

Portada

Examining the "Skin Trade"

A cultural and juridical analysis of the Internet's perpetuation of the sex tourism industry.

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Introduction

People, regardless of our differences, all matter to someone. We are all here for a reason. What is it that makes one person better than another and by whose standards? How is value placed on someone's life? I began this capstone with a desire to do something that was meaningful and worked to establish social justice. I am not quite sure why I settled on sex tourism and the Internet other than the basic belief that people are equal and all have the same worth. As a woman, I see, hear, and experience the negative treatment of women. Regardless of nationality, race, class, origin, or sexuality all women are oppressed on some level(s). The basic mistreatment, objectification and oppression of women must be stopped. Women have never received the same value, services, services or education as men. Women have been made to service others, which has lead to gross violations of women's human rights. One place this occurs on a daily basis is in sex trafficking and sex tourism.

My desire was to research a topic that brought to the public's consciousness an issue that is occurring in every region of the world. Sex trafficking has always been viewed as something that happens "over there" and to "those people." People in the United States do not want to believe that such activity happens here, or that "our" men travel to have sex with women and oftentimes abuse these women. The people I have encountered while researching this topic were continually shocked, which then turned promptly to denial, when I would discuss with them my findings. There is this incredible belief that distance equals freedom from the happening in "far off" places. This distance also makes it easier to ignore and to feel disconnected from the affected population, therefore making it easier to disassociate. The majority of people believe that sex

trafficking does not affect them; it does. The targeted abuse of any individual or group affects all people. I found myself compelled to research this topic and illustrate how the mistreatment of women “over there” affects the treatment of women here, in the United States.

The physical distance in geography, as well as my positionality as an educated white woman enabled me to examine this topic from an academic standpoint. While I have had not experienced the horrors enacted upon my research subjects, I continually experience the everyday mistreatment and objectification of women. I see how everything from the media, society, education, health services, etc. exists to perpetuate the patriarchal hierarchy in which we live. However, knowing about and enduring some of the injustices placed against women does not grant me insight into the experiences of trafficked females. While I can read, listen and look at what is going on I write this paper from the safety of my University where I am a great distance from the actual acts. I, like many, will never know what this life of human trafficking is truly like.

Sex trafficking of women is projected to take over as the leading international crime activity, surpassing drugs and weapons. Congressional sources estimate that “50,000 persons are trafficked into the United States” a year while another estimated 4 million women and girls are trafficked worldwide. Sex trafficking is defined as “all acts and attempted acts involved in the recruitment, transportation within or across borders, purchase, sale, transfer, receipt or harboring of a person: (a) involving the use of deception, coercion (including the use or threat of force or the abuse of authority) or debt bondage. (b) for the purpose of placing or holding such person, whether for pay or not, in involuntary servitude (domestic, sexual or reproductive), in forced or bonded labor, or in slavery-like conditions, in a community other than the one in which such

person lived at the time of the original deception, coercion or debt bondage” (Miko 3). Sex trafficking exists in every region of the world, it occurs domestically and internationally. Sex tourism is a subset of sex trafficking. Sex tourism involves an individual traveling to a country with the intention of seeking out sex with women, men and/or children. The Internet serves as the chief means for people to engage in this industry. This paper concentrates on the traffic of women and men engaging in sex tours. Sex tours sell sex by providing women for men’s enjoyment. These women are often called prostitutes, also known as sex workers. A basic definition of prostitution is the agreement, offer or engagement in sexual service for a fee or goods. The women who are trafficked for sex are sold to brothels where the men traveling for sex can purchase them for the night or the length of their “tour.” The women are referred to as prostitutes because they are exchanging sexual services for a fee. Of course, this is not that simple. The issues of forced/voluntary prostitution and if any woman really “chooses” prostitution become very complex.

There has been much debate over whether or not trafficked women “choose” this career as a means of making money for themselves and more importantly, their families. Proponents of this industry believe that this is a business that allows women to make money, often in economies where women cannot find jobs or if they are working, what little they earn is not enough to support themselves or their families. Conversely, opponents believe women and girls are coerced, kidnapped or sold into the sex industry, where they are enslaved, incur debt, face physical and mental abuse on a daily basis, and are kept against their will.

Sex trafficking, sex tourism and prostitution are all variants of sexual exploitation. This paper will look at how sex tourism is a subset of sex trafficking; how Internet companies that set up sex tours in foreign countries operate; how the propaganda of these companies

perpetuate cyclical subjugation of women; the health and physical condition of the women; and what laws effect this industry.

Background

To establish a basic understanding of sex trafficking, one must first comprehend the various historical foundations which underlie and motivate the trading of women. Some of the root causes of trafficking are “greed, moral turpitude, economics, political instability, transportation, and social factors” (Sietske). The traffickers use women because women are viewed as reusable commodities, objects to be sold. In short, women are seen as both expendable and re-sellable. Trafficking in human beings is very popular for this exact reason. The traffickers and managers can continue to make money off the women instead of using them once, i.e. drugs or selling them to others, i.e. weapons. Traffickers know that trade in human beings is a high-profit and low-risk venture because of an ideology reinforced by a blatant lack of law enforcement and governmental interest. Trafficking in women also continues to exist because societies and cultures continue to marginalize, objectify, and accept abuse against women.

The women find themselves in this business in a variety of ways. Most women are said to be trafficked because of poverty-either because they live in poverty, or because their family members or friends sell them for money (Rogers 48). It is also important to recognize that *women* are targeted specifically because of the second-class status they hold in many countries. Women are typically seen as subservient to males and therefore are not viewed as needing equal (if any) access to the opportunities or rights afforded their male counterparts. In many of these countries women exist to serve and that is what they are doing. Whether it is in the home or at a brothel, a term used to encompass all places where women are sold for sex; they are satisfying

the purpose many believe women are meant to serve. Other women are tricked and falsely promised lucrative jobs in other countries as maids, waitresses, or in some type of entertainment. There is also “some recognition that the majority of ‘trafficking’ cases for prostitution involve women who are aware that they are going to work in the sex industry but are unaware of the conditions under which they will work” (Doezama 10).

Whether women choose or are forced into sex trafficking, they find it almost impossible to get out of the sex industry once they have been trafficked (Landsberg). If they have been trafficked internationally, the traffickers or brothel owners immediately destroy their passports and any papers they may have so the women cannot leave without being deported. If women are trafficked within their own country and/or internationally they are threatened and immediately incur “debt bondage.” A debt bondage is when the traffickers pay the fees for the woman to be sent somewhere for their sexual service. Fees include; passports, airline tickets, transportation fees, food, and housing. The women are not free to leave the trafficker or the brothel, until the women have made enough money to repay whomever owns them (Simons 32). Before this happens most brothel owners will then sell them right before they are able to pay back the money, thus incurring another debt.

The women face abuse, lack of sustenance, and no freedom. In some instances, they spend upwards of 12 hours of having sex or pleasing the man to pay off their debt. The women are also threatened with abuse to their families if they try to leave or run away (Bales 58). Women may also face language and culture barriers making leaving very difficult, because many of these women are brought to other countries or other parts of their country where the language or dialect is different from what they normally speak.

When women do leave and go to the authorities they face a variety of frightening consequences. They are either confined because law enforcement agencies do not have the training to properly assist the women and no services exist for these women. The women may also be deported to where they will be kidnapped and returned to the brothel owner where they face violence and even more debt. In some cases, women may be immediately returned to the brothels because the law enforcement agencies are paid heavily for their cooperation in this illegal business. This is why many women do not feel comfortable seeking help because they usually will not be any better off than before (Altink 47).

There are many organizations that are working to end the traffic in persons. Despite laws prohibiting such activity, this industry/business remains highly lucrative. One way that this industry continues, despite any laws, has been through the development of sex tourism. Like sex trafficking, sex tourism exists domestically and internationally. Men will travel within their own country or to other countries to use these trafficked women, commonly referred to as prostitutes. Historically 'prostitutes' are typically thought of as women who are viewed by men as having made the choice to go into sex work as a profession. This automatically justifies the act because, when using these women for sex, men believe that this is something the women choose and that enables them to make a good living at.

Many distinguish between sex workers and trafficked women. Sex workers work in the sex industry for themselves or have a pimp that they are regulated by, and trafficked women, or forced prostitutes, who are coerced, kidnapped or sold into the sex industry, held in "slave like conditions" and are not free to leave the industry. However, I will be concentrating on women as a whole, whether their entry into the sex industry was voluntary or forced. With the dichotomy of voluntary/forced prostitution, divisions are created between the women. The

women and especially children, who are trafficked, are seen as innocent victims who need to be protected. Women who voluntarily went into the sex industry, regardless of the conditions they face, are seen as dirty and guilty whores. Therefore they “deserve whatever they get.” In fact, women who “choose” to enter the sex industry are subjected to the same conditions as many trafficked women. Sex workers, who work locally or travel for work, will usually at some point find themselves abused, held against their will, or become trafficked themselves. Therefore, when organizations and governments create laws and policies to protect “trafficked women,” sex workers are left out. Policymakers argue that sex workers rights are of no concern because sex workers argue that prostitution is a legitimate occupation. Prostitution is a legitimate occupation, and the people who chose this occupation need to be recognized as employees and protected as such and given the same kinds of rights and privileges as any other formal employee. Consequently, the working and living conditions of these sex workers/trafficked women need to be addressed as one - the issue is about human rights and violence against women.

Military Influence

Sex trafficking has been and continues to be a growing phenomenon by which every country in every region of the world is being affected. Some of the major countries where the trafficking of women occurs are the former Soviet Union, South America, United States, Japan, England, and the most well known place, Southeast Asia. When most people hear the term sex trafficking they immediately think of Southeast Asia, even if they know nothing about this topic. Southeast Asia is made up by of Brunel, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Vietnam, and Thailand. Southeast Asia has always been the largest

region with the longest history of sex trafficking. Sex tourism developed and flourished in the aftermath of military bases occupying these nations.

Southeast Asia became a major destination for sex trafficking (and as we will see later, sex tourism) and continues to be so due to the occupying militaries, economics, the World Bank and cultural and religious beliefs. Prostitutes have existed in these countries for decades before militaries began occupying them. However, it was not until militaries began occupying other countries in times of war or conflict that these women became known as “comfort women” for the men. During these times there was more cultural acceptance of prostitution which led to “economic or militarism enforced prostitution” (Ryan/Hall 140). This type of forced prostitution benefited the host countries because it provided economic growth and development. Forced prostitution by and for military men brought in foreign currency, created jobs, and allowed for development. It also provided the military forces with something they wanted: cheap sex. “An unwritten policy within the U.S. military force is to ‘keep the men happy,’ as it considers sexualized recreation vital for the ‘morale’ of troops” (Enriquez 3). Not only were they kept happy but they saw themselves as “bringing social order” to countries that had none (Enloe 52). All of this came at the expense of women and led into one reason why the sex industry, particularly sex trafficking, became such a huge industry in Southeast Asia during World War II and continued through the Korean and Vietnam War (Enloe 51).

The U.S. military did not create prostitution or “comfort women” but they did propel it into a major activity. Military bases in countries like the Philippines, Japan, or Thailand were surrounded with sources of sexual entertainment. This ranged from clubs and bars to massage parlors and streetwalkers who were there to serve and make money off the military personnel. “...At Subic Naval Base and Clark Air Force Base...the city [Olongapo] was economically

dependent on the military presence and a number of city ordinances were written that allowed prostitution to be legitimized, regulated, and protected by local state...for example, the city enforced an anti-streetwalking ordinance which ensured that the soliciting of customers could only occur inside clubs thereby assuring club owners of fees derived from the provision of sexual services” (Ryan/Hall 141). The military personnel’s sexual needs were legally served, the club owners (men) made money from the women and governments made the women feel as though this was a duty and honor to serve in this fashion. This was stated by the South Korean Minister for education, “the sincerity of girls who have contributed with their cunts to their fatherland’s economic development is indeed praiseworthy” (Ryan/Hall 141).

The sex industry, particularly in Thailand, became a major commercial source in 1967, “when Robert S. McNamara, as U.S. Secretary of Defense, oversaw the signing of a Recreation and Relaxation, or R&R, contract with the Thai government to provide vacation furloughs for soldiers fighting in Vietnam. A general in the Thai Air Force negotiated the treaty...” (Rogers 48). This treaty served to be very profitable for the areas and businesses around the U.S. military bases and Thailand became known as a “sexual playground” for men (Altink 19). This lasted until the military left. Then the cities and businesses that served this population were left with virtually no business. In attempts to turn this around, the areas around old occupied military bases became brothels, clubs, restaurants, hotels, bars and massage parlors that used trafficked women to service the local men and the tourism industry that had been created through the military. At this time, the World Bank also stepped in to ensure that the economy of Thailand did not collapse.

In 1971, McNamara returned to Thailand, this time as president of the World Bank, to discuss with government leaders their fears of economic collapse once the U.S. withdrew from Vietnam. At the time of his visit, the

combination of sun, sand, and sex turned the tourist industry into the nation's fifth largest earner of foreign exchange...the bank plan established airlines, tour operators, hotel owners, and the brokers of the sex industry as essential players in the national economy. Tourism became the equivalent of an export, central to the balance of payments...by the mid eighties; tourism had become the kingdom's top earner of foreign currency (Rogers 48-9).

Sex tourism in Thailand and other nearby countries was created by military presence.

This created a market of sex on a level that did not before exist. People saw only the benefits to the economy that this type of business brought (Bales 71). Women's bodies were exploited and at the same time created an increase in the "market value of female sexual capacity" (Ryan/Hall 141). Sex Tourism picked up where military left off and it has been flourishing ever since. "As prostitution has become a form of tourism for men, it has become a form of economic development for poor countries. Tourism was recommended by the United Nations, the World Bank and United States advisory boards as a way to generate income and repay foreign debts (Hughes, sex tours).

The World Wide Web of Deceit

"It is a phenomenon that affects the lives of hundreds and thousands of women and children. Virtually no destination in the world is spared. Children as young as five years old are forced by poverty into prostitution and exploited by unscrupulous individuals and criminal groups that use child sex or prostitution as the main selling point in tourism" (Ryan/Hall 3). Most American men find out about sex tours in other countries via the Internet. The Internet has become the new medium for men to have sex with women who will be "submissive." The sex trade has an underground nature to it, and the Internet is a perfect way to distribute information to customers. The Internet has virtually no laws and coupled with the Free Speech amendment,

the Internet, to a large extent, has free range over what is advertised and what it does. To find a sex tour agency on-line, all one has to do is go to a search engine, like Yahoo, Hotbot, or Lycos, type in keywords like “sex tours,” “sex and Orientals,” or “world sex guide” and the search engine will come back with thousands of hits. Here is one of many examples of how this works: “The Shrimp Club, an organization of men who live or travel in Southeast Asia, set up a Web site to give men an information network for events, parties and products that feature Asian women. As part of their promotional strategy they send advertisements to newsgroups, such as *alt.sex.fetish.orientals*, and make sure that their Web site is archived in web search engines. This aggressive marketing through search engines supplied them with 15,000 accesses to their Web site in the first week. It was a strategy to be adopted by all sex industry businesses on the Internet” (Hughes, Pimps and Predators). This example not only shows the will of companies to make sure the public can locate their sites easily but also how effective Internet advertisement is (as shown by the number of accesses).

According to Business Week Magazine, there are twenty-five travel agencies in the United States, based in Miami, New York and San Diego. These agencies set up these sex tours over the Internet and send American men to other countries. While exploring some of the Web sites, I discovered how easy it is to find such web sites. All of the sites included enticing photos of scantily clad women. One web site I found had pictures of women grouped by their ethnicity and the pictures consisted of shots of their faces, breasts, vaginas or backsides. These sites also consisted of quotes to draw the potential client such as, “Had enough of the American bitches who won’t give you the time of day and are only interested in your bank account? In Asia you’ll meet girls who will treat you with respect and appreciation, unlike their American counterparts” (Ryan/Hall2). Many of the companies advertise to send people to Southeast Asia to

“experience” the culture and be with an “exotic” woman, which is a racist ideology. There are some companies that have begun to advertise Central America, promoting the proximity of the countries to the United States. These companies claim the tours are the most affordable. They advertise the purity of women in Central America compared to women in Asia where tours have existed and all the women are “used up,” and to experience a new culture and a different exotic woman (World sex tours www.costaricasexguide). Although I focus heavily on sex tourism to Southeast Asia, this is not the only destination country. Europe, Russia, Asia, and the new focus, Central America are all major destination countries for sex tourism.

How Sex Tourism works

Men will contact a travel agency through the Internet for a sex tour. The price of tours range from several hundred dollars to upwards of \$3,000. For example, “A Philippine Adventure Tour will cost \$1,645 for a package that includes round trip airfare, hotel accommodations and guided tours to the bars where the customer can purchase sex from prostitutes for as little as US \$24. Tour owner and operator Allan Gaynor promises that customers ‘never sleep alone on this tour’ and recommends that the customer have sex with a different girl every day or ‘two if they can handle it’ (Holding men accountable,1). When the men arrive to their country of choice they are met and taken around to all of the brothels, massage parlors and/or restaurants. They pick a woman, utilize her services for the night, and then are checked on in the morning by the brothel owner to make sure the man is satisfied. If he is not, he can switch the woman for a different woman. The man also has the choice, if he has an extended tour (twelve nights or more), to switch women midway through the tour. Every need and desire of the man is attended to while the women are made to have sex as much as the man wants. The women do not have any freedom and are sometimes physically abused by the men.

Obviously these companies are successful due to the supply and demand theory of economics. Men demand and are supplied women. American men from the states who travel via sex tours come from all races and nationalities. They are “typically aged 35-55, and come from different backgrounds including judges, attorneys, school board members, a father treating his son on his 18th birthday, and clergymen” (Hughes, Pimps and Predators, 1). These men are exploring these sites that expose women and children as objects, commodities to be bought and used. Companies advertise these women as different from American women by using language such as “exotic” and “submissive women ready to serve your every need.” Using provocative language and showing only body parts enables men to believe that these women are perfectly happy and enjoying serving them. Such images invariably foster the justification of using sex tourism. In an interview, an operator of one of these travel agencies said, “‘Getting a bunch of guys together on a bus and saying ‘over here is the red-light district and over there is the cultural life is not illegal.’ Said the operator who would not let his name be used...Asked whether he was doing a ‘good deed’, [he] answered: ‘Yes, absolutely. Because most of our tour members end up satisfied that they had a good time and enjoyed themselves’” (Abu-Nasr, 2). I saw some of this “enjoyment” by men in some of the sites I visited by reading the message boards.

Most sites have message boards or personal letters, said to be written by men who have experienced a sex tour where they had sex with women in brothels. Common sites visited for discussions and letters of what they experienced on their tour are: alt.sex.prostitution, alt.sex.services, and alt.sex.brothels. Some of the statements made by men include; “[sex] is just more natural for the women over there, it is part of their culture...” “...the women are happy to serve us and if they aren’t, the managers will make sure they are...” “...it is normal over there and I am just providing them with money...” These quotes are taken from the above listed sites.

All entries made to these web sites and others are then compiled into the World Sex Guide, a pamphlet comprised with information and questions an interested tourist will need to plan his trip. Tourist, Howard Wells, wrote in a G&F Tours brochure about a woman he had sex with on a G&F tour: "I don't remember her name anymore. Her number was 87" (Abu-Nasr, 2). It is possible that the travel agencies themselves wrote such messages, but is it really that farfetched? Every web site I visited had message boards. All consisted of messages that were degrading to the women. Furthermore, each entry boasted of what the man was able to do to the women and how submissive the women were. There was an overwhelming sense of abuse and objectification by these men. There was a sense that everything is acceptable because this is being done to women "over there." These women are not viewed as women but simply as objects who are playing a cultural role. At the same time, men "can experience sexual intimacy without risking rejection; they can evade the social meanings that attach to their own age and body type; they can transgress social rules governing sexual life without consequences for their own social standing; they can reduce other human beings to nothing more than the living embodiments of masturbatory fantasies" (Kempadoo 52-53).

"When those with power introduce a new technology into a system of oppression and exploitation, it enables the powerful to intensify the harm and expand the exploitation" (Hughes, Pimps and Predators). Internet companies perpetuate the exploitation and oppression of women by American men. The sex tourism industry reaffirms male power by profiting off of a women's need to survive. It is a way of keeping women in a second-class status. This is further demonstrated when we explore the conditions of the trafficked women who serve these men on sex tours, and what the men are allowed to do to them.

Physical Conditions

“The soreness in [Siri’s] genitals reminds her of the fifteen men she had sex with the night before. Siri is fifteen years old. Sold by her parents a year ago, her resistance and her desire to escape the brothel are breaking down and acceptance and resignation are taking their place” (Bales 34). This vignette of a girl in Thailand mirrors the daily truths of thousands of women and girls. Many female children are sold into the sex industry due to poverty, sexism, and lack of education or jobs for women. Many recruiters, those who travel countries finding women, promise them and their families money if the female children come to work with them. Then they bring them to the traffickers, brothels, massage parlors, etc. Usually the recruiters are men, but sometimes they are women. Most of the time the women, too, were once trafficked and now traffic or enslave women themselves. “The mamasan...sometimes tours villages herself. ‘At first I go to the girl’s home and tell her family, I see you don’t have money. But you will if your daughter comes to Bangkok and works for me’” (Rogers 46).

Once the women arrive in their new environment, isolation and violence are used to control them. The violence comes from traffickers, brothel operators, pimps and clients. In Thailand, as in most other countries and cities, “...their enslavement enforced through rape, beatings, or threats-is always present. It is a typical introduction to their new status as sex slaves. Virtually every girl interviewed repeated the same story: ...any resistance or refusal was met with beatings and rape. A few girls report being drugged and then attacked. Others report being forced to submit at gunpoint. The immediate and forceful application of terror is the first step in successful enslavement” (Bales 59). Every source I read spoke, even if only briefly, about the violence these girls and women face when they first arrive. The women are beaten randomly, refuse what a customer wants, or if they try to escape. The girls/women are beaten to

keep them scared and in line. "...Women were mutilated, drugged, stalked, and murdered...one woman said: 'I knew of three girls who were murdered...'" (Richard 75). Other forms of abuse reported by trafficked women include: broken bones, battery, struck with objects, head, face, mouth and teeth injuries, loss of consciousness, or other injuries requiring stitches (Richard 78). People who are subjected to such extreme and gruesome acts of violence are severely affected for the rest of their lives. These women are inflicted with a lifetime of trauma and health issues.

Health Issues

Trafficked women face constant risk of contracting sexual diseases. The women's entire purpose is to serve men and make them happy. Therefore, they are usually not allowed to make the men wear condoms. If they try to refuse sexual contact, the operator of the business typically beats them, and then the men proceed with the sexual acts they wish to perform. Repeated infections of sexually transmitted diseases lower the rate of the body's immune system to fight off infections. The only infections that may be dealt with are those that affect the woman's ability to have sexual intercourse. All others are often left untreated. Some people who own women force the trafficked women to take contraception pills without a break and no placebo pill. This effectively stops the monthly menstruation and enables women to work more days. If a woman does become pregnant, she is sent to have an abortion. Abortions are illegal in most of these countries, so the operation will be a "backstreet" abortion. This is obviously very painful and brings many health risks (Bales 59).

Another health issue that plagues these destination countries is HIV/AIDS. Due to the low numbers of condom users the spread of HIV continues to increase exponentially. In addition, many of the women do not want to wear condoms because they are too painful when they are made to service anywhere from ten to twenty men a night (Bales 60). "According to

unofficial estimates, 60-70 % of sex workers contract HIV/AIDS” (E/CN.4 p11). Violence and lack of sanitary conditions also add to the spread of such diseases. The men are usually aware of this fact and have begun to demand younger girls and virgins. “Many customers, both foreign and local, now seek out younger girls in the belief that they are free of HIV. In fact, the opposite is more likely to be true. Young girls are particularly vulnerable to vaginal and anal wounds that expose them to the deadly infection” (Rogers 52-53). This is one of the factors that has led to an increase in child sex workers. Men request and will pay a much higher price for virgins. Due to the high demand by men and lack of virgins or those new to the industry, very young girls, the youngest being five years old, are used to “service” these men.

In cases where sexually transmitted diseases and sex trafficking are analyzed and discussed, the men more times than not are blaming the women. Overall, the men do not want to take any responsibility for their actions, knowing beforehand of a high potential risk of contracting an STD from a sex worker they choose to have sex with. As we know, both men and women transmit HIV. In Thailand the populations with the largest increase of HIV infection are wives of men who visit prostitutes and/or trafficked women (Bales 60). When governments in destination countries look at HIV, it is the women who are blamed and education is directed at women. There needs to be an awareness and education targeted at men; this is severely lacking in most countries.

Mental Health

In addition to physical health problems, women sex workers are exposed to mental health problems as well. There has not been much research done on the mental health of trafficked women. Many women do not seek help when they are no longer in the sex industry due to lack of services, cultural stereotypes, or a fear of talking about such experiences. The research that

has been done in this area found that women tend to blame themselves. They internalize abuse and responsibility; and suffer from depression, anxiety, panic disorders, posttraumatic stress disorder, and suicidal thoughts. Many women who were trafficked cannot, or find it extremely difficult to, have intimate relationships with people after they are released or get out of the sex industry (Richard 88).

The above symptoms were gathered from a host of readings. When I found mention of the mental abuses, they were merely mentioned in passing, or had a few lines that simply recognized that women do in fact suffer mentally, but that research has not been conducted in this area. In Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy, Bales discusses in some detail how many of the women resign to feelings of dread and disconnection after they have lived in the situations for awhile.

...a separation of the conscious link between mind and body. Now the girl does whatever it takes to reduce the pain, to adjust mentally to a life that means being used by fifteen men a day. The reaction to this abuse takes many forms: lethargy, aggression, self-loathing and suicide attempts, confusion, self-abuse, depression, full-blown psychoses, and hallucination. Rehabilitation workers report that the girls suffer emotional instability; they are unable to trust and for many relationships, to adjust to the world outside the brothel, or to learn and develop normally. Unfortunately, psychological counseling is virtually unknown...and little therapeutic work is done with girls freed from brothels. The long-term impact of this experience is unknown (Bales 59).

It is true that most countries do not have the financial resources to provide counseling, medication (if needed), housing or other services to these women. Some countries, including the U.S., choose not to allocate funds to provide sufficient services to these women once they are freed. Women often are left to survive on their own or return to their families, if they are

allowed to return to their families. Many women are not allowed to return to their families because of the cultural stigma and the family and community members shun them (Rogers 48).

Implications

When injustices are committed against people, everyone is affected and/or suffers. Injustices against women in other countries affect women globally. When those who have historically dominated, men, continue to impose such systems of oppression and dominance, and travel to other countries or within their own countries to further perpetuate these systems, we are all affected. Women globally are affected because men are allowed to travel virtually wherever they want, and use women as disposable objects. They are allowed and encouraged to use women however and whenever they want. Men can sit in the comfort and privacy of their own homes or offices, sign on to a number of web sites, objectify women's body parts, and read stories of countless men's elated testimonials, where they used and abused women as if they were not human but simply things.

The Internet, by far the largest source of immediate and accessible information, is serving to perpetuate the view of women as less than human. These beliefs are reinforced within men and carried into interactions with all women. How does one separate a worldwide system that sets up women as usable and disposable commodities, which exists in every country, from the notion that all humans are equal and should be treated as such? It seems impossible, and until now we have not succeeded in doing so.

Focusing on the United States, many women have continuously been underpaid for the same work as men, typically do not receive pay or are in danger of losing their job for maternity leave, and are expected to care for a family and work outside the home (Kirk/Okazawa-Rey 314-317). Women have exponentially been the majority of survivors of all forms of abuse and rape

(Kirk/Okazawa-Rey 220). Women receive less attention and support in all levels of education. There is more of an emphasis on men's health issues and more money devoted to researching cures for men's diseases. Even clinical trials traditionally involve more male participants (Kirk/Okazawa-Rey 367-369). Women continuously work under a glass ceiling, and are made to be sexual objects in all forms of media. Our bodies are under constant scrutiny and they do not have the freedom to do what they want with their bodies because of laws, policies and regulations created and enforced by men. All of these examples and more have successfully served to internalize this system of oppression in the vast majority of women.

Many factors and systems play a part in systematically making women second-class citizens. Sex tourism is one of these; it is an underground system made to serve men at the physical, mental and emotional expense of all women. Such systems have to be eliminated if the struggle for equal rights, pay, and treatment is ever to be afforded to women. A further explanation of the laws in the United States that address sex trafficking and tourism will serve to deepen the understanding of how this practice is growing to levels in which every region and all people are affected.

Laws in The United States

Laws and policies have been written at state, national and international levels to combat the trafficking in women and yet this illegal activity continues to grow every year. Most countries including the U.S. have laws that make prostitution illegal. There are also laws in the United States, such as the 1994 Child Sex Abuse Prevention Act, the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, and the United States Constitution 2423b, which prohibit people from traveling to engage in sex with minors;

U.S.C. 2423b: Travel with intent to engage in sexual acts with juvenile. A person who travels in interstate commerce,

or conspires to do so, or a United States citizen or an alien admitted for permanent residence in the United States who travels in foreign commerce, or conspires to do so, for the purpose of engaging in a sexual act with a person [younger than] 18 years of age that would be in violation of chapter 109A if the sexual act occurred in the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United States shall be fined under this title, imprisonment not more than 10 years, or both.

There are many laws concerning children and the laws are much more heavily enforced in the United States than in specific foreign countries. Most people are outraged that sex trafficking of children is taking place and therefore are much more willing to take a strong stand against it. Children are seen as innocent and helpless and deserve to be protected. The same should and needs to be applied to adult trafficked women. Regardless of age, women are being severely abused and we are allowing it to happen.

Before recent legislation was passed, the Department of Justice prosecuted traffickers under the old antislavery and peonage laws, “the only legal tools for combating traffickers are antiquated anti-peonage laws, here the statutory maximum for sale into involuntary servitude is 10 years in prison per count. In contrast, the statutory maximum for dealing 10 grams of LSD or distributing a kilo of heroin is life in prison” (Crouse). Laws are not meant to serve women and are completely lenient, independently and in comparison to other laws. Why is it that the abuse and slavery of humans carry half of the consequences of material items? What does this say about how women are viewed and treated in this world?

There have been recent laws and legislation that are much stricter on trafficking. However, these laws are rarely enforced. Law enforcement is not trained to deal with victims of trafficking and the women are often looked at as the criminals. Anti-trafficking and human rights organizations are working endlessly to try to combat sex trafficking. Such organizations require services to be offered to traffic victims and are holding accountable the people with the

power like governments, law enforcement, and the president of the United States and other political leaders to make and enforce such laws. Forums, policies, legislation and laws have been written but the enforcement of these laws is almost nonexistent. Consequently, women are still being blamed for this so-called “crime”. Furthermore, there is no federal law that explicitly prohibits the promotion of overseas sexual activity when only adults are involved. Therefore, regardless of any laws that may be created, the exploitation and subjugation of women is still supported because there are no laws or regulations prohibiting the promotion of these acts through mass media.

Some of the laws that have been recently created to combat the traffic in women are: “The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women obliges governments to ‘take all appropriate measures, including legislation to suppress all forms of traffic in women and the exploitation of prostitution of women’” (Sex Tours-A Learning Model). H.R. 3244, the “Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 1999” is designed to “combat trafficking of persons, especially into the sex trade, slavery, and slavery-like conditions in the United States and countries around the world through prevention, prosecution and enforcement against traffickers, and through protection and assistance to victims of trafficking” (McKinnon). This law looked great on paper but it was rarely enforced and if women were “rescued”, they were often treated like criminals and held in rooms that resembled prisons.

The newest law, the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000, includes an increased sentencing from 10 years to 20 years or life imprisonment for some cases. This law also requires defendants to pay retribution to the victims of trafficking or forced labor cases.

“The Victim’s Rights Immigration officials can issue up to 5,000 “T” visas annually for victims of severe form of

trafficking to allow them to remain in the United States. The victims would have to comply with any reasonable request for assistance on the investigation or prosecution of their cases if they are 15 years or older. In addition, victims would have to show that they would suffer extreme hardship if they were returned home. This law also allows women of severe cases to receive benefits and services under U.S. federal or state program. Severe conditions involve coercion, force or fraud, or victims under the age of 18. While in custody of U.S. officials, victims of severe forms of trafficking shall not be detained in facilities inappropriate to their status as crime victims, shall receive necessary medical care and other assistance and shall have access to information about their rights and to translation services” (Cheng, 5).

Again this law sounds like it would positively work to combat trafficking and it is much more in the direction that the laws need to be taken, yet the traffic in women continues to exist and flourish. Law enforcement has still not been trained to handle the women, services such as emergency housing, health and mental examinations are non-existent and women are still treated like illegal immigrants. In the United States alone, over 50,000 women are trafficked into this country and immigration officials are still having difficulty issuing all of the “T” visas. They blame this on the reluctance of the women to step forward and work with law enforcement. “T” visas were created by congress in the passing of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000, which includes the Violence Against Women Act of 2000. This visa allows women to stay in the United States lawfully while their case against the trafficker is being prosecuted. This visa is good up to three years, at that time the “T” visa can be adjusted to a green card status, if the woman meets the specifications. This visa also enables them to receive governmental assistance that would otherwise be unavailable to them due to their “illegal” status. The hope behind these visas is that women will be more willing to contact authorities with information about traffickers (Immigration Law). Why would women step forward and be

victimized again by a government and law enforcement agencies that are not providing the services these women need? Why would women step forward if some law enforcement individuals were known to work with the brothel owners (i.e. being paid off to ‘turn the other cheek’), what reason would a woman have to seek them out for help? Why would women step forward if they were viewed to be the ones to blame, and seen as illegal immigrants? Society’s beliefs of women as expendable objects must be changed so they receive the help and services they deserve as human beings.

Women’s human rights are being violated by the continuation of these practices and the laws that are not working. The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that: “No one shall be held in slavery or servitude” (Article 4), and “No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment” (Article 5), (Hughes, Pimps and Predators). Sex trafficking and sex tourism violates every one of these human rights. The conditions in which these women are kept and treated are the exact opposite of what the Declaration of Human Rights states. The beliefs and practices surrounding women and sex are different from country to country but these Human Rights are afforded and supposed to be upheld for each individual yet this is not happening. The laws, or lack thereof, that involve the Internet only work to further perpetuate the negative treatment and beliefs of women as livestock.

Internet Regulations

The Internet is a haven for free speech. There are very few laws that regulate and enforce the material that is put on the Internet for anybody with access to a computer. The Internet is the fastest growing medium of communication and to effectively regulate it proves to be problematic but not impossible. The Internet “standards were initially set by small groups of people or often by single individuals” which, for the most part, remains true today (APC Internet rights). The

strictest regulations and enforcements involve Obscenity, Child Pornography and Hate propaganda. While researching for the Internet laws pertaining to advertising sex tourism, I found they were virtually nonexistent. Some U.S. companies (Asian Sex tours and Big Apple Oriental tours) have felt small amounts of pressure from authorities so they have begun to advertise golf and scuba diving, lingerie shows, wet T-shirt contests, and/or matchmaking services for men seeking Asian wives, for fear of attracting law enforcement agencies. Every one of the twenty five companies that advertise and sell sex tours are in operation and, of the many that I have viewed, they are all still advertising pornography, women's bodies affixed in sexual positions, and when women's faces are shown, they always look very young and "innocent". I have yet to see any tour company attempt to hide what they are actually selling; however, they can get away with this because of the lack of laws and enforcement.

Sex tour companies use material that is considered pornographic by many, because any legislative efforts to curb pornography on the web have been met with great resistance from civil rights groups and Internet providers. The argue that pornography is "free speech" and should not be regulated (Child Porn, Internet and Congress. Act.). Many people believe the Internet should remain a free place where information is exchanged and government has very minimal supervision over the material that is distributed over the web. People may not agree with everything or some things that are on the Internet but as soon as free speech is threatened, most people will support the free and open nature of the Internet. If pornographic material begins to be regulated, then everything is subject to regulations and people do not want that. The Internet is one place where government has very little authority and people support that (APC Internet). Many people will support common freedom like the Internet, if it is not hurting them in any way. Sex tours and how women are portrayed on the Internet are believed to not have any affect on

people not using the services; therefore, there is not much support to have these sites regulated or taken off the Internet completely.

Regardless of laws or lack thereof, the commodification and exploitation of women will always exist as long as the demand is there and the demand is high in every region where sex trafficking exists. “Sexual exploitation of women...starts with real persons before the images and information are put on the Internet...” (Policing Internet). The Internet is a slice of what is happening in the world. Prostitution is being sold through sex tours, which amplifies the treatment of women as sexual commodities. Most people have no idea of the extent of what is on the Internet and, consequently, do not understand how the material can and does affect them. Therefore they do not want to get involved with all the laws and “messy” business behind the Internet. They would rather have it figured out by those in control and trust them to do what is right. The only problem with this is it is not working. Men are using the Internet to perpetuate the global sexual exploitation of women and the regulatory uncertainty has left the Internet largely untouched (Hughes, Technology, Globalization). With the Internet serving as a massive medium for the exchange of material and information we must look at what else is being done and can be done to combat the exploitation of women through sex tourism.

Solutions

The traffic in women cannot be eliminated by new laws, legislation, work by non-profit organization, etc. without new training and procedures for the different law enforcement agencies, public awareness, and services that are developed to assist the women physically, mentally and socially. However, more importantly, this needs to be dealt with as an international, domestic, state, community and as an individual injustice. We need to realize the elimination of abuse and exploitation of women will not happen until there is awareness and change in the

beliefs held by society. “The gender nature of trafficking derives from the universal and historical presence of laws, policies, customs and practices that justify and promote the discriminatory treatment of women and girls and prevent the application of the entire range of human rights law to women and girls” (see: elimination of violence against women, general assembly, A/RES/48/104 2/23/94). Sex trafficking and sex tourism does not only happen in one country or one part of the world. It exists everywhere because of the beliefs and values that are held about women. Women are abused, discriminated against and oppressed because women and men live in a world that accepts and justifies such violence.

The traffic in women needs to be looked at in new ways that are directed at the President, governments, organizations, all travel agencies, law enforcement, parents, women, and men. There have been laws, regulations, propaganda, and so on that have been targeted to all of these entities, except men. Men hold the majority of power when it comes to decision-making, laws, how much money gets allocated to whom and for what, and how women are portrayed in society. Therefore, if changes are to occur there has to be the support and work by those with the power. For example; the amount of women trafficked and how they are treated continues because there is corruption in the law enforcement agencies. These agencies have the power to treat the women as victims/survivors and not as the criminals. They have the power to prosecute the men and shut down the brothels, but as I write this paper, men are let go and the women are either returned to where they were trafficked or treated as the criminals and brothels are not shut down. Nothing will change until people’s underlying beliefs and values are changed.

There are many organizations that are trying to accomplish this social change. Captive Daughters, Madre, Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW), Equality Now, National Organization for Women, Coalition of Women of Asia and Middle East, to name a few (refer to

appendix for a more complete list of anti-trafficking organizations). There are many solutions that are worth looking at more closely: peer education programs, public education about sex work, elimination of abuses against women directed at men, educational programs in the schools and the use of radio and television to help bring awareness and education to the public (Red Light Radio). Another solution would be not to use women as a commodity to bring in economic gain. There is a greater evil that is being served when women are used for this purpose. This practice is exactly how stereotypes of women as re-usable commodities, objects, property and sexual objects are fostered and engrained in the belief system of all people. Another solution is the passing of prostitution as real work so the possibility of these women being trafficked would be greatly reduced, and they would receive health benefits and be protected under the law. “The individual right to self-determination includes the ability and the right of the individual to decide to work as a prostitute. In order to reduce the vulnerability of prostitutes and others to trafficking in this context, prostitution and other activities in the informal sphere should be recognized as a form of work. Consequently, prostitutes and other sex workers have the right to safe working conditions through the use of occupational safety and other labour ordinances” (Traffic, Prostitution). If prostitution were recognized as “real” work, people would begin to see sex workers as individuals who are providing a service that is in demand, just like millions of other jobs. This would take away the illegal aspect of the work, thus helping to eliminate the exploitative nature of women in sex work. This would not eliminate sex trafficking altogether but it would reduce the number of prostitutes that are abused and because their work is considered illegal, not able to prosecute and/or receive help. This would also reduce the amount of prostitutes that become trafficked. When a job, activity, practice, etc. is illegal, it exists

underground, where anything is legal. If the traffic in women is to be stopped, laws and people need to stop setting women up to be blamed and prosecuted.

The traffic in women is not something that can be solved over night. This problem affects every nation in the world, has existed for over a century and is supported by people with power. There have been thorough laws and solutions but this is not going to solve the problem. The traffic in women has a gendered nature to it. Women are objectified, exploited and oppressed for economic gain and for the entertainment of men. The traffickers, brothel owners, and clients violate women and then many times those women are violated by the agencies that are supposed to protect them. When the women seek help, they usually find themselves returned to the brothel or trafficker, or kept in confinement until their fate is decided. This can include being returned to the place from which they escaped and face beatings or being returned to their home, where the trafficker often retrieves them and brings them back to the brothels. Men, women, governments, law enforcement agencies, media, and so on support this practice. Therefore, this practice does not only need a reworking of the laws but the conditions of women need to be improved, like access to education and job opportunities. The discrimination against all women must be eliminated also if we are ever to see the equal rights and treatment be afforded to all women.

Conclusion

As I discussed in the introduction, it took a certain distance to be able to research this topic. I had to be able to disassociate from the material, the abuse, the stories and the conditions, from anything I knew to be able to research and analyze how this horrific practice came to be and how and why it flourishes into the 21st century. I was very comfortable being able to distance myself and write from this perspective. This all

changed about two weeks before this paper was to be completed when I went to an advertising agency to look at some ads and tell the agency what I thought about them. I had a feeling when I walked in the door and up the long wide staircase; I knew something was strange. The stairway led to a hallway that went to the left and right with door after door connecting to the hallway. I followed the signs into the office of the Ad agency. When I walked through the door I was in what looked like a lobby area. There was a hallway to the left that had four doors connecting to rooms. I was lead into one of the rooms to look at some ads by myself and write what I thought about them. I immediately began to feel uneasy and wanted to finish as soon as I could. I waited in the lobby for the others to do the same as I had just done before we would all go in and conduct a focus group on these ads. What I did not know when I walked through the door into this agency was that this office, along with the entire building was an old brothel.

When everybody was in the room discussing the ads and laughing, I was experiencing a room in which many women had lived, some with their children, who were made to service any man who walked through that door. Everything that I had been reading about, the pictures, and the stories that only existed in my head, all became real in this room. I sat there as if I was not in the room but as an observer who could see what took place in this small stark room. I could feel all the energy, the pain, the abuse, and existence of these women. It took all I had to stay in that room and let myself really feel this experience.

This experience has forever changed my life; it took the safety of distance away and allowed me to feel from these women who spent their lives, many of whom died there, made into objects to service men. These women, whether they are here in the

United States or in some “far off country,” live a life of sexual servitude, a life of extreme abuse, a life that is often viewed as chosen or “normal” for them because they are seen and depicted as sexual beings, “wanting to serve the man.”

It is so easy to sit at a distance and not know what is going on in the world, not want to know what is happening to human beings. I did not realize the extent of the conditions and abuse that these women live in everyday, until I walked into that room and everything became real. The human smuggling, sex trafficking, sex tourism, exploitation, defilement, oppression, and commodification, of women is happening in every region of the world. And it is not something that does not affect us. Men from the United States and other countries are taking these tours all the time. They are businessmen, lawyers, politicians, husbands, fathers, priests; they are not slimy nasty men or simply, men from other countries. The women are not only from Southeast Asia or Russia or South America; they are women from the United States and every other region in the world. When men are encouraged and allowed to treat women in these manners, all women are affected and abused. People cannot simply separate objectifying and abusing women in other countries from their interactions with women in their home country. The images on the Internet and the text serve to ingrain messages into men’s minds about women. “Do you find Oriental women appealing...Do you find the women you meet nowadays to be: too competitive (with men), too judgmental (of men), too biased (against men)? Or do you simply find that too many western women think they ARE men? Do you find western women grow more sophisticated in their manipulations every year, that they insist on examining your ‘pedigree’ and your bank account before every date?” This quote is from an actual advertisement from one of the tour companies

operating in the United States. Tour companies, like all other business, know what people will be drawn to, what the majority of people will believe or the stereotypes that are ingrained by society. These tour companies play into these typical representations of women and use them to connect to men who have thought this way before, feel this way or have heard such messages time and time again. These messages and images allow the men to say “Yes!” and to go somewhere where they can have the opposite, they can have an “exotic” woman who is subservient, who will not pose a threat to them by being too “competitive,” “judgmental,” or “biased”. This may be true to some extent because of the conditions these women are in but the messages and beliefs do not go away when the men return from their sexual exploitations. The messages are in their heads, so that when men go back to their home country and interact with women, what are they going to see? A strong, competent, individual who deserves to be treated equally, or an aggressive, judgmental woman who poses a threat to many traditional, masculine ideals? To take the United States as an example: people work and struggle on a daily basis for equality for all women and then degrading practices exist and on many levels are allowed and are encouraged to exist. They are not separate; they are all connected and affect each other. If the men who are law makers, enforcers, and governmental officials are in one way or more allowing this treatment of women to thrive in other countries, then they are also bringing this indifference back to our country and it severely affects women here and in all countries. There will never be true equality and justice until *all* women are treated with equality and justice.

Sex trafficking is projected to take over as the leading illegal trade surpassing drugs and weapons. Countries have struggled with the destructive effects of drugs and

weapons. Sex trafficking is something people know about. Some know the extend of the problem, while other are trying to combat sex trafficking. This is a repulsive activity that we have supported. Our government and military personal supported this activity with money, “unwritten” policies and the men to use these “comfort women”. Our military established a climate in Southeast Asia/foreign countries for men to go, relax and have their sexual fantasies played out. We continue to support the use of women with laws that are rarely enforced. The ease of access through the Internet further supports the exploitation of women. Society perpetuates the acceptance of injustices against those from whom we feel completely disconnected. Since we do not see the consequences of our abuse with this our own eyes, we do not take any responsibility for our actions. This has led to an environment of indifference. We cannot continue to live our lives individualistically, which has breed apathy. The way in which we treat some people effects how we view and treat all people. We are all connected in this world; we cannot afford to remain inactive!

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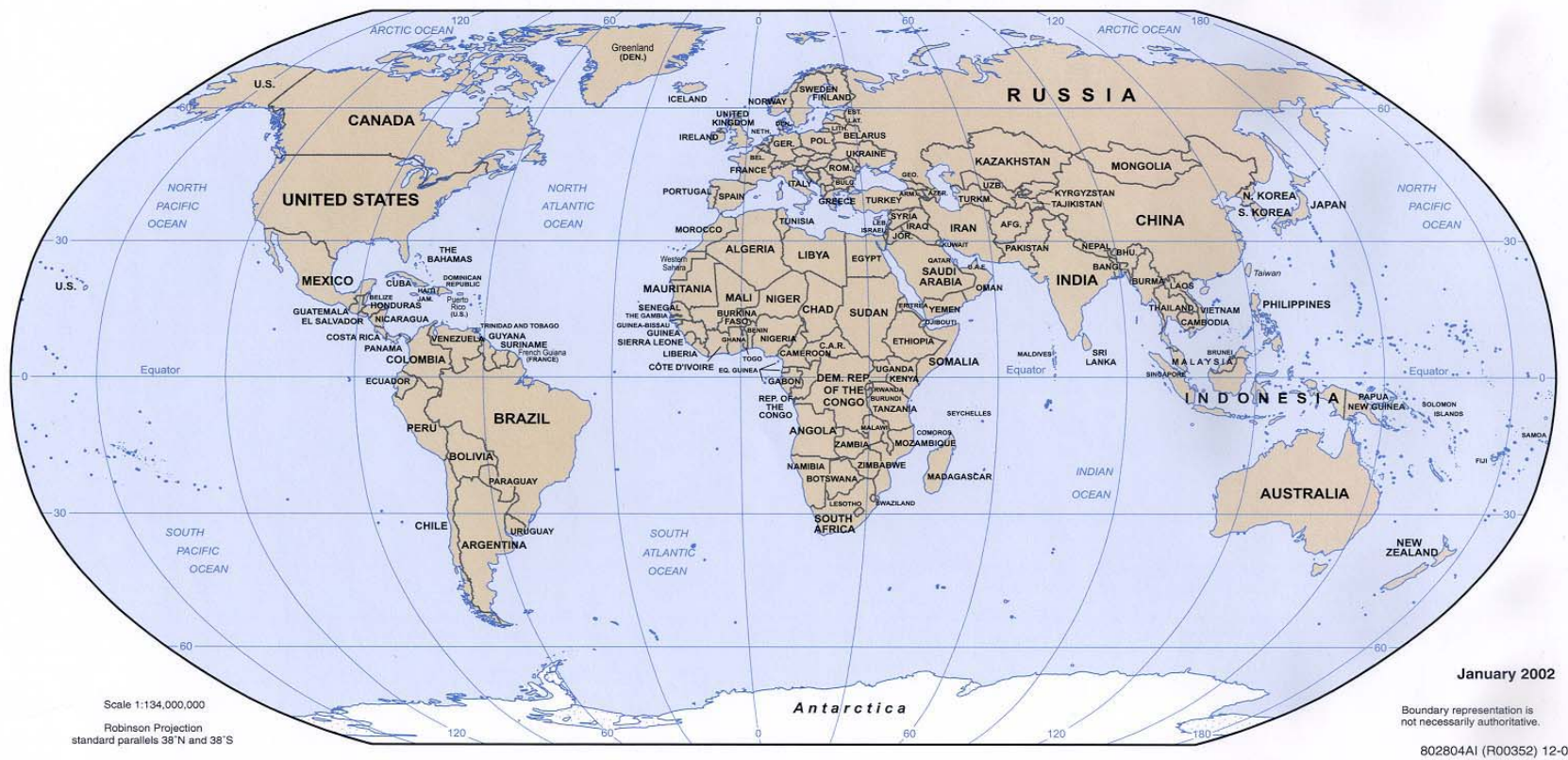
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"World sex tours and adult vacations." 21 Feb. 2002 <<http://www.costaricasexguide.com/world-sex-tours>>.

World Map: Sex Tourist Destinations



SOUTHEAST ASIA



Resources

Captive Daughters

“A non-profit organization dedicated to ending sex trafficking of children, with special emphasis on the girl child.”

www.captivedaughters.org

Equality Now

Advocates for women’s human rights

www.equalitynow.org

National Organization for Women

Organization for furthering women's rights through education and litigation.

www.now.org

Coalition Against Trafficking in Women

A non-governmental organization that promotes women's human rights. It works internationally to combat sexual exploitation in all its forms.

University of Rhode Island.

www.uri.edu

MADRE

An International Women’s Rights Organization.

www.madre.org

The Protection Project-Washington, DC

Gathers and disseminate information regarding the national and international legislation protecting women and children from commercial sexual exploitation.

Www.protectionproject.org

Global Fund for Women

Grantmaking foundation supporting women’s human rights organizations around the world.

www.globalfundforwomen.org

The Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women

Ensure that the human rights of trafficked persons are respected and protected by authorities and agencies.

www.GAATW.org

Human Rights Watch

Organization defending human rights worldwide.

hrwnyc@hrw.org

South Asian Women’s Network

www.umiacs.umd.edu

UNICEF

www.unicef.org

Coalition Against Prostitution and Child Abuse in Thailand

www.capcat.ksc.net

The Center for the Protection of Children's Rights

Based in Thailand www.internet.th.com

Third World Women's Health www.arches.uga.edu

HCOM 475: Senior Capstone
Spring 2002
Professor Paul Fotsch
Advisor Dr. Ilene Feinman
Capstone Research Prospectus

Section One:

Working Title: Examining the “Skin Trade”

A cultural and juridical analysis of the internet’s perpetuation
of the sex tourism industry.

My Capstone Research Project will be looking at Sex Tourism in the United States and Internationally. I will be looking at companies in the United States that set up the sex tours in other countries. I will be focusing on sex tour companies on the East Coast (New York, Chicago, etc.) and the destination countries such as the Philippines, Okinawa, Bangkok, Thailand, and Japan. A main focus will be on these US based companies and how they advertise over the Internet. The time period of this project will begin with a brief history of Sex Trafficking and then track the history until the present day of sex tourism.

This topic is important because sex trafficking is being projected to take over as the leading illegal international crime activity. Congressional sources estimate that 50,000 persons are trafficked into the US and I have read estimates from 2-4 million persons trafficked worldwide. Sex tourism is a subset of sex trafficking in which the girls and women are sold, kidnapped, enslaved, beaten and forced to serve men who are able to easily access these serves over the internet. I am focusing on women who are trafficked, not women who go into prostitution and work for themselves or may have a pimp who they have connected with. This project will focus on how women are being exploited, objectified, abused, marginalized, and how their human rights are being violated.

The major questions I will be researching are:

Why so many destination countries are in South-East Asia? What are the conditions for the women? Who and how do these US based companies operate? What are the health issues for the women and men involved in sex tourism?

Section Two:

I have chosen to use MLO 1, 2 and 5 for this research project. I have chosen MLO 1 because this project will be looking at sex tourism from different views points; the companies, the men who use them, the trafficked women, and government and law officials. This topic is exceptionally sensitive and needs to be researched, written about and discussed in a manner that is critical and empathic of the issues. The guidelines for MLO 1 require this and are the most appropriate way in which to conduct this research project. By placing my research project within this MLO, I will enhance my ability to critically and empathically research material and communicate to an audience.

I have chosen MLO 2 because this outcome calls for the “ability to acquire, evaluate, interpret, synthesize, apply, document and present knowledge....” A thoroughly conducted research project needs to include all of these requirements. I have already done many of these and will continue to apply these skills for the remainder of my project. This MLO will help me further practice the skills laid out in MLO 2, which I will need to be able to do well for my continuation in education.

I have chosen MLO 5 because I will be looking at the project in the respective cultural ideologies and the historical and present cultural relations between the US and the above named destination countries. The interests, identities and actions of these cultural groups will also be discussed within the paper. By using MLO 5, I will gain more experience in conducting a critical cultural analysis within my research projects.

Section 3:

1. What is sex trafficking? What is sex tourism?
2. How do the sex tour companies operate?
3. What are the various perspectives of the clients who perpetuate the sex tourism industry; the women who are coursed into the industry and how certain organizations believe this issue should be handled.
4. How does this industries media propaganda and portrayal contribute to the cyclical subjugation (suppression) of not only those involved in the sex industry but of the female gender as a whole?
5. Why are so many destination countries in South East Asia?
6. How do the cultural variances (differences) play into how this issue needs to be addressed?
7. What are the health issues that these women face and what services are available for these women when they get out?
8. What are the laws (domestic, international, internet regulations, etc.) pertaining to the sex tourism industries.
9. What are the physical conditions of the women involved in the sex tourism industries?
10. How do various cultural attitudes toward women help and/or hinder alternative solutions, such as education reform?

Section Four:

Secondary

Abu-Nasr, Donna. “‘Sex Tour’ Industry Growing in U.S.” The Associated Press. 15 Mar. 1998. 4 Feb. 2002 <<http://www.aegis.com/news/>>.

Altink, Sietske. Stolen Lives: Trading women into sex and slavery. New York: Harrington Park Press, 1995.

Cancel, C.M. “Sex Tourism and Sexual Exploitation of Girls in central America”. Global Women’s Rights. 4 Feb. 2002 <<http://www.globalwomensrights.net/>>.

Equality Now. “Sex Tourism: Real sex with real girls, all for real cheap.” Women’s

Action 12.1. Dec. 1996. 2 Feb. 2002 <<http://www.equalitynow.org/>>.

Hughes, Donna, M. "Sex Tours Via The Internet". 1997. 31 Jan. 2002
<<http://www.feminista.com/>>.

Kempadoo, Kamala, ed. Sun, Sex, and Gold. New York: Rowman and Littlefield
Publishers, Inc. 1999.

Kempadoo, Kamala and Doezema, Jo, eds. Global Sex Workers: Rights, Resistance, and
Redefinition. New York: Routledge, 1998.

Kyle, David and Koslowski, Rey, eds. Global Human Smuggling: Comparative
Perspectives. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.

Miko, Francis, T. "Trafficking in Women and Children: The U.S. and International
Response". International Human Rights Law Group. 10 May 2000.
22 Jan. 2002. <<http://www.hrlawgroup.org/>>.

Ryan, Chris and Hall, Michael, C. Sex Tourism: Marginal People and Liminalities.
London: Routledge, 2001.

Watanabe, Kazuko. "Trafficking In women's Bodies, Then and Now: The Issue
of Military 'Comfort Women'". Peace and Change. Oct. 1995, Vol.20 Issue 4.
28 Jan. 2002 <<http://ehostvgw6.epnet.com/fulltext.asp?>>.

Primary

Captive Daughters. "Sex Tours-A Learning Model". 1999. 4 Feb. 2002
<<http://www.captivedaughters.org/>>.

Seabrook, Jeremy. Travels in the Skin Trade: Tourism and the Sex Industry.
Sterling, VA: PlutoPress. 2001.

*** I have three primary resources coming from interlibrary loan.*

Section Five:

I have not meet with the librarian yet, we have an appointment for next week.
However, I did meet with her two weeks ago and we focused on narrowing my topic
down and how to search "Newsstand" for articles and how to contact organizations to get
information. We also look through www.inet.org together and discussed information we
found there. She told me I had a good grasp on how to research and what and where I
have been doing my research is where she would direct me. I will talk with her in out
next meeting how to find more primary sources and places to look for specific research
questions I have listed in section three.

Section Six:

The form/format of my capstone will consist of extensive research that will be presented in a research paper. I will look at ways in which people and organizations are trying to deal with this problem. I then hope to make a couple recommendations of my own and/or my research will direct the reader(s) to areas that are not being looked at or written about.