

Knowledge in and of the body: social workers, nurses, and lay ethnographers as actors in the new regimes of urban welfare in West Africa.

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Female commercial sex work has been closely regulated since the late colonial period in Senegal. In this paper I draw on fifteen months research in Dakar with various medical, social, state and non-governmental actors who are constructing and problematising public health strategies of "regulation" and "intervention". In this paper I focus on the strategies that street level workers mobilize to resist, satirize and in some cases to co-opt "neo social techniques" (Larner and Butler, 2005) of governance engaged by the state and the NGOs. Intervention increasingly centers on participation, dialogue, and the painstaking work of building trusting relationships with patients/clients. How is knowledge emerging from these interventions validated and instrumentalised as social workers try to hold together professional, ethical and activist identities? How do street level workers knit together the archipelago of sites of urban welfare in Dakar, and what might be learnt about new regimes of welfare in the African city by focusing on their practice?