

# In Search of the Female Hobo

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## Abstract

The following article questions the absence of the female hobo in American history. Focusing on narratives produced by self-identified hobos and hobo organizations of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, the author contends that the female hobo is located in the deconstruction of discourses of hobo masculinity.

## Résumé

L'article suivant questionne l'absence d'ouvrières saisonnières dans l'histoire américaine. En se concentrant sur les narrations créées par des ouvrières saisonnières qui se sont auto-identifiées et sur les organismes d'ouvriers saisonniers de la fin du dix-neuvième siècle et du début du vingtième siècle, l'auteure soutient que l'ouvrière saisonnière est située dans la déconstruction des discours de la masculinité de l'ouvrier saisonnier.

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Despite the varied representations of the American hobo in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, the hobo was discursively produced and understood as inherently male. Depictions of the hobo after the crash of the railroad boom in 1873 range from a national parasite able to drain the United States (US) of its productive capacities to the more highly romantic embodiment of anti-capitalism. In all respects, however, the hobo was produced as a typology of masculinity - whether a failed copy of bourgeois maleness or the rugged individual who conscientiously objected to middle-class models of masculinity emphatic of stasis and the accumulation of profit. These dualistic representations of the hobo speak to two distinct forms of knowledge production - the first, that of the US government and national media, and the latter, that produced predominantly by hobos and hobo organizations.

While recent scholarship on tramp mobility, particularly Tim Cresswell's *The Tramp in America* (2001), has located a female presence in transient, working-class subcultures, this article offers an analysis of the absence of the female figure in more celebratory and/or empathetic representations of the hobo produced by self-identified hobos, hobo organizations and sociologists of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. These particular discourses - narratives that promote the hobo as a specific class with an anti-capitalist work ethic - locate the (potential) female hobo on the margins of hobo definition. The majority of this hobo literature denies her a significant role in anti-capitalist practice, especially an emphasis on transient labor. Rather, in this literature, the female hobo is produced as a fixed body; she is, in other words, denied a kinetic history - the primary staple of any hobo. My search for the female hobo takes as its site of investigation the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries - a distinct period of history during which the hobo dominated the United States landscape and the public imagination. It is this dominant

hobo presence, particularly in the form of hobo mythology and identity - the independent, anti-capitalist wanderer who alters his job frequently, spends his money quickly, and rides the rails often - that I argue has been denied to women historically. In essence, the female hobo is predominantly fixed under the appellation of "prostitute," a result of the overdetermination of discourses of proper bourgeois sexuality and working-class masculinity that deny her a history of celebrated transience.

#### **Anti-Capitalist Masculinity on the Move**

The nineteenth-century national discursive production of the masculine citizen as one imbued with a rugged individualism - a conviction in independence and self-reliance - granted the white male hobo a positive place in the national imagination at a time when the industrial landscape required mobile, unskilled workers. This same celebratory discourse, generated out of westward expansion and emphatic of a national working-class masculinity based in hard labor, largely ignored transient female laborers of the same class. With the collapse of the US railroad boom, however, national discourse altered its production of the male hobo as a celebratory citizen to that of a lethargic denizen. In the US, what was known as The Tramp Problem - a burgeoning of the unemployed, wandering (male) working class following the end of the railroad boom in 1873 - was considered a national crisis by the latter part of the nineteenth century (Cresswell 2001). The economic depression that ensued after the railroad collapse altered the US landscape radically. The infrastructure of Manifest Destiny, or the belief in an obvious and destined US expansion from Atlantic to Pacific, required unskilled laborers who were flexible in movement for railroad production; this burgeoning rail construction, however, ceased and was replaced with massive unemployment and the crisis named The Tramp Problem that would represent the wandering and unemployed citizen as a national denizen (Bruns 1980).

Transient work practices were no longer required to the degree generated by the railroad boom; the nation transformed the

"hobo" - known since the end of the civil war for his intermittent work practices and travels across the country - into the "tramp," a collective term used by both the medical field and the press to describe a regressed species of citizen lacking a proper, stable work ethic. Disciplinary mechanisms as diverse as railroad policing, clubbing, whipping, incarceration, and arsenic poisoning were implemented (and often sanctioned) nation-wide as the means of ridding tramps (Flynt 1899). Self-identified hobos and hobo organizations, particularly the International Brotherhood Welfare Association (IBWA), reacted to this negative campaign and canopy term by producing a counter discourse that pointed to industrial capitalism as the reason for national unemployment, a discourse that separated the tramp from the hobo, attempting to highlight the differences between the two - distinctions that had been erased under The Tramp Problem. The hobo was produced by the IBWA as a good man willing to work, while the tramp was defined as a man who refused to labor (Anderson 1923; Reitman 1937). In arguing this distinction between the hobo and the tramp, hobos and hobo organizations promoted a hierarchy of the unemployed citizen, excluding the unwilling-to-work tramp from hobo classification.

Another notable hobo exclusion is that of women. In reclaiming the authentic hobo, an emphasis on masculinity persisted. For as late as 1915, the *'Hobo' News* - the newspaper of the IBWA - declared "the fools dictionaries are all wrong when they describe a hobo variously as a tramp, a vagrant, a vagabond, a vagrant workman...the official definition [of hobo]...is derived from the first two syllables of the Latin words, 'homo bonis,' meaning good man" (*"Hobo News Out"* 1915). As Cresswell has noted in his more contemporary research on tramps of the late-nineteenth century, "As far as hobos were concerned, the hobo was a migratory worker, the tramp a migratory non-worker and the bum a non-migratory non-worker" (Cresswell 2001, 49).

Women were identified as tramps, however. But, as Lynn Weiner argues in her retrospective study of hobo mythology generated in the late-nineteenth century, "For women, the term 'tramp' came to denote...a

sexual outcaste" (Weiner 1984, 177-78). Cresswell adds that "many commentators during the period from 1870-1939 referred to female tramps and prostitutes in almost the same breath" (Cresswell 2001, 101). Stephanie Golden argues further that, due to this conflation, female hobos have been denied the "mythology" of the male hobo (Golden 1992, 138). While the male version of wanderlust - the overwhelming desire to wander - had been "elevated into folklore and myth" and emphasized an "erratic mobility [that] blended into the nation's manifest destiny," the woman on the road was "immediately and completely defined by her sexuality" (1992, 139). Arresting the female hobo at the site of the sexualized body, homosocial hobo subculture and hobo researchers of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century denied her a kinetic hobo history of transient work practices. And her stasis enabled the male hobo a singular centrality in hobo history - a focus gained at the expense of objectifying and marginalizing the (potential) female hobo subject.

The production of the female tramp as sexual object represents the most significant way in which these women have been erased in hobo history. Because the female hobo has been overwhelmingly reduced to a sexual object in hobo productions, her recovery relies on a specific focus on discourses of female gender and sexuality. Judith Butler's (1996) often-cited mapping of the heterosexual matrix, in which gender, anatomy and heterosexuality connect in a performative series governed by further discourses of naturalization and originality, is key to my argument that the female hobo is a product of both middle-class maps of proper female sexuality, as well as working-class masculinity. The female tramp speaks to a particular class effect (or simultaneous effects) with regard to the heterosexual matrix of which Butler speaks, however. As a female (hetero)sex worker she does not initially disrupt the performative series of gender, sex and sexuality; only when deemed monstrously masculine because of an apparent sexual excess (evident by her sex work) is it that her lower classed position for violating such maps of proper sexuality is justified (Gibson 1997). Ironically, the female

hobo, fixed as prostitute in the majority of hobo-generated discourse of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, is produced as a specifically "feminine other" to hobo masculinity and, therefore, denied recognition in the hobo class. She is, in essence, an effect of both classed discourses, simultaneously deemed overtly masculine and feminine.

The production of the female hobo as sexual tramp in hobo discourse, as well as the discursive production of the prostitute as classed Other to proper bourgeois female sexuality, signifies a subject overdetermined by discourses that work to contain both middle-class sexuality and hobo-class masculinity (based not only in mobility, as is bourgeois masculinity, but a celebrated anti-capitalist mobility). Arrested at the site of prostitute, the female hobo's gendered impropriety is classed and employed as the Other to proper bourgeois gendered sexual performance, despite its location in heterosexuality. In being produced as the negative function to proper bourgeois femininity, the female tramp signifies an unnatural masculinity, a result of her seemingly active sexuality. In hobo subculture, however, she represents a distinctly feminine presence designed to aid in the male hobo's own sexual transience, yet another characteristic of hobo identity. For, as Nels Anderson (1923) - a self-identified hobo and the most cited hobo sociologist of the early-twentieth century - explains, hobos were known to be as transient in their sexual relationships as with their jobs. In playing foil to the male hobo's masculinity, the female tramp is contained at the feminine because her sex work complements hobo masculinity in a scheme of binary logic; she is discursively produced as a means to the male hobo's nonproductive sexual expenditure understood as an end in itself. She is, therefore, deemed distinctly feminine and denied her hobo history. The female hobo can be located at this intersection of bourgeois sexuality and working-class masculinity, and these particularly classed discourses work to contain (both discursively and materially) any relative mobility she may have practised historically.

### Gendered/Sexual Stasis

In denying female hobos their kinetic history, the majority of hobo research conducted on hobos of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries (Anderson 1923; Flynt 1899; Laubach 1916; Minehan 1934) locates women either in hobo jungles - wooded areas on the outskirts of cities, typically near railroad depots, where hobos congregated for Mulligan stew and to sleep during the warmer months - or in ghettoized spaces of hobohemias - the urban main streets, inclusive of bars, employment bureaus, pawn shops, and clothing exchanges, where hobos predominantly gathered while in the city. Misogyny, in the forms of sexual objectification and exploitation of women, permeated hobo jungles that, for most men, were understood as temporary resting spots, but for most women represented relative stasis in such literature. Women within hobo aggregates were, in the words of Thomas Minehan who conducted hobo research in the early-twentieth century, "as supreme as old-fashioned housewives in the kitchen," performing as property, maintaining the jungle sphere, dependent on the male hobo for sustenance (Minehan 1934, 139-40). Research suggests that one girl for every twenty boys took to the road by the early-twentieth century and that a gendered division of labor legitimized the sexual objectification of female bodies within such subcultures (Weiner, 1984). Hobo girls were used as objects of exchange in the jungles, working (without pay) for the male hobos - washing and mending clothes, cooking for and feeding the hobo collective, as well as making themselves sexually "available to any and all boys in the camps including adults and late arrivals" (Minehan 1934, 133-39). Once these young girls aged and were either deemed no longer desirable or chose to set out from the jungle on their own, they often took to urban sex work to earn the money for their sustenance. In fact, Frank C. Laubach, in his studies of vagrancy of this time, observes that the "female kind of vagrant" is the prostitute (1916, 71).

The history of American prostitution and the history of the American hobo reveal such a system of exchange as predominantly run by men for men. Stephanie Golden, in her

more contemporary, feminist analysis of hobo subcultures, states that the female hobo lived with and performed a sexuality that was constantly controlled in "an objectified, externalized way; when she was not fending off rape, her body was often her working capital" (Golden 1992, 136). As well, arrested at the sexed and gendered body, the female tramp is often spatialized in nineteenth and early-twentieth century hobo subculture and research. Anderson, in his typologizing of hobos in the early-twentieth century, develops the prostitute not as a distinct form of hobo, but as a means to male hobo pleasure at a price. For instance, she is the "usually forlorn and bedraggled creature" who makes the hobo susceptible to robbery and to venereal infection. The "lowest women who walk the streets," these sex workers in Anderson's study represent a means and threat to male hobo masculinity in the form of sporadic sexual acts that carry disease (Anderson 1923, 142-43). Anderson also briefly refers to a particular demarcation of the female tramp with regard to urban space. While male hobos "are as transient in their attachments to women as to their jobs" and "some are not adverse to becoming pimps for a season," the female prostitutes who service the hobo are not located on the main stem of Chicago's hobohemia, but "adjacent to it" (1923, 142-43). This tactic of spatialization employed in hobo subcultures and discourse allocates a separate sphere for the female tramp, a space, while public, removed from the main street where male hobos predominantly congregated, a space removed from where employment bureaus "offer[ed] opportunity to travel" (1923, 35). Female tramps are displaced and fixed geographically away from the hub of the hobo homosocial environment in Anderson's mapping, but are also "conveniently located so that even the 'floater,' who has come to town with a few months' savings, has no trouble finding them" (Anderson 1923, 143).

These techniques of containment with regard to the female sex worker, of course, extended beyond hobo subculture; bourgeois medical discourse of the nineteenth-century consistently produced the prostitute as contagious, reinscribing her as a regressed

female citizen. Interesting to note is that medical and media productions of the male tramp also mapped him as a contagion able to infect the nation with lethargy and crime; however, the remedy for male trampdom was often that of stable, hard labor. And this remedy of labor extended and conflated sex and work in its assumption that the employed male tramp would practice compulsory heterosexuality. Kevin Mumford (1993) notes that, with regard to sexual neurasthenia - a particular modern ailment tied to the unnecessary loss of sperm - the most popular remedy was hard labor. Physicians often understood the hard labor of the working-class male to render him immune from such a condition. The female tramp was also associated with contagion, particularly that of venereal disease; her contagious status, however, unlike that of the male tramp, was the result of her labor, not the lack of such. Additionally, the female tramp, specifically because of the mobility she practiced, was deemed a regressive species incapable of altering her status. Her location in the public sphere - whether strolling the urban environment or riding the rails - always deemed her sexually suspicious in spaces gendered masculine (Creswell 2001; Meyerowitz 1988). Unlike the male tramp who could redeem his masculinity through stable work, the female tramp never fully regained her status as proper woman with an alteration in labor; her more public female presence consistently produced her as a regressed citizen.

Because sex and work collapsed in the female prostitute's body, medical and social discourse mapped her as incapable of a civilized sexual pleasure, or, more often noted, her sexual desires and pleasures were made monstrous by equating them with her sex work. Margaret Gibson refers to the popular nineteenth-century medical production of women as asexual, which constructed any woman with a "clearly evident" sexuality as pathological (Gibson 1997, 112). While in the later decades of the nineteenth century science did consider a lack of sexuality in women a potential problem (for men), the notion of "female anerotism" as "natural" persisted throughout the century (1997, 112). Gibson notes that "the prostitute was the degenerate

demon that defined the [asexual] ideal by polar opposition" (1997, 119). Thomas Laqueur adds that prostitution represented a social problem in the nineteenth century that was "essentially quantitative" (Laqueur 1990, 232-33). Sex as commodity "became the social evil" because it represented a form of asocial and private exchange that threatened the prevailing social context (1990, 232-33). Sex with prostitutes was "set in sharp contrast...to the household economy of sex, which is quintessentially social and productive" (1990, 232). These bourgeois discourses regarding proper femininity obviously influenced readings of hobo subculture. For, while hobo historians, such as Minehan (1934) and Anderson (1923), reproduce the charm of the hobo as living an anti-capitalist life of temporal, not-for-profit (including non-monogamous, non-procreative) practices, the female hobo is simply a means to hobo masculinity.

The economic function of these productions of the female tramp is extensive; dominant discursive technologies surrounding the female prostitute produced her as Other to proper female asexuality and a form of hobo non-productive expenditure that threatened the capitalist emphasis on stability, accumulation and profit. In purchasing potential sexual pleasure from prostitutes, then, the male hobo performed an act of non-productive sexual expenditure which paralleled his celebrated work ethic based in anti-capitalist temporality, anonymity, and instability; this sexual practice represented an end in itself as opposed to a means to profitable ends. But the female tramp, regardless of her intermittent and anti-capitalist work practices, has been concealed as a hobo practitioner of transient labor. Understanding the female prostitute as hobo, as practising not-for-profit, transient work, requires both the deconflation of sex work and sexual pleasure and an emphasis on her relative mobility. Both dominant medical discourse and hobo subculture denied her this movement, however, by fixing her as Other to the asexuality of the proper bourgeois woman and the masculinity inherent in hobo mobility.

In highlighting prostitution as historically organized by and made profitable for men, much feminist scholarship has exposed the

objectification, exploitation and commodification of the female body and subject in sex work; however, some of this same scholarship has also had a tendency to reinscribe the site of the sex worker as a fixed identity by developing such women as the stable object within a patriarchal and/or capitalist system. Wendy Chapkis (1997), for instance, draws upon the scholarship of Catherine MacKinnon, Karen Davis and Andrea Dworkin to make the argument that, for anti-sex feminists, the prostitute can never be perceived as an agential subject because of her fixed location as sex-object. While I agree with the vein of scholarship that reveals the overt objectification of women within the sex industry, my emphasis with regard to female hobos is that the term "prostitute," a marker typically associated with identity formation, should be understood as a label that follows a practice, a practice of labor - a gendered performance that speaks to the patriarchal and capitalist economy of exchange that objectifies women's bodies. In shifting the emphasis away from the fixed identity of prostitute and calling attention to the transient practice on which it rests, the female hobo is released from her fixed and reductive identity as sexual tramp in hobo discourse, and can be understood as a practitioner of particular intermittent, anti-capitalist labor practices.

Much like bourgeois socio-medico-discourse that secures the female prostitute at the site of Other to the proper asexual woman, feminist scholarship that highlights the female prostitute as a fixed subject-identity tends to erase any mobility and agency she may have practiced historically. Obviously, the type of work available for women on the road differed significantly from that of men. Female hobos have been noted to cross dress and to pass in order to receive employment (and higher wages) in hard labor, the work on which most male hobos relied (Cresswell 2001). The gendered division of labor, noted in hobo jungles and in hoboemias, obviously mirrored the national industrial landscape. So, too, regarding the homosocial parameters of transient subcultures, sex work would certainly avail itself as a means to sustenance for females of wanderlust. But the primary method by which

women of the road have been erased in hobo history is by being fixed at the location of (sexual) tramp; therefore, it is crucial to note that women of the road, including those who prostituted, altered their work practices consistently, particularly because of their geographical movement.

### **Anti-Capitalist Mobility and the Female Hobo**

The most cited text in contemporary hobo research that specifically names females as hobos in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries has been recently deemed "a work of fiction" with the release of its fourth edition (Pateman 2002, 201). Dr. Ben Reitman - a self-proclaimed hobo and gynaecologist - compiled various narratives he heard from what he refers to as "hobo" women, both on the road and in the syphilis clinics he ran for the underclass in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. In *Sister of the Road: The Autobiography of Boxcar Bertha*, Reitman (1937) channels these personal narratives into a single fictitious character named "Box car" Bertha Thompson. Bertha, herself, is a self-identified hobo, and most scholars agree that she represents several hobo women Reitman met on his travels and in his clinics, but predominantly a female hobo named Retta Toble - Reitman's "lover for some months and friend for some years" (Pateman 2002, 203). Bertha has been deemed fictitious, but her narrative is still considered one that speaks to the experiences of several actual hobo women of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, albeit in a more sensational vein (Cresswell 2001). While newspaper accounts of women on the road (particularly those who cross-dressed in order to make better wages or to reduce the threat of rape on the rails) have been uncovered in recent scholarship (Cresswell 2001), none of this scholarship directly develops the female on the road as a practitioner of anti-capitalism, a predominant theme in (male) hobo typologies. It is this scarcity of literature representative of the (named) female hobo as a practitioner of nonproductive expenditure - or labor practices that work against maps of stasis and profit - anti-capitalist practices (whether organized or

not) - that drives this article, so Bertha's hobo narrative, especially because its author was a self-identified hobo and member of the IBWA, is highly significant in locating the female hobo presence denied in hobo history.

The narrative of "Box car" Bertha describes her fifteen years spent in and between American jungles and hoboemias. She introduces her readers to her fond memories of a mother who cooked in the hobo jungles and her three siblings who all had "a different father" (Reitman 1937, 8), reiterating Minehan's (1934) mapping of women and their roles in hobo jungles. As an adolescent, Bertha leaves the hobo jungle and rides the rails accompanied by her sister initially and later on her own. According to her, female hobos have their own wanderlust, including their own transient work practices, such as sex work, that come with the risk of disease and the added "hazard" of potential pregnancy (Reitman 1937, 285). After becoming a pimped prostitute to gain sustenance to travel, Bertha tests positive for both venereal disease and pregnancy. During her time on the road prior to the testing, however, she not only prostitutes, but also pick-pockets, cleans houses, and begs to acquire the sustenance required to keep moving, highlighting the limited means to sustenance for women on the road but, as well, the variation in and temporality of such labor practices. Reitman's narrative of Bertha's hobo history consists of an emphasis on this relative mobility (relative in that her gender limits her labor choices). Most crucial to note is that Bertha never remains a prostitute, but consistently alters her temporary employment, as well as her geographical location. Reitman's text also expands the historical female presence within American hobo subculture from the mere vessel of male hobo sexual pleasure to the actual agent of hobo anti-capitalist practice, for Bertha's pleasures primarily take the form of counter-capitalist hobo movements associated with the IBWA.

While Bertha's first-person narrative has been deemed fictitious, Reitman's own researched data included in the appendix of the novel is instrumental to female hobo research. For instance, Reitman's sociological data references "Negro" female transients as the

second largest racial classification of women on the road in the first half of the twentieth century, while "Indian" consists of the third, followed by "Mexican" and, finally, "Oriental" (Reitman 1937, 292). Considering the lack of data regarding female hobos of the industrial period overall, Reitman's recording of racial classifications is not only significant in recovering the female hobo, but also strongly suggests that a portion of Bertha's narrative may have been influenced by stories told to Reitman by female hobos of color. Reitman's mapping of the mobile female hobo also suggests that neither the female hobo's sexual labor nor her sexual pleasure remained fixed, but that she altered her labor and her sexual connections. Prostitution, for the female hobo, works not as a fixed identity, then, but as a labor practice that enables sustenance and mobility.

As noted earlier, it is this mobility and transient labor - the crucial ingredient for any hobo - that has been erased historically. The (potential) female hobo's stasis enables the male hobo the central focus in hobo history, a mythology of righteousness and anti-capitalist mobility associated specifically with the masculine. While the female hobo body is specifically sexed female and contained at the site of the feminine in late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century hobo narratives and the homosocial hobo environment, her stasis as a sexual object in bourgeois medical discourse is a result of her being deemed explicitly masculine. Margaret Gibson argues that the label of hypersexual woman produced in nineteenth-century scientific discourse was applied to nymphomaniacs, lesbians and prostitutes collectively. Gibson contends that nineteenth-century American medical discourse privileged evolutionary theory to construct forms of degeneration to explain "mental disease in general, and sexual perversion in particular" (Gibson 1997, 115). With regard to social Darwinism, the distinction between the sexes - masculine/feminine; male/female - was valued as a sign of evolutionary development and progress in the species. As the proper feminine was deemed asexual, medical science tended to map masculinity onto all female bodies considered actively sexual. The economic

function of discourse regarding the deemed hypersexual woman was extensive; bourgeois medical discourse connected and dismissed the prostitute, the lesbian, the nymphomaniac, and the masturbator as improper sexual citizens. Locating them all at the site of abnormal masculinity erased any differences between these women and contained them at the level of regressed species on the evolutionary scale.

At the site of the Other to proper female classed asexuality is an overt combination of extreme anatomy, monstrous gender, and excessive desire. And at the site of the female tramp are the material effects of such discourses. Thompson's narrative references "the lesbians on the road" who were also "bi-sexual...that is, who liked both men and women and also another group who were prostitutes, selling themselves to men for money but having women sweethearts" (Reitman 1937, 66). This reference to female bi-sexuality and lesbian (hetero)sex-workers represents, at least in one latent form, the queer sexual pleasure of women most typically denounced in dominant discourses on female sexuality and erased in hobo literature. And, again, while prostitution is historically hinged to men and, additionally, fixes the female at the identity of prostitute, Thompson's reference to these female sex workers and lesbians as "on the road" strongly suggests a kinetics not typically associated with sex work. In his data collected over fifteen years, Reitman also lists several forms of sexual non-productive expenditure as "reasons" why women take to the road (1937, 283). Under the heading of female transient "vices," he lists the sexual desires or the "sex irregularities" of "the nymphomaniacs, the masturbators, those who run away to have an abortion; well-marked homosexualists, perverts" (1937, 283). What classifies these sexual practices as irregular is that they represent forms of female sexual impropriety. These listed sex irregularities consist of forms of female sexual desire and practice that are deemed excessive; the engendered pleasures represent the mismanagement and deregulation of the heterosexual contract in which women,

according to Monique Wittig (1996), must play the role of Slave/Other to the Master's desire.

Bourgeois discourse regarding female sexuality served an economic function, its reach extensive. Not only did these texts efficiently produce the Other to the proper asexual middle-class woman, but in accomplishing this task, these discourses also collapsed various differences into generic representations of regression. The production of such connective discourses perpetually reinscribed the epistemological model of Social Darwinism employed to understand national Others as fixed at the site of arrested development. Exposed in mapping these scientific connections alongside Reitman's data regarding women on the road is not only a clearer understanding of how women were arrested on the evolutionary scale, but how the female hobo as tramp acts as a similar mechanism in hobo subculture. Both discourses, regardless of their difference in class, work to spatialize and contain. The female hobo, due to her sex and gender, is denied the mobility associated with masculinity in hobo culture (at least discursively). And in bourgeois medical discourse, she is denied movement on the evolutionary scale because she is deemed overtly sexual and produced as excessively masculine. At the site of the female tramp, then, is a connective feminist history of female hobos who have been misrepresented and/or erased by a constellation of technologies that led to their spatialized containment, both discursively and materially.

### Conclusion

The female hobo of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries represents a specific class effect at the intersection of classed female gender and sexuality. Overdetermined by both proper bourgeois female sexuality and hobo masculinity, she exists predominantly in the deconstruction of such discourses. Dually arrested at the site of public prostitute, she signifies an effect generated out of various technologies of hegemonic masculinity. Used as an instrument to further bourgeois productions of middle-class female sexuality, the female hobo's sex work collapses into the Other to proper asexuality,

enabling the containment of all female sexuality. Produced as an embodiment of perverted masculinity, she not only acts as the polar opposite to proper female performance, but also aids in delineating the proper site of masculinity - the bourgeois male. Her sex work in hobo subcultures, however, maintains a specifically feminine status, for her body complements the sporadic and temporal practices so celebrated in discourses of hobo masculinity. Ironically, she represents both an extreme feminine position and one located in a monstrous masculinity, and, as a result, both discourses deny her mobility. In representing both the feminine and the masculine at the intersection of these classed discourses, the female tramp actually speaks to a trans-mobility, however. In other words, while the emphasis of this article recovers her stasis in both classed narratives, in considering both hobo masculinity and bourgeois sexuality simultaneously, the female tramp is produced, not as a hobo of transient anti-capitalist labor practices, but as a subject signifying a trans-gendered body - overtly masculine in middle-class narratives of sexuality that worked to spatialize the feminine as that allocated to the private sphere, and distinctly female when denying her inclusion in the hobo class. This apparent trans-mobility in gender, however, resulted not in an emphasis on transience of the celebratory sort, but in an overwhelming stasis.

Hobo masculinity of the industrial period required the female hobo to be limited by her sex work and her femininity; after all, her mere presence on the road represented a female masculinity able to disrupt properly gendered space (Cresswell 2001). Occupying a physical place in the public realm - on the urban street, the road, or in the boxcar - she defied her assigned place in the private sphere. In doing so she troubled the masculinity so dependent upon her allocated position in the feminine and was, therefore, dismissed in both hobo subculture and even US vagrancy laws. As Cresswell states, "the possibility of female tramps caused a great deal of anxiety, for they appeared to have transgressed many of the boundaries that separated the masculine world from the feminine one" (2001, 88).

In mapping the female hobo as a class effect in the history of gender and sexuality, the triptych technology of sex, gender and sexuality outlined and popularized by Butler (1996) becomes more complicated. To speak of female sexuality without the context of class - a category historically representative of citizens denied agency, including raced, gendered, sexed, and sexualized Others - is to produce a hasty generalization. For, as Gibson notes, not only the prostitute, but "all lower class women" were connected to hypersexuality and homosexuality (1997, 120). Medical discourse consisted of doctors "condemn[ing] certain forms of lower-class employment" (1997, 120). This research speaks to the practice of bourgeois scientific discourse to produce stasis and containment in the private sphere as the remedy for all women who labored outside the home. While hobo aggregates differed from the bourgeoisie in their more sanctioned interactions with paid sex work, as the male hobo's sex with a prostitute was deemed yet another part of his celebrated identity, hobo research strongly suggests that these aggregates employed similar strategies to spatially contain the female hobo at the site of tramp, or sexual object, denying her the movement associated with the hobo, refusing her inclusion in the hobo class.

Exposed at the site of the female hobo, then, is a more complex understanding of how class inflects gender and sexuality and how gender and sexuality influence class. The female hobo represents a palimpsest of sorts in that her existence is only distinguished once these layers of both hobo and bourgeois discourse are peeled back to reveal the disciplinary mechanisms responsible for her alleged historical stasis. In deconstructing discourses that fuelled the production of classed masculinities at the expense of women, a connective feminist history of transient women of anti-capitalist intermittent and mobile work and sex practices, both in the urban landscape and on the rails - a history of female hobos - emerges.

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