

revolutionary potential and creating a global mothering force is where our voices need to go. In an era of hate, fear, and divisiveness, this collection reveals how love can create the unifying bridge. We can move away from scarcity thinking and toward abundance. As Autumn Brown writes in *Scarcity and Abundance*, “Abundance ignites the imagination.” But there are no mythical illusions, no false claims of utopia. In reading this book, we must all ask ourselves, how can we acknowledge injustice while also maintaining hope? How can we fight for change and use the rage of love without being consumed by it? *Revolutionary Mothering* provides a starting point, but it is now up to all of us to continue this fight collectively.

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MOTHERS, MOTHERING AND SEX WORK

Rebecca Bromwich and Monique Marie DeJong, Eds.
Bradford: Demeter Press, 2015

REVIEWED BY LAURA BRIGHTWELL

One romanticized, one abjected, motherhood and sex work are identities both constructed in limited and damaging ways. The new collection,

Mothers, Mothering and Sex Work explores the intersections of two identities that are often seen to be mutually exclusive and challenges societal assumptions about both types of work.

Mothers, Mothering and Sex Work refuses to reproduce a simplistic understanding of mothers engaged in sex work. Its contributors produce an image of sex work that is both joyous and harmful, safe and dangerous. Editors Rebecca Bromwich and Monique Marie DeJong’s intention is to curate a collection that renders “imaginable and speakable the messiness of divergent perspectives and experiences” about mothering and sex work. The anthology claims that it does not to adhere to either a criminalization or legalization position, arguing that the polarization of viewpoints framed by the ‘sex work debate’ leaves out many aspects of sex workers’ experiences. Centred on the Canadian context, the anthology nevertheless references global issues and challenges, particularly through its emphasis on the effects of globalization and colonization.

Despite its proclaimed editorial intention, *Mothers, Mothering and Sex Work* leans generally towards the decriminalization argument, with many of the works illustrating the harmful effects of Canadian policy, and punitive policing, on sex workers. Its intersectional approach highlights that the most vulnerable sex workers are those who are societally marginalized in other ways. Those who have the societal mobility to choose sex work as a profession are more likely to have a positive experience of it, and work under safer conditions. The overall effect of the book is therefore to align it with a legalization framework, that emphasizes the importance of sex workers’ agency and control over their own working conditions, a control that is disallowed in the paternalistic and moralizing legal framework of

criminalization.

However, the most striking and enjoyable aspect of this book is its employment of diverse storytelling mechanisms to tell the stories of sex workers. In addition to academic papers, the collection features photographic essays, poetry, and long-form creative writing. Well-known writers are included, with an excerpt from the second of Maya Angelou’s autobiographies, *Gather Together in My Name*, and a short story by Alice Munro. The work of these celebrated authors sits alongside the voices of anonymous sex workers describing their experiences, a juxtaposition that refuses to privilege one voice over the other. The inclusion of multiple perspectives demonstrates the limitations of both sides of the criminalization/legalization debate and forces readers to reconsider their own position.

The academic articles in the book cover a range of topics, such as the use of intergenerational support networks in African American mothering, the effective state incarceration of adolescent sex workers permitted by the policy of “secure care,” and the racist construction of migrant sex workers as innocents in need of rescue and repatriation. The effect of its multimedia approach is to provide first-person perspectives and refuse the othering effect often generated by academic analysis. By holding these various media in tandem, the collection offers a comprehensive approach to the topic of mothers who are sex workers and refuses to pitch these fraught and complicated identities against each other.

Mothers, Mothering and Sex Work collects and holds diverse voices, perspectives, and experiences together in order to produce a holistic examination of the intersections of mothering and sex work. By refusing the polarizing debates of victim/agent, criminalization/legalization,

the collection produces a more comprehensive understanding of the factors involved in sex work at the individual and societal levels. *Mothers, Mothering and Sex Work* offers a dynamic and important contribution to existing scholarship on both sex work and motherhood studies.

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GRINGO GULCH: SEX, TOURISM, AND SOCIAL MOBILITY IN COSTA RICA

Megan Rivers-Moore
Chicago: University of Chicago
Press, 2016

REVIEWED BY CLARE ANSTOCK

Megan Rivers-Moore writes an ethnographic account of the Costa Rican sex industry's interaction with sex tourists and the state which provides upward social mobility for these active groups. The book focuses on the sex industry as it operates within the Gringo Gulch neighbourhood of San Jose, Costa Rica, an area in which the racialised and classed relationship between white sex tourists and local sex workers converge.

Gringo Gulch is divided into two parts, the first section, "Sex, Class, and Consumption", focuses on sex tourists and sex workers, and demonstrates the social mobility of these groups. Chapter 1 begins the discussion on sex work by "situating sex tourism within the tourist in-

dustry." Rivers-Moore demonstrates that while Costa Rica has been presented as an "exceptional" tourist destination, in part due to the idyllic landscape and its political peacefulness, the state has, nonetheless, distanced itself from the sex industry. Chapter 2 then challenges prominent discourse that assumes 'the almighty gringo' to be racist, misogynistic, and exploitative. By illuminating the complexity of hegemonic masculinity and demonstrating that Costa Rica offers tourists the "possibility of enhanced status and social mobility," Rivers-Moore demonstrates that the tourists are complex agents seeking to achieve more than just sex. Rather, sex tourists, despite little change to class or financial status, experience upward social mobility when they are treated by sex workers as being financially solvent. This chapter makes clear the concept of social mobility in the context of the sex tourism industry, in which participants are either actively benefiting from financial input, or made to feel as though they are financially more solvent in comparison to their experience in their home country. Further, participants regularly direct their earnings to family members who then benefit from an income, rendering participants and family members of those in the sex industry recipients of upward social mobility.

Both chapters 3 and 4 then focus on the voices and experiences of sex workers. Rivers-Moore situates sex work in the realm of care work by suggesting that sex work is inherently a work of care, and that sex work incorporates a range of caring acts before then highlighting the intersectional identities of sex workers as mothers and consumers while signifying the transferability of social mobility. Rivers-Moore demonstrates that the motivation to engage in sex work was more than to meet immediate financial needs, but instead the

neoliberal subject pursuing a heightened economic status, and boosting the status of those with whom they chose to impact.

Part two, "Regulating Sex in the Age of Neoliberalism," incorporates chapters 5 and 6. This section first demonstrates the role of the state's engagement with the sex industry in which the state simultaneously attempts to control sex workers under the guise of public health, while also realising the financial power of sex tourism. Rivers-Moore refers to this as 'permissive ambivalence', whereby the state turns a blind eye to sex work in order to reap financial benefits from the sex tourism industry. This argument is extended in chapter 6 where Rivers-Moore argues that the state's 'permissive ambivalence' is a strategy for social mobility in which the local economy profits from the economic input of sex tourists. Rivers-Moore then concludes *Gringo Gulch* by arguing that the sex tourist industry must "be understood fundamentally as a class project of social mobility for sex tourists, sex workers, and the state," by placing individual and macro social processes on the same trajectory of social mobility.

Compellingly, the author makes succinct connections between "macro-level political-economic transformations with lived experiences and practices of sexuality in people's everyday lives," demonstrating how the state and macro-social institutions have an effect on the inter-personal heteronormativity of Gringo Gulch. Particularly convincing is the author's connection between neoliberal policies of individualization embodied in Gringo Gulch, and the claim that while sex work is an ideal form of neoliberal work in that "they work independently and in direct competition with one another, and their income is based entirely on the market with no outside regulation by the state," sex work nonetheless