

THE SOURCE



Voices from Sex Workers of Colour

Issue #001

“For many people of colour, prostitution is not what you do when you hit rock bottom. Prostitution is what you do to stay afloat, to swim rather than sink, to defy rather than disappear.”

— Pluma Sumaq

*To the sex workers of colour reading this:
I see you and keep you with me everywhere I go.
You are supported and loved.
I do this all for you.*

*With love and power,
Lilith.*

Sex workers of colour are some of the most marginalised within society.

We face institutional racism, systemic violence and stigma on an everyday basis. We are focused on survival, healing racial wounds, paying our rent, making sure our children are fed and all whilst keeping our mental health in check. The burden we carry is one that can, sometimes, be overwhelming.

We have been at the forefront of liberation movements for decades, and yet we have continuously had our stories and realities erased. Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera (two Black Trans Womxn of Colour who began the Stonewall riots) were sex workers, yet this is left out of historical common knowledge. Within our everyday life in and outside of sex work, we are expected to give countless amounts of emotional labour. We are not rewarded, we are not thanked.

We are spoken FOR and spoken OVER. We are represented via statistics and never in the flesh. We are deprived of community because we are more focused on navigating capitalism. We are dying within an industry that pretends we do not exist and insists that we hold no value.

Sex workers of colour are usually represented via statistics; a mode of portrayal that is extremely reductive and is predominantly used as a form of violence. Statistics used in proximity to blackness is a way to superficially bring issues to light, whilst silencing micro and interpersonal issues that we face. This project comes together as a result of working within NUM to create a platform which memorialises and immortalises the experience of those who have been continuously rendered invisible and have had their histories erased.

To the allies, friends and the curious: listen. We are looking for safety, not rescue. Uplift our voices and donate to projects like this and other SW organisations listed at the back.

To ALL sex workers: We must unite in our fight to work towards change and the resources we need and are denied of. If you have the capacity to contribute in any way, we welcome all who are willing to offer creativity and skills.

By buying and reading this you are directly supporting us to speak out in a radical act of reclaiming power; highlighting **new ways of producing knowledge which comes from the source, is about the source and is the source.**

THE SOURCE

Made Possible Through
Charity Funding

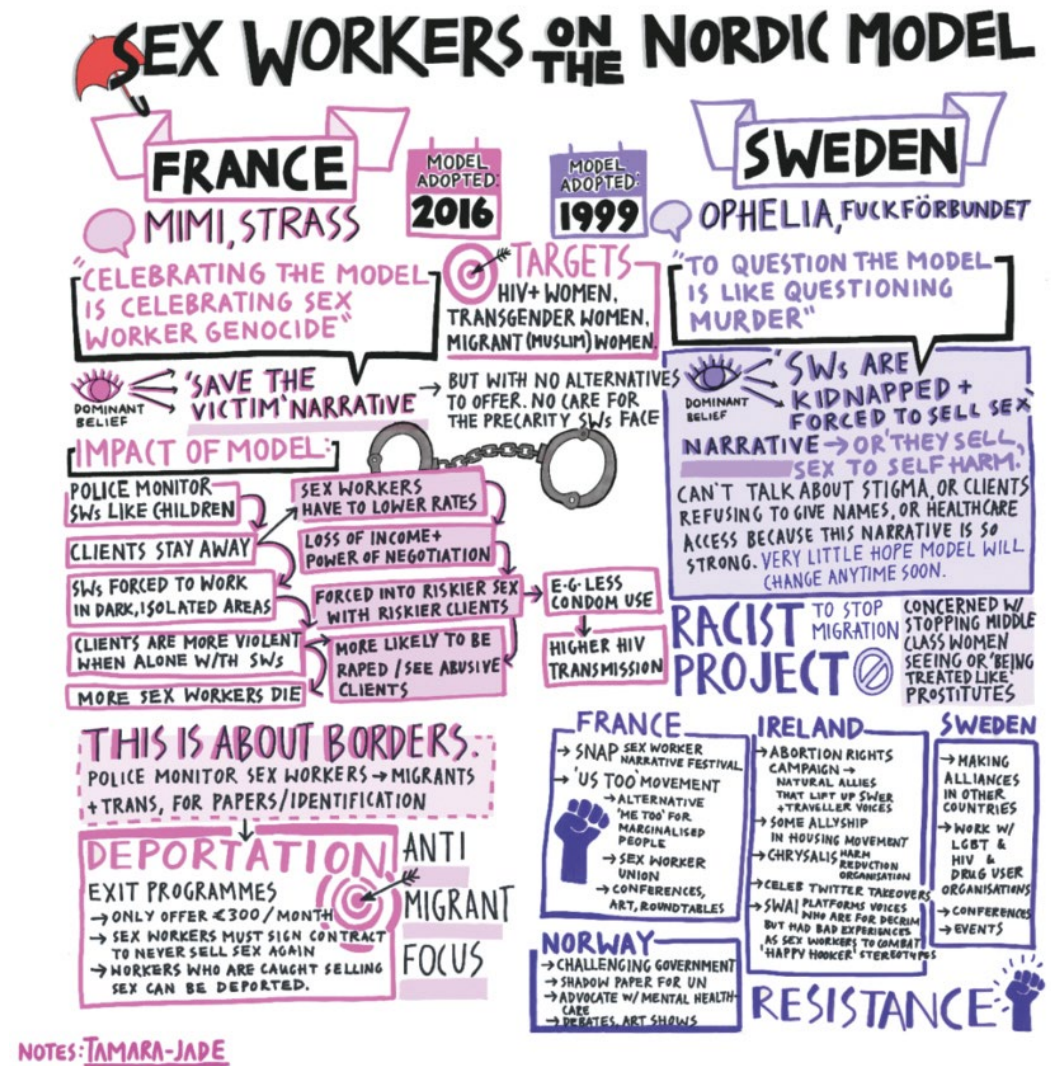
FEMME DAEMONIUM

Cooperative
Arts Project



Ending Violence
Against Sex Workers

THE NORDIC MODEL IS A VIOLENT ACT OF RACISM





HE DOESN'T LIKE BLACK GIRLS

Kitty Fisher, 2020

“I’m not normally into black girls,” he says as we screw
As I flinch at him fondling my curls like he’s at a petting zoo
Such a Good Girl, this pet whore. Rarely bites.
I imagine charging more to put up with this shite
Some charge extra for anal or pegging per chance
Or insist travel expenses are covered in advance
An extra twenty quid to talk about race as they cum
A tenner to ask me where am I *really* from
The exhaustion surely warrants a surcharge
It takes even more energy than riding something large
Do I grit my teeth, smile along, but risk later regrets
Or unpack more nuance for Brad Thirty Minutes – Wear Fishnets

“But you’re not *too* black,” he’s continued, this dope
Not noticing the tension in the body he still gropes
And he genuinely means it as a compliment, such arrogance
Though of course his small ignorance pales in comparison
To harsher comparisons pale men have made
I smile sweetly, giggle, and throw innocent shade
“What would *too* black mean? Is black so bad?”
Now he’s uncomfortable. Join the club, Brad.
I’ve probably lost future funds by being defiant
If I’d bitten my tongue, I could have had a regular client
But I regularly speak my mind too much, losing pay;
They want me for my mouth, but not for what I say

“That’s not what I meant. You people always play that card!”
 My mistake. I should have fawned over him, kept him hard
 Said yes, massah, thank you, sir, I’m not like the Others
 Thanks for craving my body in spite of the darkness of my mother
 In spite of myself, my heritage, in spite of everything I am
 There’s ten minutes left, but I don’t give a damn.
 “Well, what did you mean?” The same sweetness in my tone
 As the consumable caramel he compared me with between moans
 Again, he tries to find a way to make it sound smart
 But now he’s self-aware and going limp in every part
 I’ve given myself more work now, to keep him turned on
 And resuscitate his flaccid ego so he can come before he’s gone

“It’s just a preference: I don’t like black girls, but you don’t count!”
 I count the times I’ve been called a nigger and my anger mounts
 I count each time I’ve been called half-caste, mulatto, mutt, spat with hatred
 I count the times I’ve been ignored, each time I’m underestimated
 I count the time left with Brad Thirty Minutes – nearly through
 I counted his money and I’ll make each note count too
 I swallow my pride and I swallow his cum
 A hot stream of white and the white man is gone
 Somehow he still texts later, to say it was such fun
 He can’t wait ‘til next time to invade my “round ghetto bum”
 Seems I’m still not “too black”, as he laughs at my “sass”
 He doesn’t like black girls, but he loves my “black ass”.



AS HE MOUNTS ME
 I ONLY THINK OF U

DIGITAL ERASURE

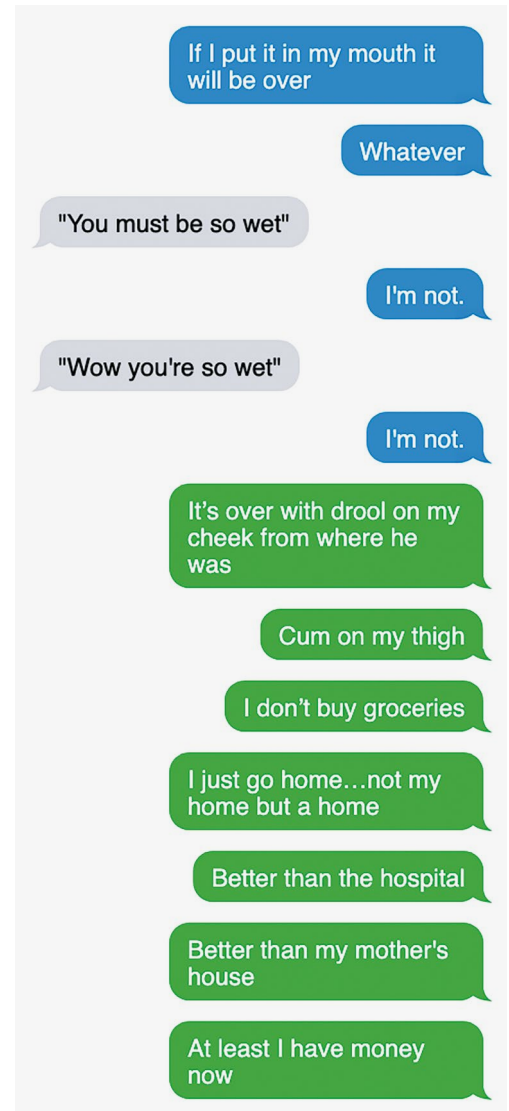
Tae Ateh

Over the Solstice there has been a debate around the boycott on Instagram by sex workers against their change of terms. As of 2021, images showing implied nudity or sexual acts will be banned. Of course, other platforms like Facebook or Tiktok already have such a ban. Some have argued in favour of the boycott while others maintain that we should not be chased away before the battle has even begun. Even though sex work is 'legal', workers are not allowed to conduct their work or business like other workers and businesses.

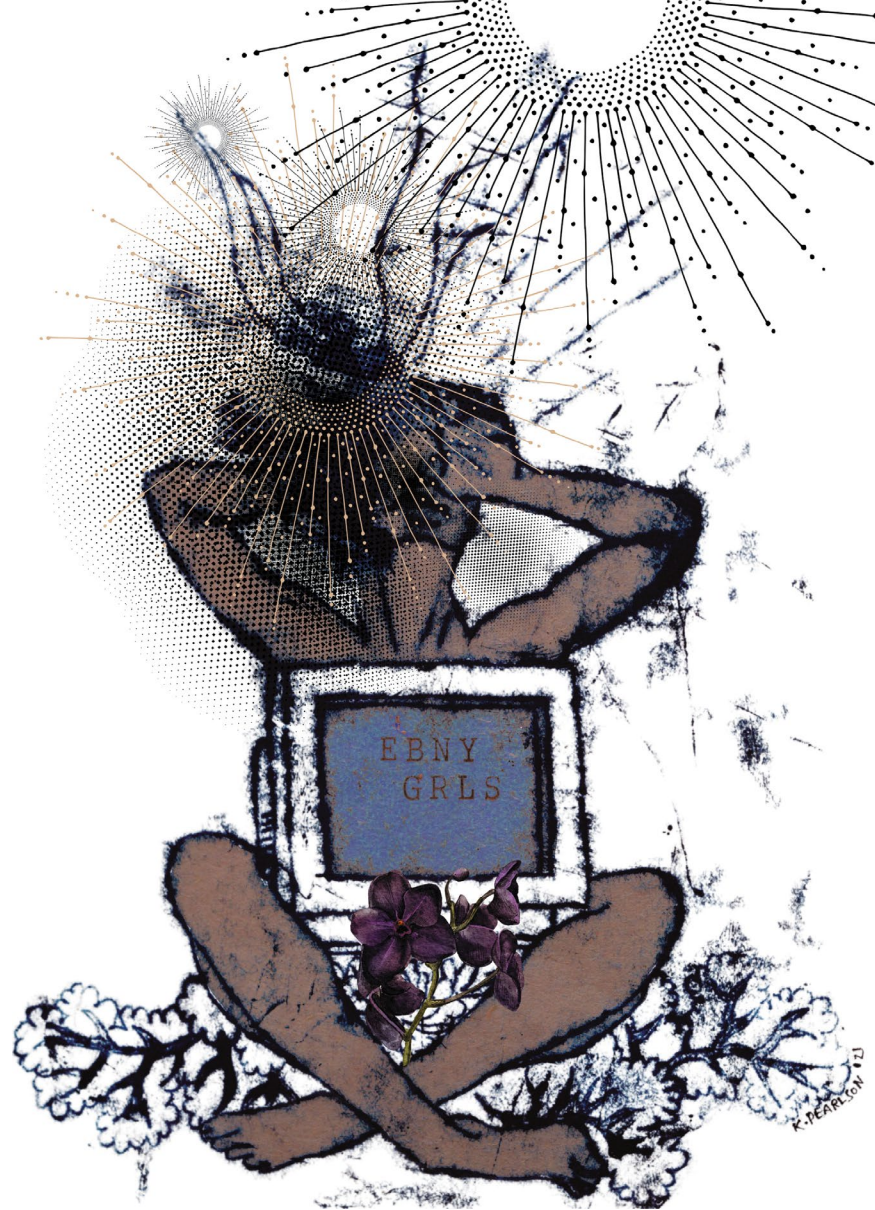
As we go into another lockdown we will no doubt see more people using sex workers and their products for commerce, but when the major platforms have banned this work, what avenues will there be for them? In their absence, how and who will perform this work on major social media platforms? On Tiktok there is a ban on sexual content and sex workers, yet the work is still being done by children, and young women thru the hundreds of thousands of dance videos made by Tiktok girls around the world. There are hundreds of thousands of men liking and sending gifts to rewards this content. How much of this is by design and how much is just a side effect of capitalist social relations?

In "the social network" we see the inception of Facebook: a college student project designed to rate photos of women. Making women into sex workers has always been a facet of bourgeois society and long before then. **Whether it is reproductive, domestic work done for free (often in exchange for housing and food security) or the "oldest profession in the world", it is work that proliferates in times of war.** Sex work is largely erased, unpaid work and in lockdown it feels more and more like work. **Surveillance capitalism is closing down the possibilities for human relationships, including sensual and sexual dimensions of identity.** The more sophisticated uses for targeting social media is reserved for businesses selling products –commodities often using the idea of sex. This field must be made available to sex workers too. Social media platforms need to be providing proper privacy and security control. This is essential for children to be able to use the same public space as sex workers. A safe space should be built into the platform and its use by design. Privacy and personal control need to be the foundation.

In other words, consent. But more than just consent. We have to acknowledge the age divide, the gender divide, the race divide and the wealth divide in access to technology both systemically and by design. We have to overturn the gaps which will disempower the already privileged and empower the victimized. Now more than ever it is necessary. Now more than ever it is possible.



"Sex work is not always glamorous and it is not always unpleasant. Like all work it is a means to live under capitalism. I continue to do this work in part because it pays the bills and in part because I have been able to carve out a space that I love in it."



LISTEN

UTTERANCES Tobi Adebajo

Utter it.
Speak your truth into existence
Affirm your beautiful, brown resistance

Utter it.
Let the words flow uncensored
Reclaim the grounds upon which
your mothers' backs were bled senseless

Utter it.
Because your voices create waves -
templates for living, loving, being

Utter it.
Pick at the stitches
That have held your tongues,
and kept your lips from flowering
those seamless dances that you so often dream

Utter it.
Give your heart the space it needs
to move you along with its steady beat

Ultimately, silence. will. not. save. you.



WE ARE BLACK. WE ARE QUEER. WE ARE DISABLED SWOP.

EXCERPT FROM COMMUNITY
ACTION STAFFORD
June 2020

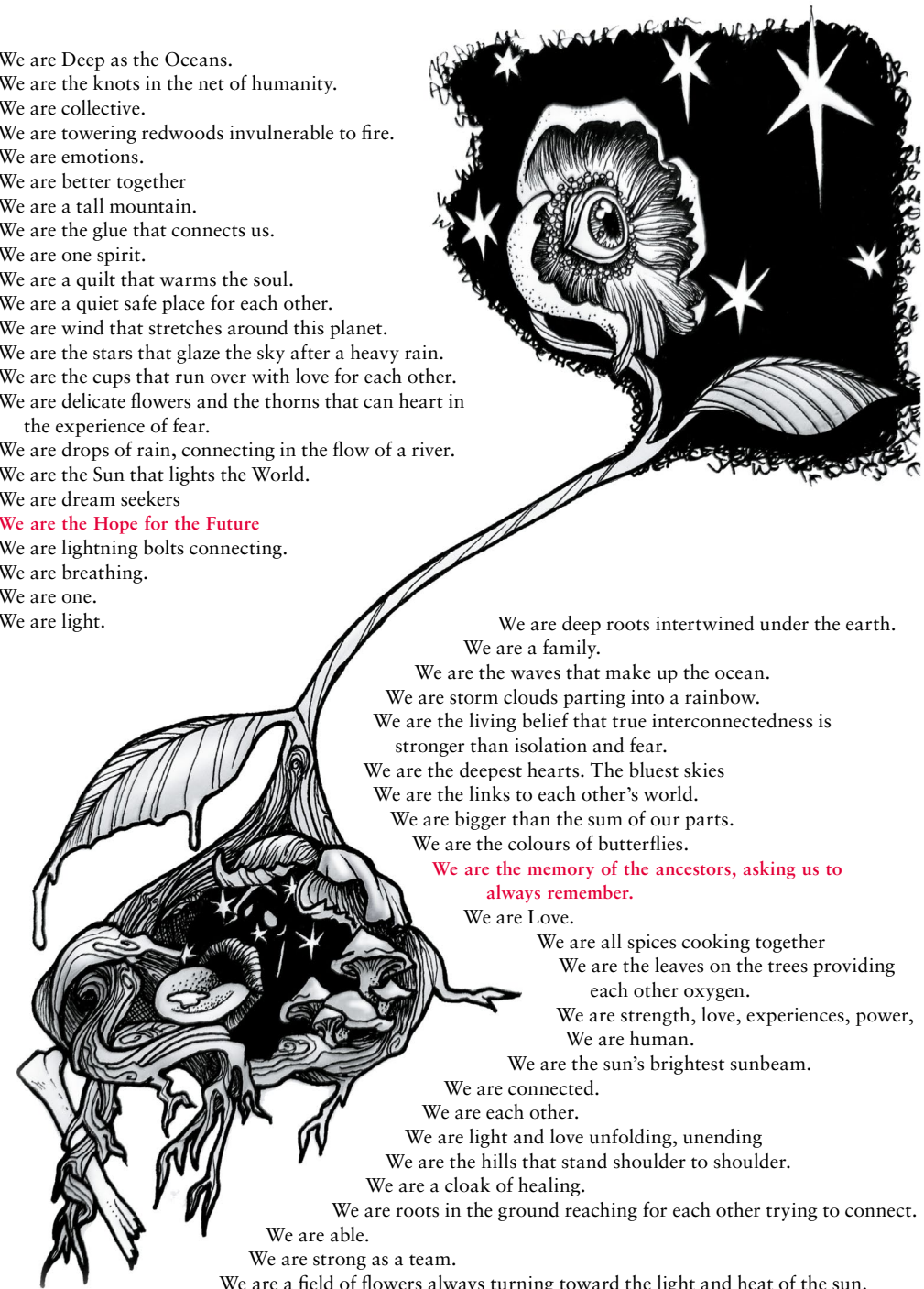
We are Community Action; a peer-support initiative of Black Queer Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP) with lived experiences living or born across the North East of England. We are a diverse group who, above all, have a difficult mental health journey and distinct sexual identity in common.

During the first lockdown, we were deemed as one of the vulnerable groups and suffered disproportionately from self-isolation. We took the initiative to start an entirely postal project to reconnect and 'get creative at home' - some of us are not particularly into tech and after staying inside for so long, some of us had seen enough of it.

Between May and July 2020, 65 envelopes full of poetry and creative reads were exchanged amongst our members, most of them in Newcastle as well as beyond. Each week, we've had a theme for consideration and an invitation to respond in an open and creative way, along with a stamped addressed envelope to facilitate a reply.

The most beautiful output is the collective 'We Are' poem created in the final round at the peak of our exchanges, reflections and emotions. It mirrors our renewed self-esteem, our aspirations and dreams in a moment of lightness for a Black non-binary and neuro-diverse world. We want to imagine collective futures for the Black gender and neuro-diverse communities in Britain and beyond.

We are Deep as the Oceans.
We are the knots in the net of humanity.
We are collective.
We are towering redwoods invulnerable to fire.
We are emotions.
We are better together
We are a tall mountain.
We are the glue that connects us.
We are one spirit.
We are a quilt that warms the soul.
We are a quiet safe place for each other.
We are wind that stretches around this planet.
We are the stars that glaze the sky after a heavy rain.
We are the cups that run over with love for each other.
We are delicate flowers and the thorns that can hurt in the experience of fear.
We are drops of rain, connecting in the flow of a river.
We are the Sun that lights the World.
We are dream seekers
We are the Hope for the Future
We are lightning bolts connecting.
We are breathing.
We are one.
We are light.



We are deep roots intertwined under the earth.
We are a family.
We are the waves that make up the ocean.
We are storm clouds parting into a rainbow.
We are the living belief that true interconnectedness is stronger than isolation and fear.
We are the deepest hearts. The bluest skies
We are the links to each other's world.
We are bigger than the sum of our parts.
We are the colours of butterflies.
We are the memory of the ancestors, asking us to always remember.
We are Love.
We are all spices cooking together
We are the leaves on the trees providing each other oxygen.
We are strength, love, experiences, power,
We are human.
We are the sun's brightest sunbeam.
We are connected.
We are each other.
We are light and love unfolding, unending
We are the hills that stand shoulder to shoulder.
We are a cloak of healing.
We are roots in the ground reaching for each other trying to connect.
We are able.
We are strong as a team.
We are a field of flowers always turning toward the light and heat of the sun.

NEW

Hetero PHOBIC Goddess

LOCAL

**Submit
or
Die**

0800-999-5428*

**(galop helpline #)*

WHAT THE FUCK IS UP WITH MEN THAT DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW TO RESPECT BOUNDARIES?
AUTONOMY OF THE INDIVIDUAL?
THE AUTONOMY OF WOMXN?
MEN THAT DON'T SEE THE SEXUAL BOUNDARIES
MEN THAT DO AND GO OVER THEM ANYWAY
MEN THAT SEE OTHER MEN DO THIS TO WOMEN AND STAY SILENT
MEN THAT APOLOGISE FOR THE ACTIONS OF OTHER MEN
THAT DISMISS THE BOOKEY ENERGY
THAT KEEP THEM AROUND FOR THE BAG
4 CLOUT
MEN THAT FIND IT SO EASY TO SEPARATE THE ABUSE FROM THE MAN

MEN THAT DON'T CARE ABOUT WOMENS BODIES
PAIN
STORIES

MEN THAT MAKE ME FEEL FUCKING SICK

MEN THAT DON'T KNOW HOW TO SHUT THE FUCK UP
MEN THAT HAVE NEVER BEEN TOLD TO SHUT THE FUCK UP
THAT USE THEIR MONEY TO CONTROL BECAUSE THEY NEVER LEARNED TO LOVE

MEN THAT
OBSESS
MANIPULATE
GASLIGHT
THEIR WAY INTO UR LIVES
FORCIBLY GET U TO STAY

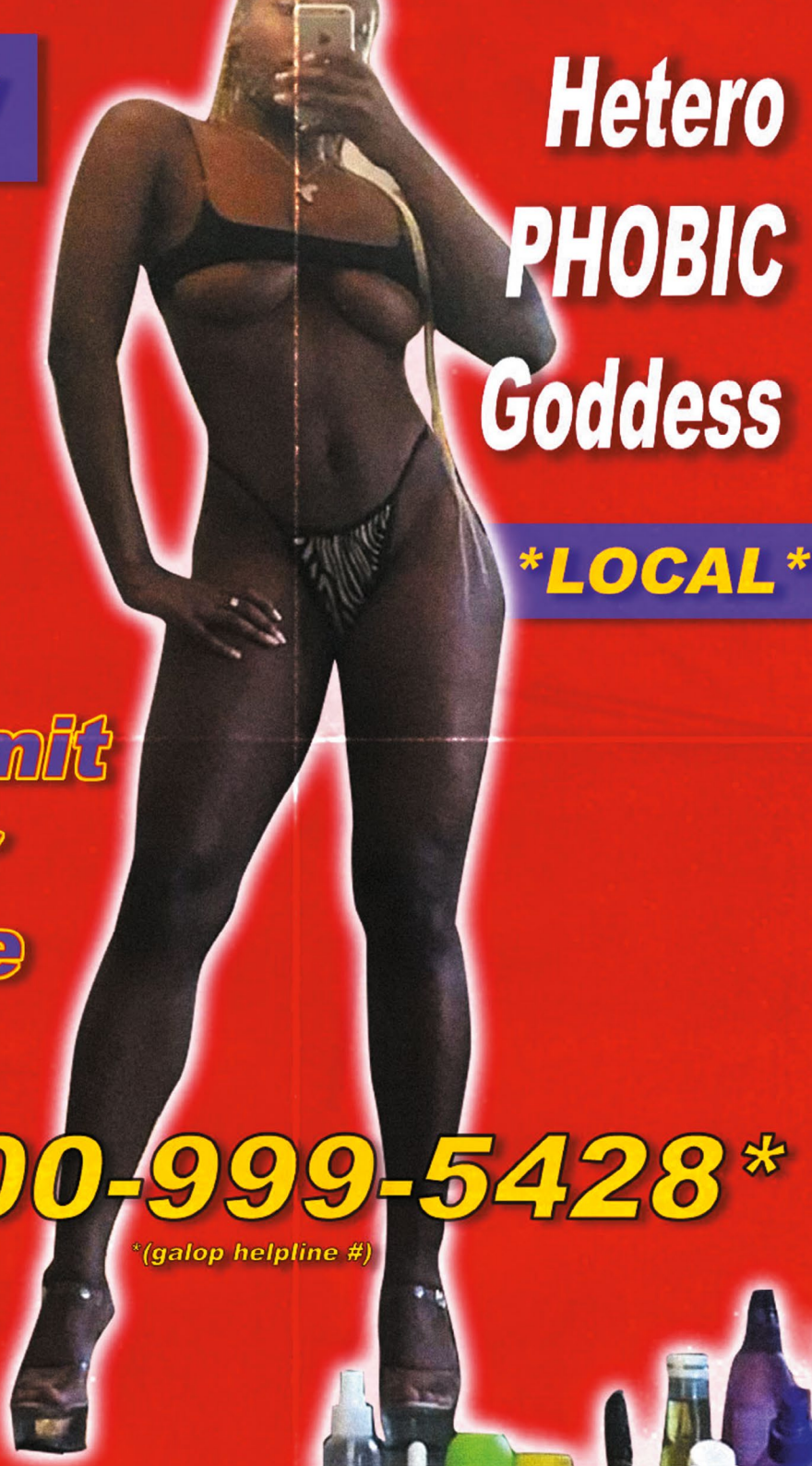
MEN THAT WANT TO POSSESS YOU
UNDRESS YOU
DISRESPECT YOU
AND THEN TRY TO RENDER YOU TO DUST.

MEN THAT I'D RATHER LAUGH AT,
OR ROB
THAN HAVE THEM NEAR ANY OF YOU

TO THE MEN WHO THRIVE OFF INSTILLING FEAR:

WHO THE FUCK TOLD YOU THAT YOU COULD STAND THERE AND TALK OVER ME LIKE THAT?
WITH YOUR LITTLE MAN SYNDROME? WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF? MY POWER?????

NO,
I DO NOT FANTASISE ABOUT YOUR DEATH
BUT IT IS HERE, SETTING MY HANDS ON FIRE



RACISM IN THE SEX INDUSTRY

ANONYMOUS INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT
The English Collective of Prostitutes

There's discrimination against all prostitute women, but Black prostitute women face an additional racism. It's often hidden, and increases your workload. Dealing with it is a big part of sex work. Much of "sex work" has little to do with sex: for example, all the planning and calculations involved in getting jobs, dealing with bias and stereotypes, protecting yourself, your family, etc. Whether or not we do paid sex work, Black women are generally seen as 'hot sexual creatures', available for all kinds of services, including sex. This is a legacy of slavery where we had to be "available". Another part of this legacy is our communities being labelled as sources of crime and vice. But we do sex work not as a vice or because we love sex, but as a way of refusing poverty, including the low-waged, dirty jobs usually available to Black women. Over generations, families have been sustained, children educated, and professional careers made possible by this money.

We are fighting against discrimination as sex workers. We're not ashamed of the work we

do, it's work like any other. In many ways you hate it, but the job is mystified because it's associated with sex. We have to deal with the threat of being treated as a social outcast in our families and communities, and being targeted for harassment and violence, arrest, fines, imprisonment, etc.

Many Black girls and women get offers of sex work, although we may not take them up. When I was older, a white flatmate sold sex to raise her fare to be with her sister who was expecting a baby. She told everyone in the flat – some were against it. As a "nice coloured girl", from a Christian family, I thought she was brave to do it but that I never could. This moralism is just one way of keeping us in line, disciplining each other and separating us into "nice" and "bad" girls.

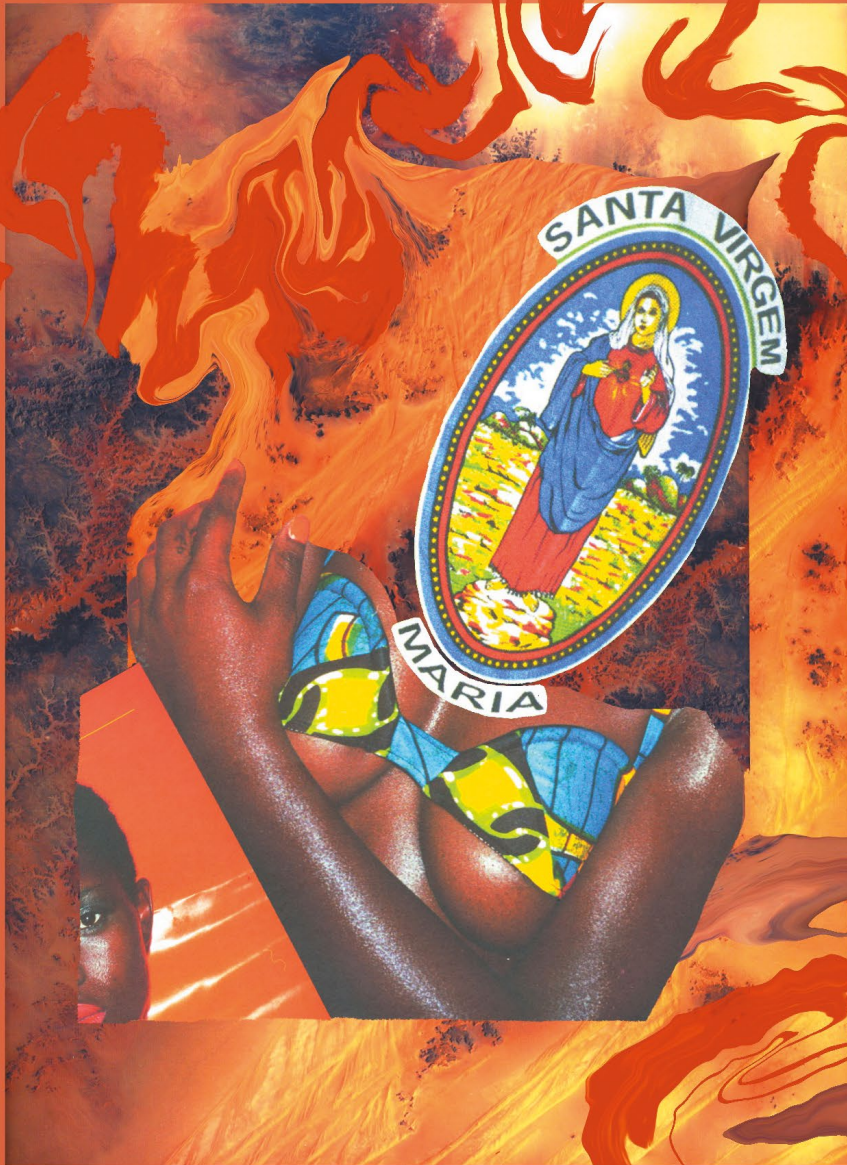
Many women consider prostitution, especially at times of financial crisis in our families and communities — and the poorer we are the more often we consider it. The questions are: will I get paid and what power will I have if I don't?

WELL AIN'T I A HOE
Taylor Chaos Waits

Well aint I a hoe?
Yeah a whore, a slut, a woman of the night,
sex worker.
You see I keep the lights on in this bitch.
I've seen it all, done it all.
Called someone's father a bitch. Sent my
feet pics to someone's senator.
Bitch I've pissed on a President.
But y'all can't stand me?

No mind, I can bring white executives to
their knees.
I know what they really like. The names they
like to be called: bitch, slave, Nancy, faggot,
yeah I know how you want it. Ain't nothing
to be scared about.
I'll get you through it. Like I always do. Even
when you can't deliver, I do.
You know I'm down. You know I can keep a
secret. I won't tell a soul.

I'll stay in the shadows like you like it. I'll
keep playing stupid. Cause it makes people
mad when a wench is smarter than them.
How can I possibly know right from wrong?
How could I have agency? How could I be
productive? successful? How dare I know
what the fuck I'm talking about?
It's ok, I know baby.
You see I keep the lights on in this bitch.
I've seen it all, done it all.
Yeah a whore, a slut, a woman of the night,
sex worker.
Well aint I a hoe?



Andie Macario

KY Jelly
Carmen Ali

What the world needs now is lube, sweet lube
Maybe just for some
Not for everyone
Some of our pussies just need a little help
Some oil to grease the tyres
Some heat to make the cheese melt
I used to have sex until I was fucked sore
I was dry as a cracker
Never left wanting more
Some people might think there's something
wrong with me
But I can't drip on demand
I just need that KY jelly





"if we don't build
a revolutionary machine
able to encompass
desire and its
phenomenon
desire will
~~continue~~
continue to be
manipulated
by the forces
of ~~oppression~~
oppression
and repression"
sol alegria

etlepomme - sadpam '23








Aile
kendilerim den



etlepomme - sadpam

SUPPORT FOR SEX WORKERS

	SWARM	A sex worker led collective based in the UK advocating for the rights of everyone who sells sexual services.	contact@swarmcollective.org
	Dean Street	A sex worker and LGBTQI+ friendly and confidential clinic for testing, advice, condoms etc.	56deanstreet@chelwest.nhs.uk 020 3315 5656
	National Ugly Mugs (NUM)	An organisation which provides greater access to justice and protection for sex workers who are often targeted by dangerous individuals. NUM offer food vouchers, alerts for dangerous clients and casework support.	casework@uglymugs.org
	Healing Justice London	Community healing and repair centring black, brown and indigenous healing. Currently doing weekly zoom classes.	info@healingjusticeldn.org
	Sistah Space	Providing advice and support as well as practical support for black women who have experienced domestic or sexual abuse.	sistahspace.org

	Galop	National lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans+ domestic abuse helpline	advice@galop.org.uk Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0800 999 5428
	UwW	Works with sex workers across the UK to improve conditions in clubs through collective negotiation and individual casework. Fighting to establish 'worker' status.	info@uvwunion.org.uk 07884 553 443
	\$exquisite	Artistic community for and by sex workers. Creative writing and dance workshops and support sessions	Instagram: @sexquishite.events
	Radio Ava	Radio station airing sex work issues, run by sex workers.	radioava@protonmail.com
	X:talk	The X:talk project is a sex worker-led workers co-operative helping sex workers to work in safer conditions, to organise and to socialise with each other.	xtalkhandson@protonmail.com
	Umbrella Lane	Supporting the emotional, physical and spiritual wellbeing of Sex Workers through community support, hardship funds etc.	hello@umbrellalane.org 07377 518 263
	Pink Therapy	The UK's largest independent therapy organisation working with gender and sexual diversity clients.	admin@pinktherapy.com 07971 205 323
	Femme-Daemonium	Ritual performance collective of sex workers and allies creating art on intersectional feminism.	source@femmedemon.com
	BAATN	The UK's largest independent organisation to specialise in working psychologically, informed by an understanding of intersectionality, with people who identify as Black, African, South Asian and Caribbean.	administrator@baatn.org.uk

Most sex workers are mothers
supporting families.

OUTLAW POVERTY NOT PROSTITUTES!

#MAKEALLWOMENSAFE

#DECRIMNOW



ENGLISH
COLLECTIVE
OF PROSTITUTES



National Ugly Mugs (NUM) is a sex worker victim support and violence prevention charity founded in 2012. We have a growing membership of over 6,000 industry workers and a network comprising almost 1,000 practitioner groups and community organisations. We run a national reporting and alerting service that provides a means for sex workers to report the harms that they experience and share alerts within their communities about dangerous people and conditions that contribute to their victimisation.

NUM provides comprehensive support services to help victims and survivors seek justice through avenues in the community as well as with facilitated access to police, courts and public services. We are proud to work with sex workers to design and deliver support services, community education and in systemic advocacy.

In our efforts to be accountable to marginalised sex workers, notably workers of colour, this publication provides an unfiltered glimpse into the lives of Black sex workers and sex workers of colour during the Covid-19 pandemic. Workers of colour suffer from structural inequities (race, class and gender oppressions), discrimination and sex work stigma, the constraints and abuses of the whorearchy, in addition to minimal social and police protections when they are harmed.

It is important to NUM that marginalised sex workers, such as workers of colour, have a platform to share their experiences. It is essential that we listen and work together with them to inform our services, educate public sector professionals and advocate for policy changes that improve their safety, wellbeing and life chances.

Despite appeals, sex workers have received no comprehensive government income support packages during all three waves of the pandemic. We need public support to ensure that this dire situation does not continue. If you have the means, please contribute to Umbrella Lane's hardship fund and donate to NUM's Mug Meals campaign to support charities in continuing to provide resources and emergency food and hygiene supplies to sex workers suffering as a result of income loss and those who healing from violence.

Sex workers of colour invested time and energy to produce the prose, poetry and artwork presented in this Zine and we encourage everyone to buy it, read it and gain understanding that can improve how these workers are treated both within sex work and beyond. Fully embrace their call for #UsToo and support sex worker-created content.

Dr. Raven Bowen
CEO, National Ugly Mugs (NUM)

END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMXN

NO JUSTICE

NO PEACE



Here lies lived experiences from sex workers of colour. A collection of poetry, literature, visual arts and sound design-led by black sex workers and supported by allies within performance collective FemmeDaemonium. By reading this you value us as artists; not statistics. By buying a copy and donating to the project you are directly contributing towards the continuation of future issues and supporting the project's return to a theatre led future. We exist to find new ways of producing knowledge that comes from the source, is about the source and is the source.

For more information and to donate, visit:
[@thesourcezine](#) | [@femmedaemonium](#) | [femmedaemon.com](#)

FEMME DAEMONIUM