In the modern and postmodern worlds, most people see sex work as something on the fringes of society, yet prostitution and its history reflect mainstream modern women’s sexuality and sexual life in myriad ways. This paper will examine how sex work exemplifies constructs of female identity. Writings and other cultural artifacts about prostitution are especially informative about social views of women because prostitutes reflect socio-cultural projections about women’s relationship to money, sex, and power. Through language, popular culture, and social norms, in American culture women are frequently and consistently perceived and portrayed as products in a sexual-economic exchange. My paper is necessarily feminist in that it discusses the objectification of women and asserts that such objectification exists. By also using social constructionism to approach how identity, particularly sexual identity, is shaped by social forces in this case, we see this construction through the history of sex work. It will draw upon scholarly writings on prostitution, writings by prostitutes themselves, American pop culture, blogs, magazines, film, artwork (including erotica) and personal interviews.