 'Sexual Trafficking in Nepal: constructing citizenship and livelihoods,' *Gender, Place and Culture*, 16 (3): 259–278.
- Rogers, B. (2004). *Is Nothing Sacred?* London: Routledge.
- Russell, A. M. (2007). 'Imposing Boundaries upon the Female Body,' pp 2-16 in C. Beckett, O. Heathcote and M. Macey (eds.), *Negotiating Boundaries? Identities, Sexualities, Diversities*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Russell, A. M. (2010). *Boundaries of the Body: De/Constructing Boundaries in the Lives of Women who have been Trafficked for Sexual Exploitation*, Leeds: University of Leeds.
- Schneider, M. (1996). 'Sacredness, Status and Bodily Violation,' *Body & Society*, 2 (4): 75-92.
- Shildrick, M. (1997). *Leaky Bodies and Boundaries*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Shilling, C. (1993) *The Body and Social Theory*. London: Sage Publications.
- Shilling, C. and Mellor, P. A. (2001). *The Sociological Ambition: Elementary Forms of Social and Moral Life*, London: Sage.
- Sinfield, A. (1998). *Gay and After*, London: Serpent's Tail.

Skjelsbæk, I. (2006). 'Victim and Survivor: Narrated Social Identities of Women Who Experienced Rape During the War in Bosnia-Herzegovina,' *Feminism & Psychology*, 16 (4): 373-403.

Stephen-Smith, S. (2008). *Routes In, Routes Out: Quantifying the Gendered Experience of Trafficking to the UK*, London: POPPY Project, Eaves Housing.

Stallybrass, P. and White, A. (1986). *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Strong, T. (2009). 'Vital Publics of Pure Blood,' *Body & Society*, 15 (2): 169-191.

Survivors of Prostitution and Trafficking. (2005). *Survivors of Prostitution and Trafficking Manifesto*, URL (consulted 18th March 2008): <http://action.web.ca/home/catw/readingroom.shtml?x=82636&AA_EX_Session=a88574b4ca90d53cbeeb40b3a0911f61>

Tanfer, K. and Aral, S. (1996). 'Sexual Intercourse during Menstruation and Self-Reported Sexually Transmitted Disease History among Women,' *Sexually Transmitted Diseases*, 23 (5): 395-401.

Tankink, M. (2006). 'Silence as a means of controlling the explosive nature of sexual violence,' Paper presented at the conference CARE FULL, medico-legal reports and the Istanbul protocol in asylum procedures, 15 November 2006, Amsterdam, URL (Consulted 25 May 2008): <http://www.torturecare.org.uk/files/Marian%20Tankink%20presentation%20CARE%20FULL.pdf>

US State Department. (2006). *Trafficking in Persons Report*, (Consulted 12th December 2008): <http://www.state.gov/p/nea/ci/74829.htm>

Weitzer, R. (2005). 'Flawed Theory and Method in Studies of Prostitution,' *Violence Against Women*, 11, (7): 934-949.

Wooden, W. S. and Parker, J. (1982). *Men Behind Bars. Sexual Exploitation in Prison*, New York: De Capo Press.

Young, A. (1990). *Femininity in Dissent*. London: Routledge.

Zimmerman, C. Yun, K. Watts, C. Shvab, I. Trappolin, L. Treppete, M. Bimbi, F. Jiraporn, S. Beci, L. Albrecht, M. Bindel, J. and Regan, L. (2003). *The Health Risks and Consequences of Trafficking in Women and Adolescents, Findings from a European Study*, London: London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine.

Zimmerman, C. Hossain, M. Yun, K. Roche, B. Morison, L. and Watts, C. (2006). *Stolen Smiles: The Physical and Psychological health consequences of women and adolescents trafficked in Europe*, London: London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

¹ I specify that my analysis is of trafficking for sexual exploitation to avoid the conflation of trafficking for sexual exploitation with other forms of trafficking.

² Gender based violence is broadly defined as violence that is the manifestation and enforcement of gender inequities.

³ See the special edition of this journal 16, (3), 2010.

⁴ The debate continues to rage over this topic and I draw the reader's attention to Weitzer (2005) and Farley's (2005) academic discussion, and the Survivors of Prostitution and Trafficking (2005) in contrast to the International Committee for Prostitutes Rights (1998).

⁵ However, the contaminating potential of menstruation as a belief does have some medical support (see Foxman et al 1998; Tanfer and Aral 1996).

⁶ 'Many women 53% (n=63) were unable to negotiate 'safe sex' at all' (Stephen-Smith, 2008:18).