

CHAPTER 1

Qualitative Description of Sex Work among Transwomen in New York City

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SUMMARY

This chapter provides a qualitative description of transwomen sex workers in New York City. Sex work occurs largely in “ethnocultural communities” that are distinct with regard to ethnicity and other variables. These include African American or black and Latina(o) and transgender people involved in the House Ball community, Asian sex workers, and white cross-dressers. Variation across these communities in the frequency and motivations for sex work, working conditions, typical clients, and power dynamics with clients were examined. The communities have little in common with one another and are economically and culturally structured along a hierarchy of power and privilege.

KEY TERMS

cross-dresser; ethnicity; ethnography; House Ball community; power dynamics; sex worker

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