

2019

What Steps Countries Are Taking To Prevent Sex Trafficking: The Relationship Between Law Enforcement And Sex Trafficking

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Abstract:

The International Labor Organization estimates that there are 4.8 million people currently trapped in sex trafficking at a global level. Human trafficking, which can also be referred to as modern-day human slavery, is an issue that never left the planet; only one that which adapted to the changing world. In this study, a large literature review has been compiled to analyze the statistics gathered by government and non-federal organizations regarding the issue of sex trafficking, and how law enforcement is tackling this issue at a domestic and global level. Qualitative data collected in the form of interviews took place in Washington D.C. and New York City, and quantitative data gathered from Marshall University students was evaluated in regards to the level of awareness of sex trafficking. The literature review found that although sex trafficking statistics are higher than ever, many federal law enforcement agencies and non-profit organizations are promoting awareness in new, engaging ways. The effects of this dedicated work are shown in the awareness data collected from Marshall University students in the Spring of 2019.

List of Keywords:

Sex trafficking, slavery, human trafficking, sexual exploitation, forced labor, law enforcement, global, domestic.

Introduction

Atlanta, Georgia. A city that holds high importance for many historic events, such as the Civil War and many of the 1960's Civil Rights Movement functions. Today however, this city is returning to the spotlight in infamy. In March 2017, Kenndric Roberts, 33, was charged with five counts of false imprisonment, five counts of trafficking persons, and two counts for possession

of a firearm in the commission of a felony.¹ This case was made aware to authorities by a 911 call made by a woman trapped in Roberts' rented house claiming, "It's a house full of girls and ...if I try to leave, he'll try to kill me and stuff". As reported by Sgt. Sam Worsham, eight women were found and rescued from the house, ranging in ages from 19-22. This is one example of what is happening across the globe: ancient slavery turned into the modern phrase: human trafficking.

Human trafficking, particularly sex trafficking, is a topic that is often swept under the rug for lack of awareness in the general public. My response to this claim is simple: lack of awareness is not the issue itself, but the desire to LEARN more about the topic is lacking heavily. Every single person currently has either heard of sex trafficking, or personally have come into contact with it. The following list of phrases or events have all seen victims of sex trafficking: watched or purchased pornography from a production studio, strip clubs (e.g. table and lap dancing), live-sex shows or peep shows in large entertainment cities such as Las Vegas or New York City, Internet, "virtual," or cyber-based prostitution, escort or outcall services, "sex tour" operators, International marriage brokers, brothels (frequently operating behind a "front" such as massage parlors, saunas, bathhouses, bars, cabarets, clubs, cinemas, beauty salons, barber shops, and restaurants), and finally pimp-facilitated, street-level prostitution.²

¹ Ortiz, E. (2017, March 10). 'I'm in a very bad situation': 8 women found held against will in luxury home. Retrieved February 14, 2019, from <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/man-arrested-after-8-women-held-luxury-georgia-home-human-n731871>

² N. (2018, August 16). Looking for Backpage.com, Hub of trafficking, prostitution, porn? Retrieved March 5, 2019, from <https://endsexualexploitation.org/backpage/>

An important note that is imperative to present is that a portion of sex work is done under full consent. Although a taboo topic, there are consenting adults of mentally sound mind that have chosen to make an income in sex work across the world. Regardless of personal morals or beliefs, this is not the center of the problem. The red, hot, epicenter of the problem I am researching is the group of people who have not consented to this life. The group of men, women, and children that have had no say in the work they were forced into, do not see any profit of the work that they have done, do not have access to leave this work as their identification is being held hostage, potentially as well as their physical bodies. The purpose of this project is to identify how sex trafficking is affecting this country in regards to law enforcement and awareness levels. In this research I was able to gain further insight on the cooperation of law enforcement agencies, location of smuggling routes, and the key ways federal law enforcement officials are tackling the on-going issue of sex trafficking.

Theory

On June 25th 1910, a key piece of legislation was made official in United States of America. A country previously heavily engaged in slavery of African Americans was facing a different kind of slavery. The awareness of sex slavery in the early 1900's was drawing high, as many innocent young women and child were being forced into prostitution; modern day trafficking. The outrage over "white slavery" began with a commission appointed in 1907 to investigate the problem of immigrant prostitutes. Citizens were made aware of the issue because many upstanding family men were engaging in paid sexual intercourse, and this damaged the image of the wholesome America being built. Allegedly, women were brought to America for the purpose of being forced into sexual slavery and vice versa, immigrant men

were convincing American girls and women to participate in the the life of prostitution.³ The business of prostitution was gaining popularity and Congress had deemed fit to hold the makers of this underground trade accountable. The Mann Act, also known as the White Slave Traffic Act, when finally passed was created to put a stop to the transportation of white women across state lines with the intent of committing, “any immoral act.” An excerpt of the Act is as follows: “An Act to further regulate interstate commerce and foreign commerce by prohibiting the transportation therein for immoral purposes of women and girls, and for other purposes. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the term ‘interstate commerce,’ as used in this Act, shall include transportation from any State or Territory or the District of Columbia, and the term ‘foreign commerce,’ as used in this Act, shall include transportation from any State or Territory or the District of Columbia to any foreign country and from any foreign country to any State or Territory or the District of Columbia.”⁴

Although starting in good faith with the intent to stop trafficking, the Act’s vague terminology such as, “any immoral act,” led to some misconceptions and false accusations. A PBS documentary covering the background of Jack Johnson in “Unforgivable Blackness” provides insight of the so called scandalous acts of men, “In 1917, the Supreme Court upheld the conviction of two married California men, Drew Caminetti and Maury Diggs, who had gone on a romantic weekend getaway with their girlfriends to Reno, Nevada, and had been

³ Congress passes Mann Act. A&E Television Networks. (2009, November 13). Retrieved February 18, 2019, from <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/congress-passes-mann-act>

⁴ Unforgivable Blackness. PBS. (2005, January 17). Retrieved February 18, 2019, from <https://www.pbs.org/kenburns/unforgivable-blackness>

arrested.”⁵ In the judgment of the conservative mood at the time, adultery was considered an “immoral purpose” even if both parties were consenting adults. In the 1940’s, the Mann Act was used to convict interracial couples who traveled across state lines, disregarding the original purpose of the Act. The Mann Act was amended in 1978 and 1986, and more efficiently rephrased from, “immoral purpose” was replaced to include “any sexual activity for which any person can be charged with a criminal offense.”

On the international front, more legal progress has been made globally in the effort to fight sex trafficking. On December 10th 1948, the United Nations General Assembly passed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by a resolution in which included a Trafficking Protocol that brought attention to all the forms of trafficking with specific definitions, as follows:

“...the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery...”⁶

Since the 1940’s, more anti-human trafficking organizations have been created in result of attention towards this critical issue. The boom in these organizations correlate with the rise

⁵ Congress passes Mann Act. A&E Television Networks. (2009, November 13). Retrieved February 18, 2019, from <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/congress-passes-mann-act>

⁶ U. (1948, December 10). Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Retrieved March 25, 2019, from <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

of more transportation options, and the increase of electronic options in the industry. In 2000 the United Nations Office of Drug and Crime (UNODC) drafted and signed the “Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children” or more commonly known as, “UN TIP Protocol”. Effective December 2003, this protocol was one of three Italian Palermo Protocols and was signed by 173 parties. It was intended to hold countries accountable by formulating definitions and safety methods for trafficking victims.⁷ Other plans and ideas have been launched since the beginning of the 2000’s such as: “The Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings” by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe effective in 2008, “The Blue Heart Campaign” by the UNODC in 2009, “The Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons” by the UN in 2010, and “The National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking”, four-year plan established by the Canadian government in 2012. All organizations were created in the attempt to raise money and awareness towards combating trafficking.

A main organization, due to size and donations provided and number of workers, started in regards to combating trafficking is Shared Hope International, which is a non-profit created to eradicate trafficking and fundraise towards this effort. This organization was started in 1998 by U.S. Congresswoman Linda Smith. After traveling to Mumbai, India she witnessed through exploring and working in the city the brutal exploitation and sexual slavery of women and children⁸ and decided to weigh in on efforts to combat trafficking by creating a, “nonprofit

⁷ United Nations Treaties. (2000, November 15). Retrieved February 18, 2019, from https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg_no=XVIII-12-a&chapter=18&lang=en

⁸ About Us- Shared Hope International. (n.d.). Retrieved February 18, 2019, from <https://sharedhope.org/about-us/>

organization dedicated to bring an end to sex trafficking through a three-pronged approach of preventing, restoring, and being justice". A stated from their platform, SHI, "We equip first responders and community members to identify warning signs of trafficking and employ intervention techniques to rescue child trafficking victims. We advance the prioritization of ending child sex slavery by initiating campaigns that raise alarm in communities. We share our expertise and resources to accelerate solutions to combat sexual exploitation."⁹ This organization specifically defines sex trafficking as the following:

"Sex trafficking is when a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud or coercion OR when the person induced to perform the act is under 18 years old. A commercial sex act means any item of value is traded for any sexual service (prostitution, pornography, or sexual performance). Domestic minor sex trafficking is the commercial sexual exploitation of American children within U.S. borders for monetary or other compensation (shelter, food, drugs, etc.). This is synonymous with child sex slavery, sex slavery, child sex trafficking, prostitution of children, and commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC)."¹⁰

Because an estimated 4.5 million people are trapped in sexual exploitation globally¹¹, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) established The Global Action to Prevent and Address Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants (GLO ACT). The GLO

⁹ S. (2019). Leading the effort to end sex trafficking. Retrieved March 25, 2019, from <https://sharedhope.org/what-we-do/>

¹⁰ The Problem- Shared Hope International. (n.d.). Retrieved February 18, 2019, from <https://sharedhope.org/the-problem/>

¹¹ I. (2012, June 01). New ILO Global Estimate of Forced Labour: 20.9 million victims. Retrieved February 18, 2019, from http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_182109/lang--en/index.htm

ACT is a four year long, 11 million dollar combined project between the European Union, US, and the UNODC. The GLO ACT states the immediate desire to focus on fighting sex trafficking in 13 hot-spot problem countries where trafficking has been recorded in elevated numbers. These statistics have been gathered by the UNODC. These countries include; Belarus, Brazil, Colombia, Egypt, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao PDR, Mali, Morocco, Nepal, Niger, Pakistan, South Africa, Ukraine. This project is expected to pair as a supplement to the previously stated, “Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children” and the “Protocol against Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air”, implemented by the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), a 2000 United Nations-sponsored multilateral treaty against transnational organized crime. As itemized by the UNODC The GLO ACT objectives are as follows:

“The GLO.ACT works with countries to develop policies and strategies tailored to their national context. The GLO.ACT ensures that domestic legislative frameworks for criminalizing Trafficking In Persons (TIP) and Smuggling of Migrants (SOM) meet international standards. The GLO.ACT works with governmental authorities to enhance the knowledge and capacity of criminal justice practitioners to combat TIP and SOM and to protect victims of trafficking and vulnerable migrants. The GLO.ACT promotes cooperation and information exchange among law enforcement officials on the identification, investigation and prosecution of offences related to TIP and SOM. The GLO.ACT, particularly through IOM, works with civil society and government authorities to develop assistance and support programs for victims of trafficking and vulnerable

migrants. The GLO.ACT, particularly through UNICEF and IOM, works with victim support services and relevant government authorities to develop frameworks for the protection and assistance of children.”

Estimate of Victims and Health

The National Human Trafficking Resource Center’s (NHTRC) is a national US hotline operated by the Polaris Project, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization headquartered in Washington, D.C. The Polaris Project is one of the largest anti-trafficking platforms in the world. Since 2007 the combination of the National Human Trafficking Resource Center hotline and Polaris's BeFree Textline have learned of and responded to “31,000 instances of human trafficking across the United States” as well as, “6,500 cases of human trafficking reported to law enforcement.”¹² Statistics collected by the NHTRC state that number of signals, which take the form of calls, web forums, and emails, received from victims or victims’ families has steadily increased between 2012 and 2016 along with the number of human trafficking cases reported. Of these reports, the NHTRC estimates that sex trafficking has been the most prevalent type of human trafficking from 2012 to the present.¹³ In 2016, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, a program funded by a grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention in the U.S. Department of Justice, estimated that 1 in 6 endangered runaways reported to them were likely sex trafficking victims.¹⁴ The International Labor

¹² P. (n.d.). Successes. Retrieved March 25, 2019, from <https://polarisproject.org/successes>

¹³ CARDENAS, A. A. (2017). THE SAVE ACT OF 2015: CONGRESS’ ATTEMPT TO REPRIORITIZE ONLINE CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING. *St. John's Law Review*, 91(2), 505-527.

¹⁴ Missing Children, State Care, and Child Sex Trafficking: Engaging the Judiciary in Building a Collaborative Response. (n.d.). Retrieved February 18, 2019, from <http://www.missingkids.com/content/dam/pdfs/publications/missingchildrenstatecare.pdf>

Organization (ILO) global estimate of forced labor in 2012 estimated that 20.9 million women, men and children were trapped in jobs into which they were coerced or deceived to be in.¹⁵ Of that 20.9 million, the ILO estimates that 22%, about 4.5 million victims, were involved in sex trafficking.¹⁶ This number of victims being sex trafficked means that, at any given point in time, around three out of every 1,000 persons worldwide are, in effect indentured servants. About 2 million children are exploited every year in the global commercial sex trade and women and girls make up 96% of victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation.¹⁷

Sex trafficking takes a heavy toll on victims psychological and physical health. Victims are often kept alone, and they are intimidated almost daily with physical or sexual assault. Victims can be sold into debt bondage, “an illegal practice where the victim has to pledge personal services in order to repay some form of debt, such as transportation into a foreign country or living expenses” and undergo severe mistreatment.¹⁸ While in captivity, victims are forced to comply and subject to physical illnesses and many inhumane methods such as starvation, drug usage, and threats to harm a victim’s family. Victims also face a serious of health risks. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services list an alarming arrangement of physical and mental health risks as follows,

¹⁵ New ILO Global Estimate of Forced Labour: 20.9 million victims. (2012, June 01). Retrieved February 18, 2019, from http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_182109/lang--en/index.htm

¹⁶ International Labour Organization. (2012). ILO Global Estimate of Forced Labour. Retrieved from http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/-declaration/documents/publication/wcms_182004.pdf.

¹⁷ 2016 UNODC Trafficking In Persons Report

¹⁸ Hodge DR. Sexual trafficking in the United States: a domestic problem with transnational dimensions. *Soc Work.* 2008;53:143–152. [[PubMed](#)]

“Physical risks include drug and alcohol addiction; physical injuries (broken bones, concussions, burns, vaginal/anal tearing); traumatic brain injury (TBI) resulting in memory loss, dizziness, headaches, numbness; sexually transmitted diseases (e.g., HIV/AIDS, gonorrhea, syphilis, UTIs, pubic lice); sterility, miscarriages, menstrual problems; other diseases (e.g., TB, hepatitis, malaria, pneumonia); and forced or coerced abortions.”

“Psychological harms include mind/body separation/dissociated ego states, shame, grief, fear, distrust, hatred of men, self-hatred, suicide, and suicidal thoughts. Victims are at risk for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) – acute anxiety, depression, insomnia, physical hyper-alertness, self-loathing that is long-lasting and resistant to change (complex-PTSD).”¹⁹

Sex traffickers transport victims to every town, city, state, and country. Sex trafficking occurs in places where buyers can be discreet about their purchase by seeming as if they are at a location for another purpose. Places like this include: hotels, truck stops, strip clubs, motels, hostels among other locations. The Polaris Project conducted a study of sex trafficking victims and when asking survivors where they were trafficked, the sample size provided the following: out of 693 victims, 35% said they were trafficked in a hotel/motel; 16% were forced to be street prostitutes; 11% were housed in a residential brothel; and 10% were a part of an escort service.

¹⁹ FACT SHEET: SEX TRAFFICKING- National Human Trafficking Resource Center. (n.d.). Retrieved February 18, 2019, from <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/archive/otip/resource/fact-sheet-sex-trafficking-english>

Other venues itemized were strip clubs, truck stop, and bars.²⁰

Shipping Routes

The following data was taken from the PBS documentary and study completed by Aaron G. Woolf featured in, “Dying to Leave”.

Europe

“The most Important gateways into Western Europe are the Strait of Gibraltar, where North Africans cross into Spain especially during the summertime, and the Adriatic Sea, where migrants, often women and girls, are trafficked from Albania to Italy. By land, trafficked individuals from Eastern Europe and Asia follow the Balkan route from former Soviet republics and satellite states through Greece. Illegal immigrants that are subjected to trafficking from North Africa also travel across the Mediterranean to Sicily. Many are smuggled in Britain from northern France across the English Channel to the port of Dover. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, young women from Russia, Estonia, and Latvia are trafficked to Finland, where prostitution is legal. Russian women are also trafficked to Norway and Sweden, where prostitution is also legal.

Americas

Most of the movement on this map is directed toward the United States, but a number of South American migrants are trafficked to work in the Japanese sex industry.

²⁰ Polaris Project. (n.d.). Sex Trafficking in the U.S.: A Closer Look at U.S. Citizen Victims. Retrieved February 18, 2019, from <https://polarisproject.org/sites/default/files/us-citizen-sex-trafficking.pdf>

According to Interpol, most human cargo is being smuggled into the United States by plane. Increasingly, victims travel first to South Africa, where fraudulent documents may be obtained. Interpol also suggests that seafaring ships usually approach America via the Pacific Ocean, where Canada has also intercepted a number of cargo vessels carrying trafficked illegal Chinese immigrants trying to enter through the Vancouver area. But recently, use of this method has declined. Instead, many trafficking victims are arriving in Central or South America to enter the U.S. via Mexico.

Southeast Asia

Most of the women trafficked in southeast Asia are sent to work in the commercial sex trade, particularly in Japan. Thailand is an important location for sex tourism, and the source of many of Japan's prostitutes, sex trafficking victims easily blend in. Increasingly, in the number of illegal immigrants, a portion trafficked individuals, from South Asia and the Middle East who arrive on the western shores of Australia, particularly on Christmas Island, which is located quite close to Indonesia and home to Australia's island detention center, a dumping ground of refugees."²¹

In the following section, the methods used to collect qualitative and quantitative are presented.

²¹ Woolf, Aaron Gwin. "Dying to Leave." *Wide Angle*, season Business of Human Trafficking, episode Trafficking Routes, PBS, 23 Sept. 2005.

Methodology

Data were collected from many sources including the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice, and the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, agencies tasked with enforcing the prohibitions against sex trafficking. In addition, scholarly articles in books, journals, and reports have provided a more comprehensive portrait of sex trafficking. Such sources have included: Human Trafficking Hotline, a clearinghouse for information on human trafficking; The Polaris Project, a Washington D.C. charity that reports on where trafficking occurs and gathers current news articles covering on trafficking; and End Slavery Now, a charitable organization organized by the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center that collects resources and disseminates statistics on trafficking.

In the fall of 2018 President Gilbert of Marshall University announced the availability of funds sponsored by his office to create the University-wide Undergraduate Creative Discovery and Undergraduate Research Scholar Award program. This program provided students with an opportunity to pursue original creative work, scholarship or research, under the mentorship of a full-time faculty member. The program was open to juniors and seniors with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0. The awards provided a \$750 stipend, and up to \$1000 for travel and materials for one semester. Moreover, \$750 also went to my participating faculty mentor Dr. Fred Roth for travel. Paired with this Capstone project, this research fund proved incredibly helpful as it enabled me to conduct interviews with important stakeholders in Washington, D.C and New York City. In this regard the funds were used solely for travel costs, food, and to conduct interviews with federal and non-governmental organizations fighting human trafficking.

Many different organizations which contributed to the data collection permitted comparisons to one another. To supplement data from these organizations, I interviewed representatives from the Department of Justice and sitting chair members of these non-profit organizations. In assembling this type of data, I was able to see what steps each organization has taken to combat sex trafficking. An interview was customized for each organization, but the same questions were similar in certain areas. Inquiries concerning the organization's background, objectives, and types of sex trafficking they see was asked. I was given the opportunity to ask about tactics, methods, and decisions these organizations use first hand to battle sex trafficking. In collecting these type of data, I was able to see what steps each organization has taken to thwart sex trafficking. Because of the nature of this portion of the project, it was unlikely that other more conventional kinds of data collection methods would yield optimal findings; survey data, for instance, though suitable for determining respondents' opinions and beliefs, lacks the ability to delve intensively into why the subject feels as he/she does. I was able to specifically analyze data from these organizations with face-to-face interviews.

Qualitative Data

The first interview able to be held was with Sharon Kurn. Ms. Kurn is an assistant U.S. Attorney, Chief of Sex Offense and Domestic Violence Sections in Washington DC, and The U.S. Attorney's Office Supervisor of the D.C. Human Trafficking Task Force. As a leader on countless criminal cases, Kurn was one of the lead attorneys on the United States vs. Brice case located in Washington, D.C and was able to share details of the elevated success of this case, claiming it was, "a victory she will never forget". Details of this case include:

“On February 28, 2006, a federal jury sitting in the District of Columbia convicted Jaron Brice, also known as “Jaron,” “Jay,” “Jay Bird,” and “Daddy,” 27, of nine counts related to his illegal sex trafficking operation that involved the prostitution and sexual assault of females as young as 14 years old. Brice was charged with sex trafficking of a child and sex trafficking by force, interstate transportation of a minor and adult for prostitution, first degree child sexual abuse, and pandering. The evidence showed that from March 2004 through May 17, 2005, Brice recruited females as young as 14 years of age to engage in prostitution for his own financial benefit. He caused these females to prostitute in D.C. and other locations, including Maryland, New York, and Florida. He used emotional and physical violence, including armed threats, to ensure their compliance with his rules. Brice also had sexual intercourse with one of his prostitutes, then 14 years old. On September 15, 2006, Brice was sentenced to 30 years’ imprisonment and a ten-year term of supervised release.”²²

Kurn went on to explain that because of the close work with all local DC task forces, such as FBI, CIA, and heavy contact with the DC police, they were able to convict Brice of his suspected crimes. She claimed that the most valuable pieces of evidence, such as, “Witnesses, evidence like text messages sent to victims, gun, condoms, money, online postings” are enough to make a case successful, and that these are physical aspects she and her task force look for in making a case stick in a court of law. Stating that, “There were no typical investigation time lengths, all of it depends on how long it takes to obtain a search warrant”. Kurn was able to spend valuable time with victims and prep them for acting as witnesses in her cases. Although not in her job

²² Attorney General’s Annual Report to Congress on U.S. Government Activities to Combat Trafficking in Persons Fiscal Year 2006. (2007, May). Retrieved February 18, 2019, from <https://www.osce.org/cthb/25182?download=true>

description, Kurn works closely with victims of trafficking on a daily basis, and explains that this has been a hard process to pair her law field into victim advocacy in and out of the courtroom. Kurn explained that this was usually difficult to watch, and would later help victims become paired with advocates to help aid their healing process from being trafficked. Lastly, when asked how she would educate the public more regarding awareness towards trafficking, she explained;

“More outreach to nail salons, schools, restaurants is 100% necessary. I would spread awareness to look for all of the warning signs. I would stress that warning signs are not always physical abuse, it can be coercion and bribery, and verbal abuse. These are tactics that are sometimes overlooked when searching for bruises on a victim’s body.”

The next interview that took place in Washington D.C. was with Kenya Davis. Mrs. Davis is an assistant U.S. Attorney Senior. She holds an active role on the Litigation Counsel at the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia. She is the co-chair on the DC Human Trafficking Task Force, a position that she trained three years to earn. Finally, she is a leader on the Sex Offense and Domestic Violence Felony Major Crimes Section Board. When asked of a main success case that was able to be shared, Davis was able to give details regarding the US vs. Marshall case she was a main prosecutor of. Daraya Marshall, 37, was running a prostitution business out of his apartment in the Southeast Washington area. An immediate press release from February 1st, 2018 states:

“Marshall pled guilty on Oct. 16, 2017, the day that his trial was scheduled to begin in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. He had been charged by the grand jury in a 15-count indictment; the remaining counts were dismissed at sentencing pursuant to the plea agreement. Following his prison term, Marshall will be placed on 15 years of supervised release. By law, he will also be required to register as a sex offender for a minimum period of 25 years. Judge Chutkan also ordered Marshall to pay \$21,800 in restitution and an equal amount in a forfeiture money judgment. According to the government’s evidence, Marshall and his co-defendant, Jarnese Harris, 31, ran a sex trafficking operation out of their apartment in Southeast Washington. At times, Marshall had six or more women and girls prostituting for him, including Ms. Harris. In 2014 and 2015, Marshall separately persuaded four girls - who were ages 14, 15, 15-16, and 17 years old - to prostitute for him by engaging in commercial sexual acts with strangers who responded to ads placed on Backpage.com.

These commercial sexual transactions would occur either in Marshall’s apartment, or Marshall or Harris would drive the victims to other locations in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia. Marshall and Harris took pictures of the girls in sexually provocative poses, and paid for and placed advertisements on Backpage.com. The victims were vulnerable because of their youth and difficult life circumstances, and Marshall lured them with the promise of independence and a chance to make money. He provided the victims with food and marijuana, let them stay in his apartment, and gave them rides to and from home or school so that they could work for him at night and on weekends. Additionally, Marshall took photos and videos

of one of the victims, which depicted child pornography, when the victim was 15 and 16 years old. He also sexually abused one of the victims by engaging in intercourse with her when she was just 14 years old.”²³

Davis works domestic cases in trafficking, primarily Washington DC cases, and those in the close Maryland and Virginia area. When she is looking outside the DC area, she and her team are looking at cases that tie in with the issue of smuggling. Davis explained that, “When colleagues and I look at routes that involve smuggling we are looking at places with internationally airports. We would focus on states like Texas, California, Florida, and NY.” When asked to explain where she saw trafficking on a daily basis, she illuminated the darkness of the internet that is available to be viewed worldwide. “Cyber trafficking is what I see the most of. I see it on Instagram, Facebook, and definitely Backpage.” Backpage today, is known as the superstore of any wants or needs. On Backpage, you could purchase anything imaginable, from cars to boats, dogs to cats, and unfortunately- your preference of human that is tied to sex-trafficking, child or adult. Writer Gayle Clark states that,

“The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) told a recent Senate subcommittee that 71 percent of all suspected child sex trafficking cases have a link to Backpage. According to the Justice Department, more than half of known victims

²³ D. (2018, February 01). District Man Sentenced to 25 Years in Prison on Charges Stemming from Trafficking Four Children for Commercial Sex. Retrieved March 8, 2019, from <https://www.justice.gov/usao-dc/pr/district-man-sentenced-25-years-prison-charges-stemming-trafficking-four-children>

in the U.S. are younger than 17. Some are as young as 7.”²⁴ Dawn Hawkins, the executive director of National Center on Exploitation, Backpage posts at least one million sex ads today.²⁵ Davis continued that, “Backpage is a challenge for law enforcement because the US can’t get into some of the addresses. When one shuts down, another one pops up in a different location. Investigators now are really trying to focus on [Backpage’s] “hip” lingo. “P16” would stand for “pimp” on certain online domains such as Backpage. Upon researching the infamous site, this notice appeared from a simple Google search:

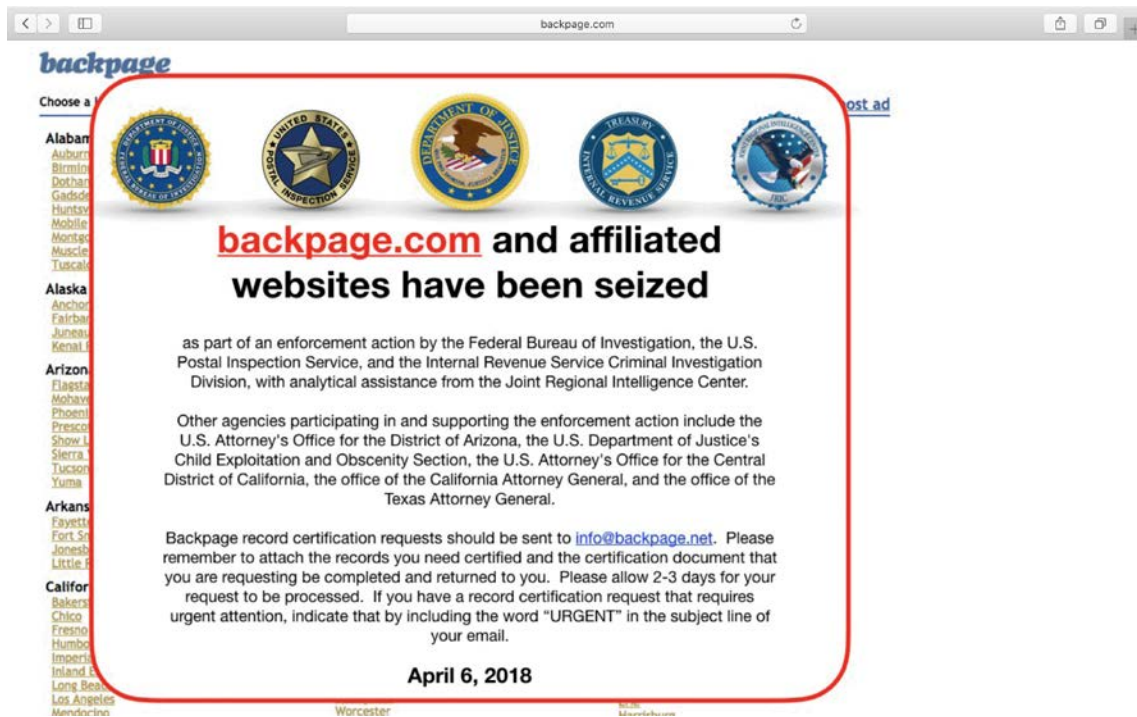


Figure 1: Screenshot taken from personal computer of backpage.com on 3/5/19.

²⁴ Clark, G. (2017, October 31). 9 Things You Need to Know about Backpage.com and Sex Trafficking. Retrieved March 5, 2019, from <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/9-things-you-need-to-know-about-backpage-com-and-sex-trafficking/>

²⁵ N. (2018, August 16). Looking for Backpage.com, Hub of trafficking, prostitution, porn? Retrieved March 5, 2019, from <https://endsexualexploitation.org/backpage/>

This search is no doubt the work of Davis and her team of law enforcement fighting this issue of the apparent misuse of this website. When Davis was asked about red flags looking for traffickers on apps or websites like Backpage, she explained that, " A pimps persona is very braggy and flashy. Their social media usually is showing pictures of money or the girls they are using. This is a business and they love to do the advertising themselves." Davis emphasized once she has alone time with the victims of her case in her office, the most important emotion she can offer them is respect.

"I always respect their time. If they don't want to talk today, I let them have space, if they don't want to talk tomorrow, I still let them have space. They will want to talk eventually. I show them that I respect them. I don't use language that would ever imply I disrespect them or look down at them. And I trust them. Sometimes story lines don't add up, but I let them tell me the truth. I explain to them that with the whole truth, I can give them justice. I let them know always that somebody does care, somebody does believe. I also let them know this; even if my case flops and I don't have enough evidence, I will never let go of that trust."

Finally, Anita Teekah was the last individual interviewed in December. Teekah is the senior director for the Anti-Trafficking Program (ATP) branched off from Safe Horizon, directly based out of New York City. Safe Horizon's ATP is, "one of the largest direct service providers to victims of human trafficking on the east coast. We provide both legal and case management services to all victims of human trafficking – labor and sex trafficking – including men, women,

children, foreign nationals or U.S. citizens.”²⁶ ATP provides a wide-range of services to the public, including but not limited to, culturally and linguistically sensitive services, supportive counseling and empowerment groups, assistance with basic needs, legal assistance, advocacy through the criminal justice system, help with access to public benefits, linkage to shelter and housing options. When asked what Teekah’s everyday work was like in the ATP program, she described,

“Our sex trafficking team has a legal team to aid them, and works specifically in Brooklyn and Queens. I help conduct training to medical facilities so they are equip to screen for trafficking victims, even if they do not speak English. So far we have trained about a dozen facilities in NYC. I help assign and hire social workers to different cases and they take care of the counseling.” In training local hospitals every day for screening trafficked victims, Teekah also works with and trains very closely with local law enforcement agencies such as Kings County DA, FBI, Department of Labor. “With working the most with these, we find that sex trafficking is prosecuted more so than labor. There really is no profile for a trafficker either, anyone can be one so it hard to nail down a specific watch list.”

When researching which smuggling routes to get ahead of the curve in searching for trafficking victims, Teekah and her team work with local law enforcement studying certain areas such as, New York, California, Seattle, and Texas.

²⁶ Anti-Trafficking Program - Safe Horizon. (n.d.). Retrieved March 8, 2019, from <https://www.safehorizon.org/anti-trafficking-program/>

Unlike Kenya Davis, Teekah and her organization work closely with face-to-face contact regarding trafficking, and don't work with much cyber trafficking. In saying this, the goals of this organization tend to be slightly different than the goals of law enforcement, which come into contact more with prosecution and court dates. Teekah explained that her organization hopes to achieve many things, but mainly, "Raise the profile of of labor and sex trafficking. I want people to know that you can be trafficked anywhere. In any city, any person, in person or over the computer. I want to able to educate people so less and less people fall into trafficking." When asked what her organization would like to raise a decent amount of awareness towards, she discussed what the trafficking victim would look like. Although anyone can be trafficked, the symptoms of the aftermath tend to appear similarly. She explained that if one were trying to determine if someone was being trafficked, these are the signs that lead to a confirmation: "With sex trafficking, we look for the following: incredibly exhausted, drug addicts, repetitive hospital visits, payments for hotel always in cash, medical conditions like STI's, STD's, UTI's, multiple abortions, ID never residing with them, always with someone accompanying them. This person usually speaks on the victim's behalf, either because they can't speak English, or out of force for a control tactic."

Quantitative Data

Apart of the the qualitative data collected, quantitative data was collected as well to determine the awareness level of sex trafficking from Marshall University students. This quantitative derived from a survey of students taking the general education classes of Marshall University's Department Sociology and Anthropology that was developed and administered by

the department's Senior Seminar course.²⁷ The survey was conducted between February 26 and March 19, 2019, where the students entered 13 classes on the Huntington campus, read the consent statement, passed out the forms, and collected the forms through a slit on the top of a box to ensure anonymity. One class from the Teays Valley and the Mid-Ohio Valley Center campuses were administered by their instructors. An invitation to the online version, developed using Qualtrics, was emailed to students who took online versions of the courses during the same period. The total population of in-class students on Huntington campus was 504, from which we received 231 responses for a rate of 65.5%, the population from remote campuses was 23, from which we received 18 for a rate of 78%, and the population of online students was 164, from which we received only 3 responses, a rate that was so low that we decided to not use them. The population of students in the department's general education courses has been generally representative of the broader student body at Marshall who are taking general education courses.

The survey was constructed with a section for basic demographics, a section asking how often respondents engaged in given behaviors, and a section of statements which the respondent would indicate four levels strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) with neutral recorded but not prompted (see Appendix A for a copy of consent form).

A scale including six of the statements measures misunderstandings about sex trafficking and is comprised of the following questions:

1. Men cannot be sex traffic victims
2. Sex trafficking only happens in developing countries (Asia, Africa, etc)

²⁷ The survey received Marshall IRB approval as study # 725823-6 under the title "Capstone Survey."

3. Sex traffickers only target victims they do not know
4. It is not considered sex trafficking if everyone is consenting adults
5. Minors in the United States (anyone under the age of 18) can consent to prostitution
6. Other than sex, there are no other forms of human trafficking

Apart from this scale, other statements analyzed separately include: "Sex Trafficking is the equivalent, or interchangeable with the term 'prostitution'", "I am very aware of issues regarding sex trafficking", "Other than sex, there are no other forms of human trafficking", "Sex trafficking happens in West Virginia", "I would know where to report a sex trafficking case", "Sex trafficking can happen in middle or upper class settings", and finally "Sex trafficking is always a violent crime".

This sex trafficking misconception scale has a Cronbach $\alpha = .69$, with 2.2% of students in general agreement with the statements given in the indication of the four levels. The correlations analysis explored a large number (204) relationships among the demographics and the questions specified for this study, so this study will only report as statistically significant those with probability levels of $p < .01$, anticipating the possibility of 2 false positive results (unless the p levels are much lower). I was anticipating for the statements and questions regarding religion and religious importance to the respondent were going to have a positive correlation with the sex trafficking questions, as sex and prostitution can be a taboo topic in religious communities. However, the results proved inconclusive, there proved to be no connection to the topics in question disproving the stereotype of religious individuals to be uneducated or dismissive on the topic of sex trafficking. A positive correlation that I was not expecting to come across was the connection between the political identity of the respondent

and their awareness of sex trafficking and misconceptions toward the topic. The highest positive correlation in the data collected colluded that people who consider themselves to be conservative on the political identity scale given, (0.534) tend to have more misconceptions (the scale listed above) about sex trafficking. Other positive correlations included; People who consider themselves to be conservative (0.388) tend to believe that sex trafficking is interchangeable with or equivalent to the term prostitution. And also, People who consider themselves to be conservative (0.294) tend to believe that other than sex, there are no others forms of human trafficking.

From looking at these positive correlations regarding a conservative political identity and sex trafficking, many abstract conclusions can be made. It can be speculated that those who identify as conservative are receiving false, or misinterpreted data about sex trafficking funneled through different news outlets or political leaders. Particularly in the current political climate, it is easy to pinpoint a starting point of the funnel, and this can be the President of the United States Mr. Donald Trump. February 5th in his State of the Union address the President stated, "Human traffickers and sex traffickers take advantage of the wide-open areas between our ports of entry to smuggle thousands of young girls and women into the United States and to sell them into prostitution and modern-day slavery." Easily trying to build the connection between the the dangers of immigrants and the push for the southern border between the United States and Mexico, it can be speculated that those aligning their political agenda with President Trump could be falling into the trap of believing the only access sex traffickers have to the country is through the Southern border. When in reality, this is only a fraction of where the sex trafficking reported stem from. President Trump also stated on February 1st that, "Human

trafficking by airplane is almost impossible. Human trafficking by van and truck, in the backseat of a car, and going through a border where there's nobody for miles and miles, and there's no wall to protect — it's very easy. They make a right, then they make a left. They come into our country. And they sell people." While the idea of this sounds easy to buy into, it is quite the opposite of the truth. On the flip side, human trafficking network depends highly on the insurance of international airports, not the United States and Mexico border entrance via automobile. Data collected by the United Nations' International Organization on Migration, analyzing 10 years of information on more than 90,000 victims, has found that 79 percent of international trafficking journeys "go through official border points, such as airports and land border control points." The International Organization on Migration said that "about a third of official border points are crossed by bus, another third by train, and 20% by plane."²⁸ Just researching these small snippets of what the President has claimed about human trafficking, it can be speculated that those who identify with the conservative ideology believe the claims made as a form of trust and understanding has been made.

Conclusion

This funnel carrying misinterpreted data creates the ideology of false awareness in the general public. To properly educate the public, and this includes the conservative voters at Marshall University, proper data and knowledge needs to be presented. To create an all-encompassing awareness campaign of the sex trafficking epidemic, authentic facts and statements need to be presented to stop this issue. Law enforcement agencies cannot help

²⁸ T. (n.d.). Counter-Trafficking Data Collaborative (CTDC). Retrieved April 9, 2019, from <https://www.ctdatacollaborative.org/story/victims-trafficking-road>

fight the issue if the general public, those being the eyes and ears of the country, do not know what to look for in sex trafficking issues. If the public is completely disregarding airports in being aware, they are at a higher risk and the awareness level drops significantly.

To do this productively, authentic awareness needs to be produced at the highest governmental level with federal law enforcement and the President of the United States. With the qualitative data collected through interviews, it was proven that the same efforts are being transparently made in fighting sex trafficking. The issue that came up in every interview however, was that awareness in the general public was not being executed properly, and therefore more people were falling into believing misconceptions or not reporting sex trafficking because they do not believe the instance was a case of sex trafficking. Proper awareness starts at the highest level, and this will funnel through the general public. In doing this, we will ultimately have a safer country in cooperating with federal law enforcement initiatives in fighting this epidemic.

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Appendix A.

Survey Consent

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled “Capstone Survey,” designed to compile a wide range of data from Marshall students. The survey is being conducted by students in a Sociology and Anthropology Capstone class of Marty Laubach of Marshall University.

This survey asks you to fill out the non-identifying questionnaire concerning your basic background, attitudes, and perceptions. The survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Your replies will be anonymous, so do not put your name anywhere on the instrument. Participation is voluntary and if you choose not to answer any or all questions, you can submit the partially or completely blank form. When you submit the form, please place it in the closed box with the slit on the top so that nobody can see your responses. Submitting this survey form indicates your consent for use of the answers you supply.

If you have any questions about the study you may contact Dr. Marty Laubach at (304) 696-2798. If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research participant, please contact the Marshall University Office of Research Integrity at (304) 696-7320.

By completing and returning this survey, you are also confirming that you are 18 years of age or older.

You may keep this copy of this consent form for your records.