

Final Paper

Abby Hanley

College of Professional and Continuing Studies, University of Oklahoma

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Professor Jennifer Clark

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As stated in the question, a significant, consistent theme in all of the readings was the various effects of globalization and Western materialism on the increase of human trafficking. Globalization, in a general sense, is basically a business or organization that excels and ends up developing influence all around the globe until it is a standard international operation. While globalization could be a good thing for a business, when it was applied to the world of sex trafficking and sex slavery, it opened up a whole new layer of grave outcomes. Globalization ultimately allowed for new-age slavery to thrive by making the process of sex trafficking a known ordeal. As globalization has become the new economic norm, it has also increased both the demand and supply of sex trafficking. Because of this newfound demand, traffickers have needed more supply of products, or people in this case, than they ever have. The new reduced cost of mobility and travel has sadly opened doors for traffickers to now prey on the most economically vulnerable. In the trafficker's mind, these are the easiest targets as they typically fall into an economic landmine that forces these individuals to do whatever it takes to survive. In our textbook *sex trafficking: Inside the Business of modern slavery*, author Siddharth Kara dives into the specific effects globalization has on rural and vulnerable areas like Italy and Western Europe. In these areas, it strictly comes down to business for these traffickers, and the global economy perpetuates vulnerability. For example, prostitution is legal on the streets of Italy, which allows a wide range of loopholes for traffickers to have if any trouble comes up. Areas like these are more vulnerable than ever due to globalization as the global economy perpetuates the economic vulnerability to exploit trafficking ultimately. One way they do this throughout Eastern and Western Europe is through organized crime, such as the mafia. Through stories in the chapter, we learn that the trafficking truly only begins in Italy. From there, the women and victims can be shipped and sold almost anywhere. One thing that is certain is that Italy treats

these trafficked women very harshly. “They are all violent. I can tell you that in 1990, the number of foreign women murdered in Italy was 5 percent of all murders, and last year [2004] it was 25 percent. This is because the crime groups kill trafficked women in Italy when they escape or try to testify” (Kara, ch 3.). Another area that treats their trafficked women as brutal and horrid is Pakistan. In our textbook, *Disposable People: New Slavery in the global economy*, Kevin Bales talks about the brutalization of trafficked women in chapter five. Similarly to Western Europe and Italy, globalization allows Pakistan to prey on the economically vulnerable and use it to its trafficking advantage. One thing that remains common in this area is the threat of debt. When working, the women are aware that most of these traffickers know where their families are and are realistic that they will hurt them in a heartbeat. Their time trafficked is often to make up various debts or from the lack of access to formal lending markets, which both ultimately create vulnerability to bonded labor. In my opinion, the main fatal flaw that globalization made was the opportunity and availability that traffickers now have to target economically weak areas. In doing this, there is a cycle that appears almost impossible to get out of. Once the traffickers set their minds on economically weak individuals, they will begin their work simply as a way of surviving. They will never be able to overcome that economic struggle. Both authors were able to exemplify some of the ramifications of globalization in different ways by showing how it has negatively impacted other parts of the world. While the areas and stories are different, the common theme was quite apparent as there was no way to avoid the drastic increase in sex trafficking due to globalization and Western materialism. From what I have learned this semester, one of the main ways to battle globalization is to create more punishment or penalties for the traffickers themselves. It is important to remember that sex trafficking truly is a business and that the supply and demand will always remain the same. With that being said,

what changes can we make? Well, by eliminating the people who supply, also known as the traffickers, there, in theory, should be less access to sex trafficking. It may not be fool proof, but it is a significant step towards changing how globalization has negatively impacted sex trafficking around the globe.

Human trafficking, while the familiar horrors remain the same, varies in the United States in relation to other countries, both developed and developing countries. Personally, there are many ways that the United States differs in regard to sex trafficking. First and foremost, a majority of people in foreign countries fall into sex trafficking due to the pressure of their poverty. Many women and men tend to fall into the profession to provide for their families and themselves. Most individuals have found no alternative means of making a living and are exposed and vulnerable to the lifestyle, then ultimately fall into the cycle. While this may be the case for some in the United States, it is not the most common in comparison to other countries. Many Americans begin this lifestyle by being exposed to prostitution firsthand. The methods are not as extensive in how they entered the area and profession as in other areas around the world. Another critical factor to think about is the difference between trafficking someone and smuggling someone that occurs in the United States. For example, a majority of the Mexicans who illegally enter the United States are smuggled into the country rather than trafficked. While the difference may be slight, it is valuable as smuggling tends to involve someone who wants to be across the border to be brought into the country. In most cases, someone who is smuggled into the United States has willingly chosen to come and is often helped by someone and aided in. Once they are in the States, it usually becomes every man for themselves the type of scenario in order to adjust and start new. However, with trafficking someone to brought into the country against their will. Following that, most individuals, once in are then taken and shipped to wherever they are told to and have no voice and choice in the matter of what happens. For smugglers, crossing the border is close to the end of their story, as they are now free to live how they want. On the other hand, for sex trafficking, once they have crossed into the States, it is usually just the beginning of a long and painful journey ahead of them. While that may be the

blueprint idea. Kara speaks on how often times Mexicans who have crossed the border on their own still end up being sex trafficked later on. “Shrewd operatives are well aware that large numbers of people migrate each day illegally, and rather than incur the expense and risk of moving slave labor into the country, they take positions in key border towns with promises of wage-paying jobs that become one-way tickets into slavery” (Kara ch 7). This approach was interesting as it made me realize that while the United States is different in many ways in the sex trafficking world, the traffickers themselves remain the same with one goal in mind, exploitation and money. Another major way that the United States differs in relation to sex trafficking is the federal legislation and laws that are in place here. I was actually able to dive into those more in my policy report in unit three when I researched the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA), which was put into motion in 2000 to protect the rights of trafficking victims in the U.S ultimately. You may refer back to the original paper I wrote in order to see how I think this law has helped the victims be able to address some of their post-trafficking life issues and provide justice. However, I do believe that the TVPA falls short as it focuses more on the protection of traffickers rather than attacking some of the more systematic factors that ultimately perpetuate trafficking. For example, tied visas and restrictive border policies could be addressed and make a massive change for sex trafficking victims. Personally, one of the final main reasons I think that the United States differs from other countries in regards to sex trafficking is simply because of the ignorant people that live here, myself included. It can be easy to fall into the ignorant to live in America, the land of the free and home of the brave, and place yourself into a “that will never happen to me” type of bubble. The truth is sex trafficking is here, and it is everywhere around us. The main thing I learned throughout this entire semester in this class has been that knowledge and understanding are power. How are we to fight something that we know nothing about, only

know about in other areas of the world, or are not willing to research? The answer is that you can't! I saw this first hand when watching all of the films that most American people like to say they are supporting something and talk the talk but fail to follow through and walk the walk. That is why the last film we watched was my favorite of the semester, as it showed organizational leaders, political figures, actors and actresses, and other famous people being exposed to the harsh realities of sex trafficking. However, it was not a shame on you for not knowing the approach, it was a chance to learn and grow, and it was visible how most of these individuals were shocked by how relevant sex trafficking is in the States and were able to place their ignorance aside and simply learn the facts

We learned about domestic minor sex trafficking a couple of weeks ago from a national report from the shared hope international organization. In this report, domestic minor sex trafficking is defined as the “recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act” where the person is a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident under the age of 18 years” (shared hope international). This information is important to know as this is the terminology of what constitutes someone to be a minor trafficked or not. The types of people that traffick young boys and girls are typically pedophiles who are aware of the demand of young children. In the report, there is a section about what is wrong with the term “child prostitute?” I recall reading this and being appalled that there was even a question surrounding this. However, in our newfound day and age, wording and terminology are the loopholes that people use to get away with things. For example, the term “child prostitute” implies that somewhere in there is the choice to do this. This way of describing them puts them in a box that allows people to dismiss their situation as a choice or way of working and making a means. However, that is not the case at all. In fact, it is the opposite as most of these children have been exposed to things and forced to do something that has and will change them forever. In regards to how individuals end up finding themselves in the world of sex slavery, I touched on this a little bit above. I think that a majority of individuals fall into sex slavery from some kind of economic struggle, debt, or issue that becomes relevant and overpowering due to globalization. In foreign countries especially, it can be pretty hard to find successful work. If you are faced with economic stress, and you are in charge of providing for the family and yourself, it is not hard to imagine someone then turning to sex work to be able to provide. However, once in that cycle, it is hard to escape it. From the aspect of children, I think most are trafficked by kidnapping or manipulation. Young boys and girls are very easily manipulated, and traffickers will sadly almost

always use this to their advantage. To put it quite simply, the main factor that makes a minor the most vulnerable is quite literally their youth and naivety. It makes them the easiest target as they are still learning who they are, what is right and wrong, and how the world works. To a trafficker, this is a dream as they can take them, make them work, and mold them into the slave that they want. However, for the child, their families, and everyone else involved, it is a nightmare. The nightmare honestly never ends for these child victims as they are forever changed. Another sad reality I noticed in the readings was the lack of services for young victims of trafficking. In fact, there even appeared to be specific policies that just perpetuated the re-victimization of these children, such as placing them in the foster system. That, again, is just another ongoing cycle that they will have a hard time escaping from. Honestly, this chapter of the learning material was the most difficult for me to digest. Something about preying on the weak, young, and vulnerable made me sick to my stomach and was especially hard for me to learn about. Personally, I think a significant way to help protect our children is to inform them. I am aware that most people want to protect their children by placing them in a safe naive bubble. However, this is unrealistic to help them if something were to occur to them. The best way to fight back is knowledge. While the level of information you want to give them remains up to the parents, I do think some basic knowledge is a vastly powerful weapon against any possible trafficking scenario.

Reference Page

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