

Working Girls in Melbourne Brothels

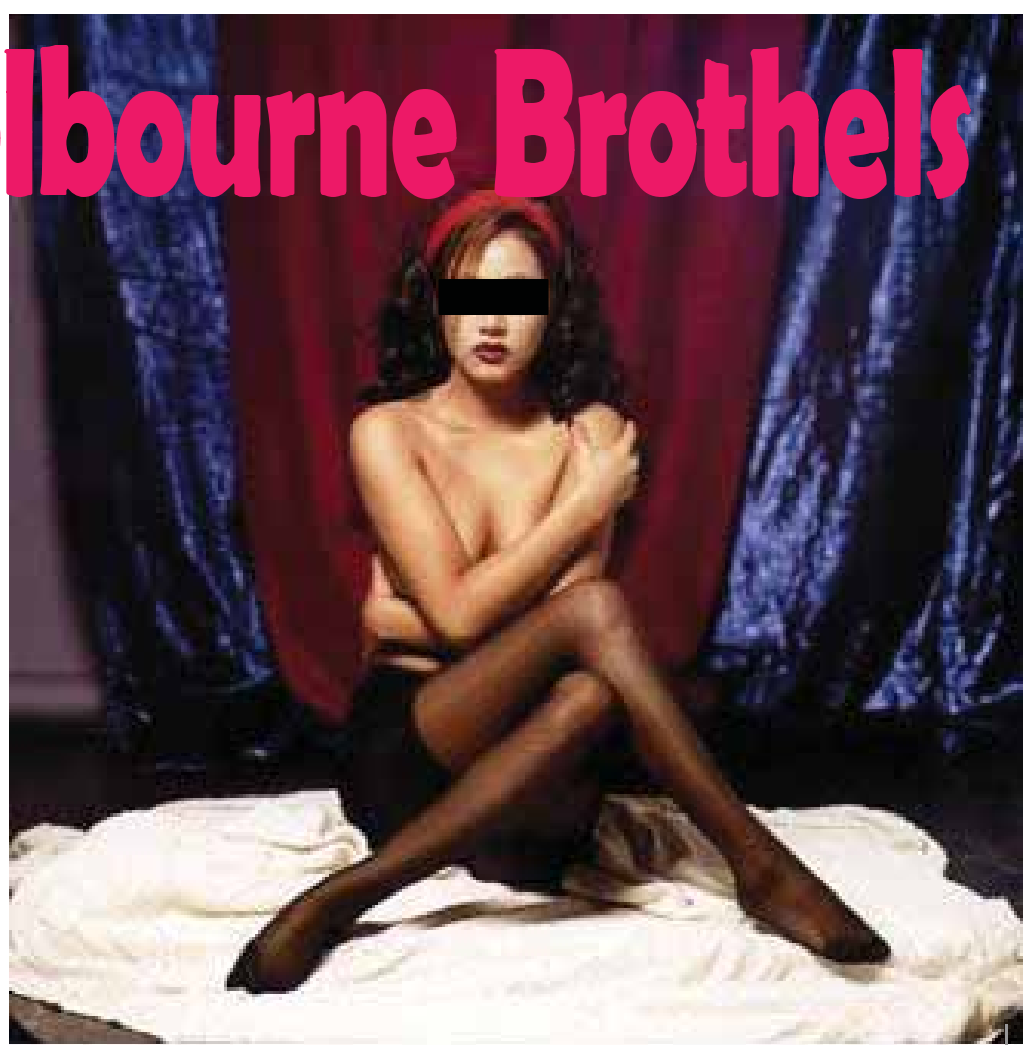
An investigative survey into the Melbourne Sex Industry by RhED (Resourcing Health and Education In the Sex Industry)

Given the 10th anniversary of the establishment of a legal sex industry in Victoria, RhED felt it timely to explore the profile of women working in the industry.

We conducted a semi structured face to face, confidential survey with 100 women from the industry, capturing both day and night shift women. We then collated the information and clustered the data in themes and differences, highlighting the experiences of women working in the industry. The results presented in this report inform the RhED team and will assist future planning, using the results to develop our brothel outreach services and resources.

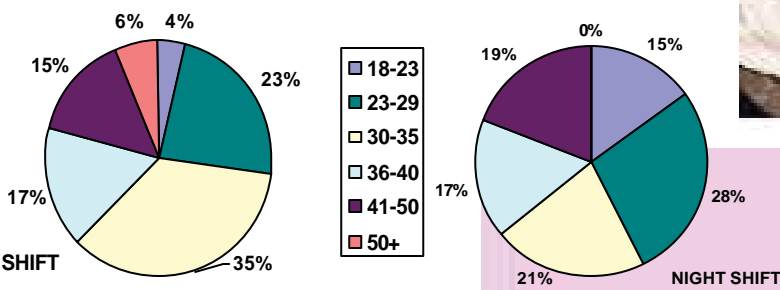
The RhED team would like to thank the 100 women throughout Victoria who so willingly participated in the survey. The time, care and honesty you gave with this survey is very much appreciated.

Jan Groves
RhED Program



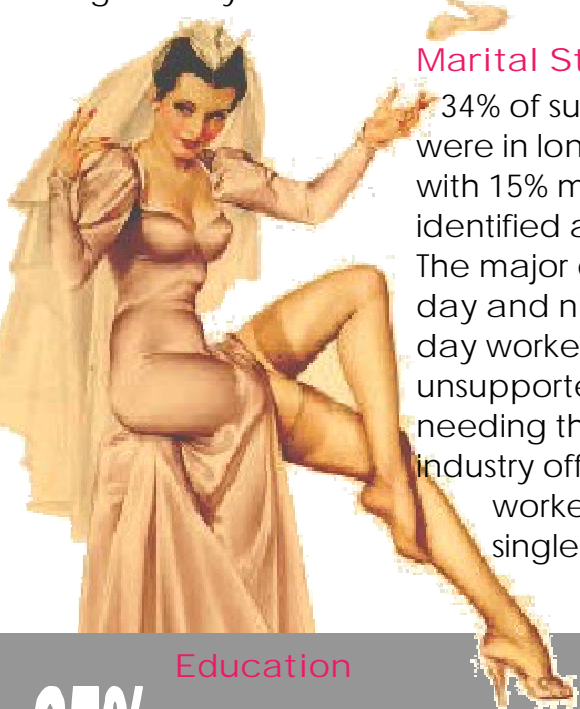
Age

The majority of sex workers are aged between 23-35. Workers surveyed over 50 were found to only work during the day.



Marital Status

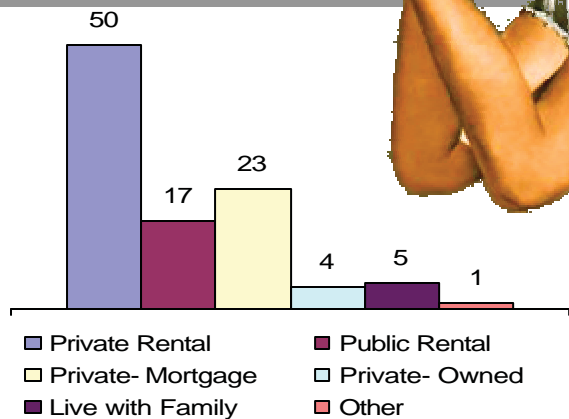
34% of surveyed participants were in long term relationships with 15% married. The majority identified as single. The major difference between day and night workers are that day workers were mainly unsupported sole parents needing the flexibility the industry offers, whereas night workers tended to be single with no children



Education

65% had completed up to and including year 12

42% had completed some form of higher education



Accommodation

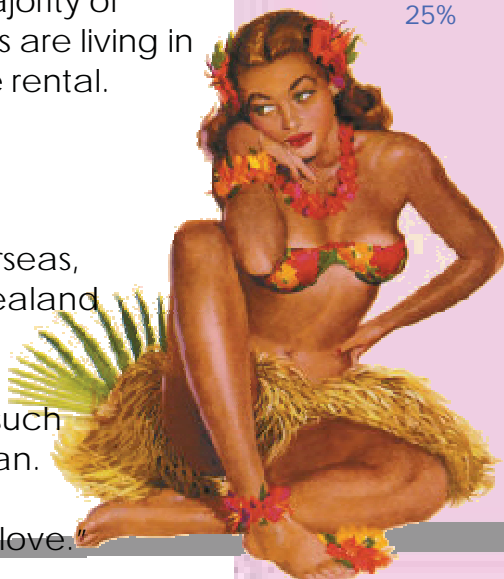
The majority of workers are living in private rental.

Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

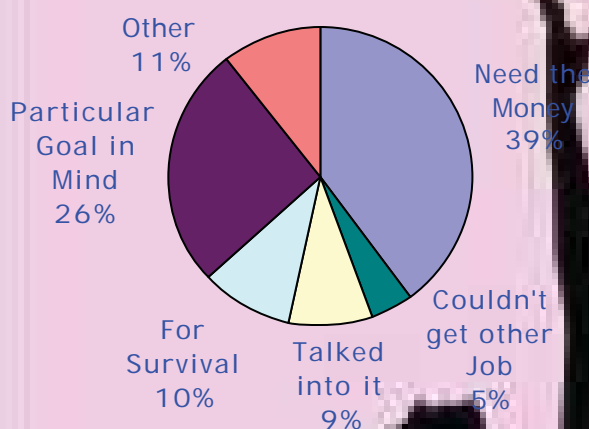
20% of sex workers surveyed were born overseas, the majority of ex-pats coming from New Zealand (31%), England (14%) and Russia (13%).

Around 20% can speak another language such as German, Spanish, Chinese and Indonesian.

One person was fluent in "the language of love."



Industry findings

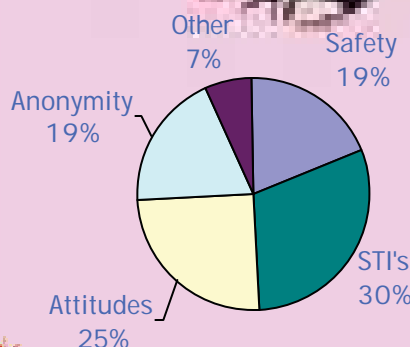


Entry into the Industry

Other reasons workers gave revolve around escaping a background of difficulty as well as choosing the flexibility, independence and empowerment that sex work provides. Some workers stated that they just really enjoyed the work.

Length of time in Industry

The data shows that, due to the establishment of the legal industry in Victoria, the majority of sex workers have been able to work for an extended period of time. The large majority have been in the industry for over five years.



Concerns about Working

Other concerns that were expressed regarding the industry included:

- The lack of knowledge/ education of new, young workers
- Unsafe sexual demands from clients
- The effect of illegal parlours on clients
- On a personal level, they were worried about:
 - The effect on relationships
 - The psychological impact
 - The disconnection from self and world

