

Sex Work, Stigma and Gendered Identity(ies)

- **This project is looking for english-speaking female, transgender and male sex workers to take part in a research project exploring the ways in which sex workers can be stigmatised – that is, discriminated against or treated negatively – as a result of their occupation.**
- **Participants will be interviewed about their views and experiences, and paid \$50 per interview as a way of acknowledging the experience, knowledge and expertise that they bring to the research, and as compensation for their time and energy.**
- **A maximum of 40 participants will be interviewed and this must include 10 male, 10 transgender, and 10 female workers.**
- **Ideally, participants would be available for interview within the Brisbane, Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast areas in Queensland – however, other locations/states would be considered.**

Purpose of the Research

This research project is concerned with the way(s) in which sex workers can be stigmatised – that is, discriminated against and treated negatively – as a result of their occupation. The aims of the research are to investigate whether female, transgender and male sex workers experience and negotiate this stigma differently. The project begins from the position that sex work is work, and it is hoped that the results of this research will produce knowledge which helps to reduce the stigma that sex workers experience. The research is being undertaken as part of a PhD project at the University of Queensland, and has the support of Queensland's sex workers' organisation *Respect.Inc* who have been consulted as part of the research process.

Your Involvement

As a sex worker, your views and experiences of stigma are crucial to this research. You will be invited to participate in an interview, at a time and location convenient to you – ideally this will be a private room to ensure confidentiality. The length of the interview may vary, and this will depend on the time you are happy to give. The interview will explore issues such as your working history, your experience(s) of stigma, the effects that these experiences had on you, and how you dealt with these experiences.

Confidentiality

Any information that you chose to disclose during the interviews will be kept strictly confidential, and *your identity will be protected at all times*. With your agreement, interviews will be recorded and written up. Any details which could potentially identify you will be removed or amended (for example, names and places will be changed). The recordings of interviews and any identifying information will be kept separately on a password protected computer, which will be accessible only to me. Findings of the research will be published in the form of a doctoral thesis. In this your words may be quoted, but pseudonyms will be used. These measures will ensure that your identity is protected and cannot be linked to the information you provide.

Voluntary Participation

Participation in this project is entirely voluntary; you do not have to take part if you do not wish to, and you are free to withdraw from the research at any time. You may also request that any information collected from you be destroyed. Your consent to take part will be obtained verbally, and *no written confirmation* of this will be sought.

Risks Associated with Participation

Because you will be discussing personal issues and reflecting upon your views and experiences of stigma, it may be possible that you experience negative feelings and emotions as a result of the topics we discuss. However, I would like to stress that you do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer, and can stop the interview and/or withdraw from the research at any point without question. In addition, I will be able to provide information regarding services and resources that could be of help or support, should this be of benefit to you.

Feedback

It is extremely important that your experiences and views are represented correctly, and you will be provided with opportunities to review your responses as well as comment upon the research findings before they are published. On completion of the project you will also be provided with a summary of the findings, and details of how to access the full thesis.

If you have any questions about participation in this research project, and/or would like to arrange an interview, please do not hesitate to contact me. I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank you for your time and help with this matter.

**Researcher: Ms. Jane Nolan / Mob: 0403 425804 / E-mail: jane.nolan@uqconnect.edu.au
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This study adheres to the Guidelines of the ethical review process of The University of Queensland. Whilst you are free to discuss your participation in this study with the researcher (contactable at jane.nolan@uqconnect.edu.au), if you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved in the study, you may contact the Ethics Officer on (07) 3365 3924.



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