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# ANTI-TRAFFICKING REVIEW

Special Issue
**ANTI-TRAFFICKING EDUCATION**

# ANTI-TRAFFICKING REVIEW

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# Editorial: Anti-Trafficking Education: Sites of care, knowledge, and power

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## Introduction[1]

Soon after the World Health Organization (WHO) discovered a mysterious coronavirus in Wuhan, China, in January 2020, the world faced a global pandemic. By July 2021, it was estimated that more than 196 million people were infected and more than 4 million had died, with untold global effects.[2] The pandemic led to governmental responses such as lockdowns, curfews, and other restrictions on movement that affected schools, services, businesses, families, and communities. Countries around the world wrestled with questions like: How to teach children learning from home?[3] Who counts as an essential worker?[4] How to deliver services

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[1]   In the spirit of feminist scholarship, we would like to acknowledge the collaborative nature of this project and that all three guest editors contributed equally. The co-editorship order is alphabetical by last name. We also extend our deep appreciation to the journal's Editor, Borislav Gerasimov, as well as the editorial board, anonymous reviewers, and contributors for their commitment to materialising this project, which was especially commendable during a pandemic.

[2]   'Coronavirus Resource Center: Global map', Johns Hopkins University & Medicine, n.d., retrieved 2 August 2021, https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html.

[3]   F Manca and F Meluzzi, 'Strengthening Online Learning When Schools Are Closed: The role of families and teachers in supporting students during the COVID-19 crisis', Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)*,* 24 September 2020, https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/strengthening-online-learning-when-schools-are-closed-the-role-of-families-and-teachers-in-supporting-students-during-the-covid-19-crisis-c4ecba6c.

[4]   N Greenfield, 'COVID-19 Has Exposed the Gross Exploitation of Meatpacking Workers', Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)*,* 30 October 2020, https://www.nrdc.org/stories/covid-19-has-exposed-gross-exploitation-meatpacking-workers; see also H Elver and M Shaprio, 'Violating Food System Workers' Rights in the Time of COVID-19: The quest for state accountability', *State Crime Journal*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2021, pp. 80–103, https://doi.org/10.13169/statecrime.10.1.0080.

when social systems are strained or in danger of collapse?[5] In this context, the anti-trafficking movement, composed of educators, activists, service providers, healthcare workers, and many others, faced demands for distanced connections utilising online learning, telehealth services, Massive Open Online Courses, virtual exchange, and other forms of digitally-mediated communication.[6]

During the pandemic, people began to understand 'Zoom' connections as part of an everyday lexicon where web-video meetings were a central form of communication. While some people saw the possibilities to radically alter and expand education, the pandemic also exacerbated neoliberal market pressures that privilege privatised teaching and learning, entrench the digital divide, and threaten local and Indigenous knowledge systems.[7] Additionally, it was apparent that vulnerable populations were rendered even more vulnerable due to economic instability, resource scarcity, and heightened conditions of exploitation, to name but a few of the pandemic's effects.[8] And yet, at the same time, global uprisings for Black lives in the summer of 2020,[9] and protests against anti-Asian rhetoric and racism,[10] enabled many people to see that education is critical for challenging white

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[5]     E Monaghesh and A Hajizadeh, 'The Role of Telehealth During COVID-19 Outbreak: A systematic review based on current evidence', *BMC Public Health*, vol. 20, article no. 1193, 2020, https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-020-09301-4.

[6]     See B Pattanaik, 'Will Human Trafficking Increase During and After Covid-19?', Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW), 6 August 2020, https://gaatw. org/blog/1059-will-human-trafficking-increase-during-and-after-covid-19; see also C Murray *et al.*, 'Reconceptualising Relatedness in Education in "Distanced" Times', *European Journal of Teacher Education*, vol. 43, issue 4, 2020, pp. 488–502, https://doi. org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1806820.

[7]     T Adams, 'Digital Neocolonialism and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs): Colonial pasts and neoliberal futures', *Learning, Media and Technology*, vol. 44, issue 3, 2019, pp. 365–380, https://doi.org/10.1080/17439884.2019.1640740.

[8]     'Domestic Workers at the Frontline of the COVID-19 Crisis', International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF), 30 April 2020, https://idwfed.org/en/covid-19/ domestic-workers; S Ramaswamy and S Seshadri, 'Children on the Brink: Risks for child protection, sexual abuse, and related mental health problems in the COVID-19 pandemic', *Indian Journal of Psychiatry*, vol. 62, issue 9, 2020, pp. 404–413, https:// doi.org/10.4103/psychiatry.IndianJPsychiatry_1032_20.

[9]     A Westerman, R Benk, and D Greene, 'In 2020, Protests Spread Across the Globe with a Similar Message: Black Lives Matter', *NPR,* 30 December 2020, https://www. npr.org/2020/12/30/950053607/in-2020-protests-spread-across-the-globe-with-a-similar-message-black-lives-matt.

[10]    J Ho, 'Anti-Asian Racism, Black Lives Matter, and COVID-19', *Japan Forum*, vol. 33, issue 1, 2021, pp. 148–159, https://doi.org/10.1080/09555803.2020.1821749.

supremacy and colonialism, including within the anti-trafficking movement.[11] In effect, education became highly visible due to the pandemic because everyone needed to know about the coronavirus and learn new ways to interact, communicate, work, and organise online, in-person, locally, and globally. Lessons from the pandemic regarding structural vulnerabilities, educational modalities, and radical possibilities for change must now be incorporated into the anti-trafficking movement, if it endeavours to challenge interlocking forms of exploitation and oppression occurring across the globe.

The aim of this Special Issue of the *Anti-Trafficking Review* is to catalyse a collective process of reflection on and evaluation of the current state and stakes surrounding education on human trafficking. The theme of the Special Issue emerged from conversations among the three guest editors several years ago, and it is even more urgent given the pandemic and its compounded effects. The three of us are scholars and educators who have long been invested in critical trafficking studies, albeit from different academic domains that include Ethnic Studies, Rhetoric, and Feminist Studies.[12] In our conversations, we shared similar concerns about the proliferation of education on human trafficking and how it was frequently framed as an assumed 'good' without critical reflection or evaluation. Today, anti-trafficking education extends well beyond the college classroom, accompanied by a significant rise in the sites and stakeholders offering educational resources, such as specialised curricula created for professionals in healthcare, social services, legal professionals, and law enforcement. In the United States, anti-trafficking education is also state-mandated for various people and professions, such as for truck drivers in Arkansas and Kansas;[13] hotel and motel employees

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[11]   See A Jones and H Epping, 'Anti-Racism Work is Essential in the Anti-Trafficking Movement', Freedom Network USA, 26 February 2021, https://freedomnetworkusa.org/2021/03/02/anti-racism-work-is-essential-in-the-anti-trafficking-movement; C Murray, 'Victims and Villains: Anti-trafficking movement urged to tackle racial bias', *Reuters*, 25 June 2020, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-race-trafficking-trfn/victims-and-villains-anti-trafficking-movement-urged-to-tackle-racial-bias-idUSKBN23W30S.

[12]   See the following contributions: A Hill and K R Chávez, 'Inciting Communication Across Queer Migration Studies and Critical Trafficking Studies', *Women's Studies in Communication*, vol. 41, issue 4, 2018, pp. 300–304, https://doi.org/10.1080/07491409.2018.1544000; A I Fukushima, 'Witnessing in a Time of Homeland Futurities', *Anti-Trafficking Review,* issue 14, 2020, pp. 67–81, https://doi.org/10.14197/atr.201220145; and J Suchland, *Economies of Violence: Transnational feminism, postsocialism, and the politics of sex trafficking*, Duke University Press, Durham, 2015, https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822375289.

[13]   Act 922, Arkansas, 2017, requires a human trafficking prevention course for the issuance or renewal of a Class 'A' driver's license. In 2018, Kansas Public Safety also required this course.

in California;[14] staff at lodging establishments in Florida;[15] and law enforcement agents in Georgia[16] and Indiana.[17] Other states require youth to receive education on trafficking as part of a comprehensive sexual health education. In Southeast Asia, the ride-hailing company Grab is training its drivers to 'spot victims'.[18] In the Indian state of Odisha, NGOs provided pre-migration training for female migrants as a means to prevent labour-related exploitation.[19] The argument for much anti-trafficking educational expansion is that people in diverse professions interact with trafficking survivors and those in trafficking situations but lack the knowledge to identify victims or provide assistance. Thus, increasing numbers of people are being trained and taught to take part in anti-trafficking initiatives on their own or in collaboration with police, victim services, and the criminal legal system.

## Situating Anti-Trafficking Education

Given the proliferation of sites for anti-trafficking education, there is a range of educators who shape how publics and institutions understand 'what is human trafficking'. Educators from many different employment sectors are creating formal and informal ways to teach about trafficking as a problem, and how to respond and prevent it. This vast educational reach is possible because learners are encountering anti-trafficking content through workshops, classes, trainings, policymaking sessions, videos, and virtual reality programmes both online and in-person. Unfortunately, educational content on trafficking is often structured by dualities (e.g., victim/criminal, illegal/legal)[20] and conflated with sexual economies

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[14] SB 970, California, 2018, amends the *Fair Employment Housing Act* to require hotels and motels to provide twenty-minute trainings about human trafficking to employees.

[15] Title 33 Chapter 509 § 096, Florida, 2019.

[16] Title 35 Chapter 1 § 35-1-16, Georgia, 2014.

[17] Title 5 § 5-2-1-9, Indiana, 2018.

[18] BL Yi, 'Asia Ride-hailing Giant Trains Drivers to Fight Human Trafficking', *Reuters*, 6 June 2017, retrieved 5 August 2021, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-asia-trafficking-transportation/asia-ride-hailing-giant-trains-drivers-to-fight-human-trafficking-idUSKBN1QS1E1.

[19] N S Pocock *et al.*, 'Challenges to Pre-migration Interventions to Prevent Human Trafficking: Results from a before-and-after learning assessment of training for prospective female migrants in Odisha, India', *PLoS ONE*, vol. 15, issue 1, 2020, e0238778, https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0238778.

[20] A I Fukushima, *Migrant Crossings: Witnessing human trafficking in the US*, Stanford University Press, Palo Alto, 2019.

or other myths[21] bound to morality.[22]

To grapple with anti-trafficking education, we must address the abundance of anti-trafficking teaching and learning in which epistemologies about human trafficking are reproduced and possibilities exist to shift dominant understandings. There is a need to grasp the pedagogies making up the formalised and informalised practices that facilitate learning about trafficking. At its worst, educational content steeped in misinformation and myths fails to contextualise and complicate trafficking, which can lead to dehumanisation and violence, for instance through misguided interventions or 'vigilante rescue'.[23] At its best, anti-trafficking education can encourage and inform endeavours to create structural change, social justice, and individual empowerment. In the United States, for example, there is knowledge-sharing about worker rights by organisations such as the Coalition of Immokalee Workers and the National Domestic Workers Alliance, and trainings to combat housing disparities offered by the Freedom Network USA. Workers' rights organisations, unions, and migrant-led organisations advocate for improved working conditions and against wage theft, violence, and the exploitation endemic to myriad labour sectors, as exemplified by Migrant Forum in Asia's Justice for Wage Theft campaign. By contrast, anti-trafficking education can reproduce a narrow focus on extreme forms of (sexual) violence and remain disconnected from knowledge about and activism for migration and labour rights. We thus ask, what would it take for anti-trafficking education to be more in the service of economic justice, labour rights, and public health than criminalisation? If the expansion of anti-trafficking education is divorced from expansive visions and longstanding movements for equity, then it runs the risk of teaching about trafficking while upholding practices and systems of oppression, exclusion, and expropriation, as well as diverting attention and resources from the ongoing global work toward structural change.

As an educational topic, human trafficking is well-situated for expansive knowledge production and consumption. Yet, under the broad banner of anti-trafficking education, there is a paucity of critical reflection on and evaluation of what is being taught, to whom, and with what effects. One goal of this Special Issue is to identify where the sites of anti-trafficking education are and who participates

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21   L Martin and A Hill, 'Debunking the Myth of "Super Bowl Sex Trafficking": Media hype or evidenced-based coverage', *Anti-Trafficking Review*, issue 13, 2019, pp. 13–29, https://doi.org/10.14197/atr.201219132.

22   C Keo *et al.*, 'Human Trafficking and Moral Panic in Cambodia', *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 653, issue 1, 2014, pp. 202–224, https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716214521376.

23   E Shih, 'Not in My "Backyard Abolitionism": Vigilante rescue against American sex trafficking', *Sociological Perspectives*, vol. 59, no. 1, 2016, pp. 66–90, https://doi.org/10.1177/0731121416628551.

in them. Arguably, the anti-trafficking classes, trainings, workshops, study groups, and virtual reality programmes offered in non-profit, corporate, and governmental organisations make available opportunities for educational excellence and innovation, but they can also disseminate incorrect information while reproducing hierarchical and potentially harmful power relations, ideologies, and attitudes. For example, the growth of anti-trafficking training in social services and healthcare enables the 'carceral creep' commonly found in anti-violence initiatives.[24] What may appear as a softer or more humane side of the anti-trafficking movement continues to be linked to punitive systems and can result in the criminalisation of survivors and precarious labourers. This carceral creep is likewise elaborated by the criminal legal system's investment in 'penal welfare', that is, services accessible only through contact with the criminal legal system.[25] Provision of care to survivors is still primarily the outcome of diversion programmes or human trafficking intervention courts, or it coincides with incarceration, and thus even support can hinge on surveillance by the court apparatus.[26] Carceral creep, and coercion into support services, are pertinent here because anti-trafficking education can be used to legitimise the unequal relations of power (and injustice) embedded in the anti-trafficking movement and the criminal legal system at large.

Additionally, non-profit organisations involved in anti-trafficking initiatives can serve as important collaborators on government-led task forces. The good intentions of employees at non-profit organisations neither necessarily translate into accountable outreach, nor do they always serve the best interests of the people they aim to assist. In tandem with the NGO-ification of the anti-trafficking movement, some organisations function as gatekeepers to anti-trafficking policymaking and may intervene in what research is conducted.[27] Furthermore,

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[24] M E Kim, 'The Carceral Creep: Gender-based violence, race, and the expansion of the punitive state, 1973–1983', *Social Problems*, vol. 67, issue 2, 2020, pp. 251–269, https://doi.org/10.1093/socpro/spz013.

[25] A Gruber, A Cohen, and K Mogulescu, 'Penal Welfare and the New Human Trafficking Intervention Courts', *Florida Law Review*, vol. 68, issue 5, 2016, pp. 1333–1402, https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2776870.

[26] K Lerum *et al.*, 'Using Human Rights to Hold the US Accountable for its Anti-Sex Trafficking Agenda: The Universal Periodic Review and new directions for US policy', *Anti-Trafficking Review*, issue 1, 2012, pp. 80–103, https://doi.org/10.14197/atr.201215; S Foley *et al.*, 'Un-Meetable Promises: Rhetoric and reality in New York City's Human Trafficking Intervention Courts', Report by the Global Health Justice Partnership of the Yale Law School and Yale School of Public Health in collaboration with the Sex Workers Project for the Urban Justice Center, September 2018.

[27] J Musto, 'The NGO-ification of the Anti-Trafficking Movement in the United States: A case study of the Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking', in T Zheng (ed.), *Anti-Trafficking, Human Rights, and Social Justice*, Wagadu, vol. 5, Xlibris Publishing, Bloomington, Indiana, 2008, pp. 6–20.

'Trafficking 101' or introductory classes and trainings are now ubiquitous features of college campuses, community events, and workplaces, which are run by instructors with varying degrees of experience and expertise. The question remains, then, what is gained in terms of reducing exploitation and violence via the cottage industry of anti-trafficking education? Does the proliferation of education further entrench an individualised rather than structural response to exploitation? When, where, and why does anti-trafficking education participate in oppression and unequal power relations? And how can this tendency and co-optation be reduced in the service of advancing knowledge that leads to empowerment for more people and the most marginalised?

In our view, anti-trafficking education can reflect the problems endemic to anti-trafficking efforts and it can be an avenue through which to intercede and improve on these efforts. This paradox, which calls for both reform and radical change, is perhaps most evidenced in the incorporation of education that centres survivors of trafficking. For example, trauma-informed care intercedes in anti-trafficking efforts and education by prioritising the needs and knowledge of survivors from within the systems that criminalise and stigmatise them. The incorporation of trauma-informed care pushes against systems that too often criminalise first, before (if ever) caring for people. Moreover, trauma-informed care demands greater recognition that survivors of trafficking can and should speak for themselves and that their knowledge is at once critical to, and critical of, initiatives to stop human trafficking. Hence, it is necessary to centre the people who have direct experience and knowledge of trafficking in educational practices and materials on the topic. Several contributors to this Special Issue call for survivor-led advocacy organisations and survivor consultants to play an active role in the development and delivery of anti-trafficking education. We see the centring of survivors as a long overdue remedy to the human rights deficit in the anti-trafficking movement and its instrumentalisation of survivor stories.

Although caring professions potentially perform an ameliorating role, they can also enable and give cover to the carceral logics alive in anti-trafficking efforts. While there is no single survivor story, the deployment of survivor stories is used to give evidence (not only but including in a legal sense) for the maintenance of a legal apparatus that deems some people sympathetic victims of crime while others are demonised as criminals only deserving of punishment.[28] For instance, survivor stories, and the desire to foreground some of them as self-evident, perpetuate the status quo that structures the anti-trafficking movement, including the persuasive

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[28] For an excellent assessment of the fraught aspects of including victims and survivor voices, see B Pattanaik, 'Voices and Participation of Victims, Survivors and Workers: Some reflections on World Day Against Trafficking in Persons', GAATW, 29 July 2021, https://gaatw.org/events-and-news/68-gaatw-news/1107-world-day-against-tip-2021.

power of the 'ideal victim'.[29] Moreover, expansion of anti-trafficking trainings into the caring professions can contribute to the hypercriminalisation of the sex trade, which is treated by many as a primary source of violence and trauma. This tendency occurs despite professionals in the fields of public health, nursing, and social work trying not to replicate the overemphasis on trafficking in sexual economies at the expense of attention to other forms of trafficking.[30] And while some trainers and educators include the diverse perspectives of people in the sex trade, given the history and enduring dominance of 'abolitionist' agendas, there is no guarantee that such perspectives are routinely included, let alone centred, within anti-trafficking education in the caring professions. Overall, education on trafficking needs to incorporate the knowledge and experiences of the people most affected by trafficking and anti-trafficking, including those who endure the collateral damage caused by anti-trafficking interventions in diverse labour sectors, not only the sex trade.[31]

To our surprise, most of the contributions to this Special Issue analyse anti-trafficking education in the United States. This skew may be the result of a range of factors such as regional interest, distribution of the call for papers, how countries and people are experiencing the pandemic, and the global focus on research that prioritises COVID-19. Nevertheless, anti-trafficking education has long been a

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[29]   A I Fukushima, 'Has Someone Taken Your Passport? Everyday surveillance of the migrant laborer as trafficked subject', *Biography*, vol. 42, no. 3, 2019, pp. 561–585, https://doi.org/10.1353/bio.2019.0060.

[30]   N Littenberg and S Baldwin, 'The Ignored Exploitation: Labor trafficking in the United States', in M Chisolm-Straker and H Stoklosa (eds.), *Human Trafficking is a Public Health Issue*, Springer, Cham, 2017, pp. 67–91, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-47824-1.

[31]   There are manifold types of collateral damage related to legal and social anti-trafficking contexts, such as the negative impact suspicion of exploitation plays in the lives of people who are already under state surveillance. For example, in the context of massage parlours and nail salons in the United States, the long history of racist and nativist immigration policies impact how workers are treated. In sites deemed potential places of trafficking and labour exploitation, workers are easily caught in a carceral apparatus that can result in police violence, arrest, deportation, and social stigma. Concern about trafficking intensifies border controls and surveillance of migrant workers, which reproduce racialised and gendered stereotypes and harms. See E Lam and A Lepp, 'Butterfly: Resisting the harms of anti-trafficking policies and fostering peer-based organising in Canada', *Anti-Trafficking Review*, issue 12, 2020, pp. 91–107, https://doi.org/10.14197/atr.201219126; E Lam *et al.*, 'The Double-Edged Sword of Health and Safety: COVID-19 and the policing and exclusion of migrant Asian massage workers in North America', *Social Sciences*, vol. 10, issue 5, article no. 157, 2021, pp. 1–17, https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci10050157; and J Ham, M Segrave, and S Pickering, 'In the Eyes of the Beholder: Border enforcement, suspect travellers and trafficking victims', *Anti-Trafficking Review*, issue 2, 2013, pp. 51–66, https://doi.org/10.14197/atr.20121323.

focal point for governments, NGOs, and corporations across the globe.[32] While germane to the US context in which the turn to 'domestic trafficking' contributes to an emphasis on 'sex trafficking', the need to think and teach against this bias is relevant in other contexts. For instance, the UN Trafficking Protocol definition separates 'forced labour' from 'exploitation of the prostitution of others and other forms of sexual exploitation'. This distinction is replicated in research and education on trafficking. Emphasis on the United States likewise translates into less discussion of education specifically addressing non-sexual labour trafficking, such as the 'know before you go' curriculum and predeparture trainings directed at labour migrants, and outreach to industries in which exploitation is prevalent. Although these geographical and labour sector skews limit the Special Issue's scope, the included research articles and forum pieces initiate a timely and much-needed critical reflection on anti-trafficking education.

Relatedly, another limitation we want to note is a lack of analysis of public education, especially prevention programmes. Prevention remains an under-analysed and underfunded dimension of the anti-trafficking movement.[33] Anti-trafficking education prioritises teaching professionals who may encounter potential victims, rather than reaching potential victims directly. As stated above, this educational shift is significant and opens opportunities to foreground care over criminalisation. But prevention has always been an anti-trafficking goal narrowly focused on individual choice, rather than structural change.[34] And yet, prevention and public education could play a larger role than they currently do in highlighting the structural forces that contribute to human trafficking and exploitation. The growth in educational sites and stakeholders addressing trafficking has not, to our knowledge, sufficiently boosted social justice mobilisations in support of criminalised survivors, migrant labourers, or the decriminalisation of survival economies, including for people in the sex trade. Rather than build coalitions that resist structural oppression, anti-trafficking education—like the anti-trafficking movement writ large—often works in isolation from or in contradiction to social

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[32] See, for example, Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, 'Simulation-Based Training', Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), n.d., retrieved 19 July 2021, https://www.osce.org/cthb/simulation-based-training.

[33] See M Lemke, 'Educators as the "Frontline" of Human-Trafficking Prevention: An analysis of state-level educational policy', *Leadership and Policy in Schools,* vol. 18, issue 3, 2019, pp. 284–304, https://doi.org/10.1080/15700763.2017.1398337; see also J Donohue-Dioh *et al.*, 'Survivors' Conceptualizations of Human Trafficking Prevention; An exploratory study', *Evaluation and Program Planning*, vol. 83, 2020, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2020.101873.

[34] J Suchland, 'The Missing "P" in U.S. Anti-Trafficking', *The Feminist Wire*, 23 November 2015, https://www.thefeministwire.com/2015/11/the-missing-p-in-u-s-anti-trafficking-law.

justice and liberatory movements.[35]

## Contributions to the Special Issue

The full-length research articles in the Special Issue display a diverse array of professional and pedagogical approaches to anti-trafficking education. Contributors detail instructional materials and institutional settings, and what they alternately describe as intersectional, anti-oppressive, team-based, civically-engaged, trauma-informed, and survivor-led approaches to teaching and learning about human trafficking.

The lead article, by **Lara B. Gerassi and Andrea J. Nichols**, begins by announcing, 'Social work education in the US that addresses trafficking for sexual exploitation occurs in a white, heteronormative social context'. Bringing the structural conditions of social work to the fore, Gerassi and Nichols argue that intersectional frameworks and anti-oppressive practice should be central to anti-trafficking curricula designed for social work students. The authors recount how whiteness and white women have dominated the social work field in the US, and anti-trafficking education must therefore prepare future social workers to address their implicit biases and learn to work with diverse people to create alternative conditions of agency and empowerment. Overall, teaching about trafficking can require confronting the interlocking oppressions within a profession that has only recently turned a critical lens on the production of knowledge and power in social work itself.

Moving from the caring profession of social work to healthcare, **Caroline Shadowen, Sarah Beaverson, and Fidelma B. Rigby** survey existing research on anti-trafficking education for providers working in hospital emergency departments (ED). Their findings indicate that trainings tailored to the unique logistical and physical constraints of EDs increased providers' confidence in their ability to identify and assist trafficked persons. Given this potential outcome, the authors make the case for a 'team-based approach' to anti-trafficking trainings in the ED setting, and for a curriculum that includes survivors' input and does not focus solely on trafficking in the sex trade. As the authors note from the research, when survivors participate in curriculum development, the 'results are consistently culturally aware, victim/survivor-centred, and trauma-informed, which creates

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[35] 'Human Trafficking and Sex Workers Rights', Freedom Network USA, April 2015, https://freedomnetworkusa.org/app/uploads/2016/12/HT-and-Sex-Workers-Rights. pdf; J Suchland, 'Human Trafficking Awareness Month: Making the connections to social justice', National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, 11 January 2021, https://freedomcenter.org/voice/human-trafficking-awareness-month-making-connections-to-social-justice-part-i.

more robust training for providers' in clinical contexts.

While Shadowen *et al.* analyse anti-trafficking education in healthcare, **Laura A. Dean** turns to the educational terrain of academia and the emergent role of 'human trafficking research labs' (HTRL) in universities. Dean reflects on her experiences leading an HTRL to illustrate how this collaborative research site can develop students' critical thinking about human trafficking and their professional skills, particularly if they aim to enter a career in the anti-trafficking sector. Dean contends that HTRLs give students first-hand experience producing original research and working with local anti-trafficking stakeholders but, most significantly, these labs can address the power dynamics inherent to research, education, and legal interventions, thereby helping students to grapple with 'the ethical implications of knowledge production in social justice advocacy'.

Another ethical dimension of anti-trafficking education is the important role of representations. Working from a postcolonial framework, **Sallie Yea** discusses her university-level teaching to show how survivors' knowledge and narratives are essential to teaching about trafficking. Yea draws on two types of media: narratives by former slaves, forced labourers, and trafficked persons, and documentaries and films made by people who were not victims/survivors or freed slaves. By presenting these media, within a postcolonial framework, Yea helps students to become aware of and resist victim stereotypes. A postcolonial framework centres questions of power and perspective, such as who has agency to have their voices heard and stories told, which foregrounds the continuous need to interrogate the powerful role of representations and how educators use them.

Continuing the focus on higher education, **Annjanette Ramiro Alejano-Steele** proposes that 'universities can situate themselves within local anti-trafficking initiatives by offering courses to expand organisational capacities to end human trafficking'. In support of this proposition, Alejano-Steele details how her multidisciplinary course on human trafficking is co-created by community partners and students through inclusive, trauma-informed pedagogy. The author outlines key design questions for facilitating civic engagement principles, teaming up with community partners, and supporting college students who are committed to social justice and change. As such, Alejano-Steele illustrates the ways in which both institutional setting and course design enable and constrain anti-trafficking education, as well as innovative strategies to promote community and student empowerment in teaching and learning.

This section of article-length contributions ends with a consideration of the discursive power of failed anti-trafficking education, as illuminated by **Bond Benton and Daniela Peterka-Benton**. The authors contend with the new and enduring links between anti-trafficking advocacy and conspiracy theory, most recently the rise of QAnon. Tracking the spread of conspiracy theories about the sexual exploitation of children in particular, Benton and Peterka-Benton

examine how anti-trafficking myths and disinformation are essential to QAnon, and how online theories can lead to real-life threats and violence. Arguing that the anti-trafficking movement also circulates harmful myths about trafficking and its subjects, the authors assert that anti-trafficking education can and should counteract this tendency by actively interrogating misinformation, including historical myths and the burgeoning conspiracy theories of the twenty-first century.

The full-length research articles are followed by a Forum section with shorter pieces addressing anti-trafficking education. The Forum offers examples of pedagogical praxis in which teaching and learning are not offered as a template, but rather as a gesture toward models, inquiry, and frameworks that others may take up, rework, or re-evaluate. Contributors share their educational experiences and strategies to give readers a variety of promising practices within anti-trafficking instruction.

There is a need for pedagogical models and reflexive learning that are committed to grappling with the uncomfortable and unknowable. Two members of an online critical 'modern slavery' study group, **Maayan Niezna and Pankhuri Agarwal**, detail their work to that end by defining collective principles, organised into themes and cognisant of the pandemic crisis impacting all of the participants' lives. Niezna and Agarwal describe how to engage with anti-trafficking teaching and learning through peer-based education. They provide a strong argument for ongoing critical self-reflection and education for those deemed 'experts' on trafficking. The study group is an inspiring model for the ethics of education and reflection, especially on the most controversial and intractable issues within the field, and it illustrates the radical pedagogy we suggest is necessary for transforming anti-trafficking teaching and learning.

**Jessica L Peck** outlines a train-the-trainers programme for nurses based on a model developed by the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners. Utilising web-based content and culturally-aware programming for nurse practitioners, Peck describes a particular profession-based strategy to train trainers on child trafficking. This contribution reveals the process by which healthcare professionals, in this case nurses, become viewed as anti-trafficking stakeholders. In explaining the evolution of the educational programme, Peck gives insights into the growing professional investment in training that is driven by feedback and knowledge from anti-trafficking organisations. At the same time, Peck shines a light on the particular quandary that healthcare providers experience when they are confronted with the complex intersections of the extension of both care and systems of criminalisation.

Likewise focusing on healthcare, **Preeti Panda, Annette Mango, and Anjali Garg** foreground survivors' perspectives and participation in educational programming for healthcare providers. The authors consider how survivor

expertise can be established in a training and educational programme through a partnership that explicitly fosters equity. To do so, they focus on how a localised partnership strives to create equity among professionals, including survivor experts, by incorporating their testimonies of working together. In contrast to approaches that instrumentalise survivor stories to fit an already existing curriculum, the authors explain the process of partnering with survivors at the very beginning of designing the training. Establishing survivor partnerships requires special attention to hierarchies and a commitment to collaboration as a method to ensure equity.

Concluding the forum section, **Danielle Borrelli and Benjamin Thomas Greer** present the recent and evolving development of the California Cybersecurity Institute's virtual reality (VR) human trafficking training programme. VR uses immersive digital scenes to train police officers and frontline professionals to identify trafficking situations and victims. Borrelli and Greer highlight the technological innovation in education and how it may inform and reshape biases in anti-trafficking responses. Showcasing the specific platform of 'serious games' and immersive storytelling, the authors advocate for the benefits of VR in encouraging critical decision-making, empathy, and complex thinking within the context of law enforcement and advocacy organisations. As with any educational content, VR programmes must also contend with the potential myths, biases, and stereotypes that they can reproduce and reinforce. As the authors note, contending with these limitations is crucial if immersive pedagogies are to succeed as harm-reducing techniques.

## Future Directions in Anti-Trafficking Education

We close this Editorial by proposing several promising directions in critical anti-trafficking education. As readers enter the Special Issue, we invite them to ponder what pedagogies are used to raise awareness about and intervene in human trafficking. Within various educational sites, modalities, and practices, how might the anti-trafficking movement create and contribute to pedagogies that seek liberatory ends? What are the ways in which anti-trafficking education can work against neoliberal, colonial, and capitalist forms of teaching and learning? There are already diverse traditions and approaches to draw from that foster anti-oppressive and liberatory goals such as liberation theology,[36] feminist pedagogies,[37]

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[36] P McLaren and P Jandrić, 'From Liberation to Salvation: Revolutionary critical pedagogy meets liberation theology', *Policy Futures in Education*, vol. 15, issue 5, 2017, pp. 620–652, https://doi.org/10.1177/1478210317695713.

[37] S L Crawley, J E Lewis, and M Mayberry, 'Introduction - Feminist Pedagogies in Action: Teaching beyond disciplines', *Feminist Teacher*, vol. 19, no. 1, 2008, pp. 1–12, https://doi.org/10.1353/ftr.0.0021.

decolonial pedagogies,[38] and teach-ins,[39] as well as reflexive and collaborative forms of teaching and learning. Some of the contributions of the Special Issue gesture toward these traditions and approaches while reflecting on power, collective learning, and implicit bias. As ever more institutions and stakeholders engage in anti-trafficking education, this expansion may provide real opportunities to challenge the embedded hierarchies that privilege oppressive forms of knowledge and action, which are certainly present in the anti-trafficking field.

It is important for anyone taking up the work of anti-trafficking education to reflect on why they or their organisation is interested in teaching about trafficking, what is given and gained by specific educational content, and what opportunities and constraints exist for ensuring an empowering and ethical experience for all involved. It is also vital that the history and present impacts of structural racism, anti-Blackness, colonialism, and the intersecting hierarchies of citizenship status, class, caste, gender, sexuality, and ability are acknowledged and addressed as part of the work of anti-trafficking education. What does it mean to take on a 'new' population for care when medicine, science, law, and other institutions of biopower are also sites of control and violence?[40] Since political concern about human trafficking re-emerged after the Cold War in the mid-1990s and early 2000s, vibrant activist and scholarly communities have formed that advance critical anti-trafficking approaches, many of which tackle the human rights deficit created by those early efforts at combatting labour exploitation.[41] Legal professionals and community groups, such as domestic violence shelters and migrant rights organisations in particular, have been on the frontlines observing the needs of trafficking victims, the deleterious effects of the law, and how enforcement is

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[38]   R Grosfoguel, R Hernández, and E R Velásquez, (eds.), *Decolonizing the Westernized University: Interventions in philosophy of education from within and without,* Lexington Books, Lanham, 2016.

[39]   Consider models from the Vietnam War and those that emerged in response to Black Lives Matter.

[40]   See M Chisolm-Straker, 'Historical Context Matters: Health research, health care, and bodies of color in the United States', in M Chisolm-Straker and K Chon (eds.), *The Historical Roots of Human Trafficking: Informing primary prevention of commercialized violence*, Springer, Cham, 2021, pp. 257–278, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-70675-3_14; see also J Kaye, *Responding to Human Trafficking: Dispossession, colonial violence, and resistance among Indigenous and racialized women*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 2017.

[41]   For a close analysis of this genealogy and the role of the end of the Cold War, see Suchland, 2015.

practised by immigration and police agents.[42] Additionally, activist academics have contributed, in collaboration with community partners, to critiquing anti-trafficking policies, terms, and interventions. Yet, universities remain sites of social exclusion with their own histories of exploitation in the name of education. Such contextual facts are essential to know, as educators and universities continue to be entangled in, rather than separate from, social inequities and the urgent topics of discussion in the classroom.

Current anti-trafficking education on sexual economies is robust, so how might we strategise our teaching and learning to examine industries that produce human trafficking beyond sexual economies, and the power relations that undergird trafficking, including racism, heterosexism, cis-genderism, classism, casteism, nationalism, nativism, and ableism? Recognition is growing that racism,[43] racialised sexualities,[44] colonisation,[45] and other oppressions create differential vulnerabilities and impacts (which we are also now witnessing in relation to COVID-19). As a case in point, recent efforts by the Freedom Network USA and the Housing Project[46] led to critical conversations and educational programming in the form of webinars that cover issues ranging from emergency to long-term accommodation solutions and housing marginalised communities, such as LGBTIQ+ people, migrant communities, and substance users. Important educational content has also been developed in the labour movement, mapping the links among labour,

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[42] A Ray and E Caterine, 'Criminal, Victim or Worker: The effects of New York's Human Trafficking Intervention Courts on adults charged with prostitution-related offences', Red Umbrella Project, New York, 1 October 2014, https://nyf.issuelab.org/resource/criminal-victim-or-worker-the-effects-of-new-york-s-human-trafficking-intervention-courts-on-adults-charged-with-prostitution-related-offenses.html.

[43] For work analysing the anti-Blackness of anti-trafficking, see T P Woods, 'Surrogate Selves: Notes on anti-trafficking and anti-blackness', *Social Identities*, vol. 19, issue 1, 2013, pp. 120–134, https://doi.org/10.1080/13504630.2012.753348; L P Beutin, 'Black Suffering For/From Anti-Trafficking Advocacy', *Anti-Trafficking Review*, issue 9, 2017, pp. 14–30, https://doi.org/10.14197/atr.20121792; A Hill, 'The Rhetoric of Modern-Day Slavery: Analogical links and historical kinks in the United Kingdom's anti-trafficking plan', *philoSOPHIA*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2017, pp. 241–260, https://doi.org/10.1353/phi.2017.0023; and K Kempadoo, 'The Modern-Day White (Wo)Man's Burden: Trends in anti-trafficking and anti-slavery campaigns', *Journal of Human Trafficking*, vol. 1, issue 1, 2015, pp. 8–20, https://doi.org/10.1080/23322705.2015.1006120.

[44] J Hua, *Trafficking Women's Human Rights*, University of Minnesota Press, Minnesota, 2011.

[45] S Hunt, 'Representing Colonial Violence: Trafficking, sex work, and the violence of the law', *Atlantis: Critical Studies in Gender, Culture, and Social Justice*, vol. 37, no. 2, 2015, pp. 25–39.

[46] 'Housing Project: Training and technical assistance', Freedom Network USA, n.d., retrieved 5 August 2021, https://freedomnetworkusa.org/training/housing-project.

exploitation, and immigration.[47] Lastly, prevention programmes have emerged that connect the violence of colonisation to present cases of missing and murdered Indigenous people.[48] These are commendable educational efforts that enhance teaching and learning and analyse trafficking as an intersectional issue within and beyond borders.

We would like to see education on human trafficking invested in people who experience 'risk' or face exploitation that may not meet the legal threshold of trafficking as defined by national and international bodies. Legal definitions and carceral responses are often legitimated in educational spaces and used as the only discursive frames available. The foreclosing of alternative frames and radical pedagogies consequently closes possibilities for liberatory education as a response to trafficking and interlocking forms of oppression. Educators must learn from people with knowledge and experiences of trafficking, and avoid the common presumption that professionals need to teach the trafficked, or that the privileged hold more knowledge than vulnerable people. In other words, experts may have no expertise in what it feels like and means to be trafficked or vulnerable to trafficking. Therefore, no one should be teaching about trafficking without including the knowledge of people impacted by trafficking *and* anti-trafficking efforts, as well as those who have insights into interlocking forms of oppression beyond trafficking.

What would it look like to conceptualise anti-trafficking education that centres liberation for all, not in the 'rescue' sense of the word, but where education is itself liberatory? Paolo Freire offers a framework for educators to subvert oppression called the 'pedagogy of the oppressed', that is, 'a pedagogy which must be forged with, not for, the oppressed (whether individuals or peoples) in the incessant struggle to regain their humanity'.[49] As we contemplate the liberatory potential of anti-trafficking education, we should begin by considering how organisations and individuals define education. To that end, we suggest bell hooks as a point of departure because she sees education as a 'practice of freedom'. According to hooks, education

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[47]   'Fair Food Program', Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW), n.d., retrieved 5 August 2021, https://www.fairfoodprogram.org.

[48]   See H S J Gordon and T W M Roberts, 'Missing or Murdered Indigenous People: Culturally based prevention strategies', *Department of Justice Journal of Federal Law and Practice,* vol. 69, no. 1, 2021, pp. 47–70.

[49]   P Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 30th Anniversary Edition, Continuum, New York and London, 2000, p. 48.

is a way of teaching that anyone can learn. That learning process comes easiest to those of us who teach who also believe that there is an aspect of our vocation that is sacred; who believe that our work is not merely to share information but to share in the intellectual and spiritual growth of our students. To teach in a manner that respects and cares for the souls of our students is essential if we are to provide the necessary conditions where learning can most deeply and intimately begin.[50]

This Special Issue invites readers to question and reconsider what is good about anti-trafficking education. What hopeful, necessary, and critical work is fostered by teaching and learning about trafficking? Why and how has anti-trafficking education become a good in itself or a commodity that purports to sell knowledge and skills, but that may do more harm than good? How might we come to understand anti-trafficking education as a complex and vexed site of care, knowledge, and power relations? The diffusion of anti-trafficking education into diverse professions, places, and digital platforms should provoke active ambivalence and deep reflection. It should incite inquiries into the nature and scope of anti-trafficking education, and how such endeavours in teaching and learning might be (re)made to promote social justice and liberation.

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[50]    b hooks, *Teaching to Transgress*, Routledge, New York and London, 1994, p. 13.

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# Thematic Articles

# Social Work Education that Addresses Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation: An intersectional, anti-oppressive practice framework

*Lara B Gerassi and Andrea J Nichols*

## Abstract

Practice, policy, and research focused on trafficking for sexual exploitation and commercial sex involvement occur in the United States within a white, heteronormative social environment that must be addressed pedagogically in the classroom. Social work education increasingly includes the topic of trafficking for sexual exploitation as a stand-alone course or as sessions embedded within other courses. Yet, very little scholarship critically examines how instruction in social work on this topic can apply intersectional, anti-oppressive frameworks across micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Furthermore, current literature suggests that some social workers use exclusionary practices when addressing trafficking and commercial sex involvement, further exemplifying the need for anti-oppressive curricula. The purpose of this paper is to critically analyse how key anti-oppressive theoretical and practice frameworks should influence education on trafficking for sexual exploitation and commercial sex involvement in social work. Written by two scholars and social work instructors, we describe how we apply these frameworks to pedagogical exercises in social work courses. Finally, we argue that intersectional, anti-oppressive social work education is critical to training social work students and, ultimately, addressing the needs of people experiencing or at risk of trafficking.

**Keywords:** trafficking for sexual exploitation education, anti-oppressive practice, intersectionality

## Introduction

Although anyone can experience trafficking into sexual economies, people at risk and survivors in the United States (US) are more likely to experience identity-based oppression and identify as Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer (LGBTQ+), low-income, or people living with a disability.[1] Social work education in the US that addresses trafficking for sexual exploitation occurs in a white, heteronormative social context. For example, an analysis of 20 social work courses in 14 states found that most courses did not include a direct focus on structural oppressions experienced by people of colour or LGBTQ+ people who trade sex.[2] Social work students, faculty, and practitioners in the field also predominantly consist of white, cisgender, heterosexual people.[3] As such, general social work education as well as courses that address trafficking for sexual exploitation must use an intersectional, anti-oppressive practice (AOP) framework that centres on the convergence of multiple axes of oppression in people's lived experiences of privilege, oppression, and discrimination.[4]

This paper provides a framework for designing instruction in social work programmes on trafficking for sexual exploitation, thereby preparing future social workers to address the needs of people involved in commercial sex across the micro (i.e., individuals, families, and small groups), mezzo (i.e., community-

1    L B Gerassi and A J Nichols, *Sex Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation: Prevention, advocacy, and trauma-informed practice,* Springer, New York, 2017, https://doi.org/10.1891/9780826149756; J A Reid, 'Sex Trafficking of Girls With Intellectual Disabilities: An exploratory mixed methods study', *Sexual Abuse*, vol. 30, issue 2, 2018, pp. 107–131, https://doi.org/10.1177/1079063216630981; M Dank *et al.*, *Surviving the Streets of New York: Experiences of LGBTQ youth, YMSM, and YWSW engaged in survival sex*, Urban Institute, Washington, D.C., February 2015, p. 94; L Werkmeister Rozas, J Ostrander and M Feely, 'Inequalities in US Child Protection: The case of sex trafficked youth', *Social Sciences*, vol. 7, issue 8, 2018, p. 135, https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci7080135.

2    M R Panichelli, 'The Intersections of Good Intentions, Criminality, and Anti-Carceral Feminist Logic: A qualitative study that explores sex trades content in social work education', Dissertation, Portland State University, 2018, https://doi.org/10.15760/etd.6396.

3    E Salsberg *et al.*, 'Profile of the Social Work Workforce', A Report to Council on Social Work Education and National Workforce Initiative Steering Committee, The George Washington University Health Workforce Institute, October 2017; J Morton, D Jeyasingham and S Hicks, 'The Social Work of Sexuality: Rethinking approaches to social work education', *Health and Social Care Education*, vol. 2, issue 2, 2013, pp. 16–19.

4    K Crenshaw, 'Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color', *Stanford Law Review*, vol. 43, issue 6, 1991, pp. 1241–1299, https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039.

coordinated responses and interagency collaboration), and macro (i.e., state and organisational level policy) social work levels. We are two professors who have taught undergraduate and graduate trafficking courses at our respective universities and guest-lectured for other social work instructors, professional organisations, and community groups across the US. We emphasise an intersectional, AOP framework in research and teaching and are cognizant of our own intersecting privileges that impact our lenses. The first author identifies as white, Hispanic, cisgender, and heterosexual, while the second author identifies as white, pansexual, and cisgender. We begin by analysing the social work context in which sex trafficking courses occur. We then discuss theoretical frameworks (e.g., intersectionality) and social work frameworks (e.g., AOP) before describing how to integrate such frameworks into coursework examples across different levels. Finally, we conclude with recommendations to use theoretically guided, practice-informed, and evidence-based curricula to strengthen instruction on prevention, identification, policy, and interventions in relation to trafficking for sexual exploitation.

We use the US federal definition of trafficking for sexual exploitation (more commonly referred to as sex trafficking in the US), which occurs when: 1) a minor[5] exchanges a sex act (e.g., prostitution, pornography, stripping, or selling illicit photos) for financial compensation or other benefits (e.g., food, clothing, housing, or drugs), or 2) an adult is induced through force, fraud, or coercion to perform a commercial sex act.[6] We use the term sex work to refer to adults who sell sex without force, fraud, or coercion. We recognise that adults involved in commercial sex may do so by choice or circumstance, and that systemic oppressions across multiple sociodemographic groups (e.g., race, class, or sexuality) heighten vulnerabilities to exploitation. Social work education should highlight person-centred services and promote collaborative environments that consider the continuum of experiences involved in trafficking for sexual exploitation and sex work, and analyse the impact of policies on sex workers as well as trafficking victims and survivors alike.[7]

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[5]    A person under the age of 18.

[6]    J Bigelsen and S Vuotto, 'Homelessness, Survival Sex and Human Trafficking: As experienced by the youth of Covenant House New York', Covenant House, May 2013; Dank *et al.*; C L Miller *et al.*, 'Individual and Structural Vulnerability among Female Youth Who Exchange Sex for Survival', *The Journal of Adolescent Health*, vol. 49, issue 1, 2011, pp. 36–41, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2010.10.003.

[7]    Gerassi and Nichols.

## The Social Work Context

In response to social mobilisations against police brutality, anti-Black violence, and ongoing racialised violence against BIPOC people, many educators in social work are reckoning with the extent anti-oppressive theories and frameworks are integrated into the field's guiding ethics, educational competencies, and student learning outcomes. For example, the US Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) is revising educational competencies to focus on engaging diversity and difference in practice and address intersectional factors, including race, gender, and sexual orientation, among others.[8] Another social work competency aims to advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice by eliminating oppressive structural barriers.[9] These competencies are important but omit the integration of anti-oppressive practices as well as adequate engagement with intersectionality. There is a growing recognition that social work institutions are built on a white supremacist culture that utilises the history, labour, and pain of people of colour to benefit white people.[10] Current competencies also insufficiently address heteronormativity by exclusively focusing on the negative experiences of 'sexual minorities', rather than confronting heterosexist policies and the structural oppressions that allow heteronormative assumptions to thrive.[11] To address these criticisms, CSWE will issue new competencies by 2022 to 1) integrate how diversity, equity, and inclusion characterise and shape the human experience, 2) expand on the dimensions of diversity to emphasise the intersectionality of factors, and 3) engage in anti-racist practice, cultural humility, and the dismantling of structural oppression.[12] As such, coursework that addresses trafficking for sexual exploitation can serve as an ideal case study to integrate theoretical and practice frameworks that address structural oppressions.

[8]    Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Commission on Educational Policy and the CSWE Commission on Accreditation, *2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards for Baccalaureate and Master's Social Work Programs,* Council on Social Work Education, 2015.

[9]    *Ibid.*

[10]   'Social Work Coalition for Anti-Racist Educators (SWCAREs)', 2021, retrieved 22 February 2021, https://www.swcares.org.

[11]   Morton, Jeyasingham, and Hicks; B Bennett and T G Gates, 'Teaching Cultural Humility for Social Workers Serving LGBTQI Aboriginal Communities in Australia', *Social Work Education*, vol. 38, issue 5, 2019, pp. 604–617, https://doi.org/10.1080/0 2615479.2019.1588872; T G Gates, 'Challenging Heterosexism: 6 suggestions for social work practice', *The New Social Worker*, 2006, https://www.socialworker.com/ feature-articles/ethics-articles/Challenging_Heterosexism%3A_Six_Suggestions_ for_Social_Work_Practice.

[12]   D M McPhee *et al.*, 'Leading Critical Conversations on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: Educational policy and accreditation *standards*, 2022 Progress Update', Council on Social Work Education, 2020.

Education that addresses trafficking can and should prepare future social workers to support and work alongside diverse people involved in commercial sex as encompassing a range of relationships: choice, circumstance, or trafficking.[13] At the micro level, social workers may encounter trafficking survivors or individuals at risk and should be prepared to identify red flags, conduct assessments, and provide critically important behavioural health services. At the mezzo level, social workers may work within coordinated community responses to improve social services and should be prepared to encounter interagency challenges. At the macro level, social workers must be prepared to advocate for policies that help survivors and those at risk, ranging from trafficking-specific legislation—e.g., *Trafficking Victims Protection Act* (TVPA), *Violence Against Women Act*, etc.—to policies that prevent and reduce risks—e.g., Medicaid expansion, living wage policies, etc. Doing so in ways that centre people involved in commercial sex or survivors of trafficking is essential, as several studies suggest that social workers have created harm in their service responses (e.g., use of saviour ideologies in practice or of sensationalistic and re-traumatising organisational materials).[14] Thus, utilising an intersectional framework to facilitate students' nuanced understanding of trafficking for sexual exploitation and commercial sex involvement, and guide related responses across those levels are essential components of social work education and practice.

Overall, we contribute to critical anti-trafficking work by demonstrating how an intersectional framework can be applied in efforts towards anti-oppressive education. While we focus on social work, curricula in other areas of study (e.g., criminal justice, human rights, sociology, or gender studies), community-based education and awareness initiatives, and professional trainings can similarly benefit from the curriculum and principles we present here. Similarly, we focus on trafficking for sexual exploitation, as this is the focus of many US social work courses.[15] The lack of focus on trafficking for labour exploitation in this curriculum is reflective of a larger global trend of marginalisation in social work and criminal justice curricula, as well as in legal and justice systems, and social services more broadly. Ostensibly, the same principles detailed below apply to other forms of human trafficking as well, including trafficking for labour exploitation.

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[13] Gerassi and Nichols.

[14] G Soderlund, 'Running from the Rescuers: New U.S. crusades against sex trafficking and the rhetoric of abolition', *NWSA Journal*, vol. 17, issue 3, 2005, pp. 64–87, https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/4317158.pdf; A I Fukushima *et al.*, 'Multiplicity of Stigma: Cultural barriers in anti-trafficking response', *International Journal of Human Rights in Healthcare*, vol. 13, issue 2, 2020, pp. 125-142, https://doi.org/10.1108/IJHRH-07-2019-0056.

[15] Panichelli.

## Theoretical Frameworks: Prioritising intersectionality

Given the multiple axes of oppression experienced by people who are involved in commercial sex, related coursework should be guided by an intersectional framework. Intersectional theorists note that people's unique identities intersect to inform their experiences with oppression, specifically on the grounds of race, class, sex, gender identity, age, sexual orientation, citizenship and immigration status, and abilities.[16] Despite the growing awareness of intersectional feminism, US anti-trafficking discourses have largely been led by divergent radical and liberal feminist philosophies. Related debates within sex work discourses centre on agency, victimisation, and the role of the state in perpetuating or ameliorating gender inequality.[17] However, experiences with commercial sex are nuanced, and can be empowering for some, oppressive for others, or a mix of these.[18] Teaching social work students about the fluidity and variance in the experiences of people involved in commercial sex will lead to better understandings about diverse populations and their service needs, and will counter often homogenising depictions of commercial sex rooted in abolitionist (i.e., the movement to end commercial sex viewed as 'modern slavery') and radical feminist thinking (i.e., the essentialist view largely depicting commercial sex as male violence against women). Instructors should teach criticisms of radical and liberal feminism, as they largely focus on women and girls and ignore nuanced contexts of nationality, immigration, race and ethnicity, LGBTQ+ identities, and men and boys who experience trafficking.[19]

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[16] N J Sokoloff and I Dupont, 'Domestic Violence at the Intersections of Race, Class, and Gender: Challenges and contributions to understanding violence against marginalized women in diverse communities', *Violence against Women*, vol. 11, issue 1, 2005, pp. 38–64, https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801204271476; Crenshaw.

[17] K Kempadoo and J Doezema, *Global Sex Workers: Rights, resistance, and redefinition*, Routledge, New York, 1998; J Doezema, 'Forced to Choose: Beyond the voluntary v. forced prostitution dichotomy', in *Ibid.*, pp. 34–50, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315865768-3.

[18] *Ibid.*; see also L M Agustín, *Sex at the Margins*, Zed Books, London, 2005; S A Limoncelli, 'The Trouble with Trafficking: Conceptualizing women's sexual labor and economic human rights', *Women's Studies International Forum*, vol. 32, issue 4, 2009, pp. 261–269, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2009.05.002; C Valadier, 'Migration and Sex Work through a Gender Perspective', *Contexto Internacional*, vol. 40, issue 3, 2018, pp. 501–524, https://doi.org/10.1590/s0102-8529.2018400300005.

[19] Liberal feminists vary in the ways they view choice, and have been critiqued for excluding diverse viewpoints. (see J Doezema, 'Now You See Her, Now You Don't: Sex workers at the UN trafficking protocol negotiation,' *Social & Legal Studies,* vol. 14, issue 1, 2005, pp. 61–89, https://doi.org/10.1177/0964663905049526.) Radical feminists have been critiqued for their essentialist views, such as framing sex work as violence against women, thereby ignoring LGBTQ+ people involved in commercial sex. (See L Duggan and N D Hunter, *Sex Wars: Sexual dissent and political culture*, 10th Anniversary Edition, Routledge, New York, 2006.)

Intersectionality allows for an analysis of the problematic notions of the 'ideal victim' that impact identification and criminalisation of survivors of trafficking for sexual exploitation, and reinforce racial, class, sexual, and other forms of inequality.[20] Intersectional feminists critique essentialist frameworks as primarily benefiting white, cis, heterosexual, middle- and upper-class women and girls. Scholars, such as Kimberlé Crenshaw, Patricia Hill Collins, Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Laura Agustín, Kamala Kempadoo, and Jo Doezema, among others, generally reject the invisibility of oppressed groups. Such scholarship centres oppression as a focal point of analysis, and catalyses change that benefits people across race, sex, gender, class, abilities, immigration status, and sexual orientation. Presently, social work trafficking curricula largely reflect the inaccurate homogenisation of survivors and ideal victimhood.[21] Monolithic depictions of commercial sex are often promulgated by Christian and abolitionist NGOs that impact academic and community curricula. Radical, abolitionist, and anti-sex work thinking has had a demonstrable impact on the US policy level as well, reflected in the 'Anti-Prostitution Pledge' of the 2005 TVPA reauthorisation, the popularity of 'end demand' frameworks illustrated in expanded safe harbour legislation, and the advent of SESTA-FOSTA.[22] Such abolitionist policies aim to eradicate or significantly curtail the commercial sex industry and are shown to have problematic impacts on trafficking survivors and sex workers alike.[23]

Intersectional curricula may also focus on consequences of anti-trafficking responses resulting in heightened criminalisation and barriers to services for marginalised people, as well as the role of carceral protectionism, surveillance, and criminalisation directed towards oppressed groups on community, practice,

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[20]   A I Fukushima, *Migrant Crossings: Witnessing human trafficking in the U.S.,* Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2019.

[21]   Panichelli.

[22]   Acronyms for the 2018 *Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act* (FOSTA) and 2018 *Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act* (SESTA); S Gies *et al.*, 'Safe Harbor Laws: Changing the legal response to minors involved in commercial sex, Phase 1. The legal review', U.S. Department of Justice, February 2018; Kempadoo and Doezema; R Weitzer, 'The Movement to Criminalize Sex Work in the United States', *Journal of Law and Society*, vol. 37, issue 1, 2010, pp. 61–84, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6478.2010.00495.x.

[23]   Missouri Ho (MO Ho) Justice Coalition, 'The State of the Hustle: Sex workers speak out in the show-me state', retrieved 9 March 2021, https://mohojustice.com; D Blunt and A Wolf, 'Erased: The impact of FOSTA-SESTA and the removal of Backpage on sex workers', *Anti-Trafficking Review*, issue 14, 2020, pp. 117–121, https://doi.org/10.14197/atr.201220148; E Tichenor, '"I've Never Been So Exploited": The consequences of FOSTA-SESTA in Aotearoa New Zealand', *Anti-Trafficking Review*, issue 14, 2020, pp. 99–115, https://doi.org/10.14197/atr.201220147.

and policy levels.[24] Understanding historical and current state and police violence directed towards oppressed people through an intersectional perspective is imperative to understanding its impacts on identification, access to justice, and interaction with social services and state institutions more broadly. Police violence, such as randomly searching and arresting trans people for carrying condoms and charging them with prostitution (so-called 'walking while trans' laws), police brutality towards African Americans, jurisdictional policies that move power from tribal justice systems in indigenous communities towards US federal justice systems to address victimisation, and enhanced border control, deportation, and detainment of immigrants erodes trust in the justice system and facilitates fear.[25] Students should learn how to address problematic state and federal policies, as well as their consequences, from an intersectional framework. Students engaged in anti-trafficking work will assuredly encounter organisations reflecting ideologies that are exclusionary and carceral, which thereby facilitate harmful policies and practices. This can prepare students to counter the deeply racialised, gendered, heterosexist, and cis-centric rhetoric reflected in policy, interagency relationships, and direct practice, as discussed later in this article.

Theoretical and political perspectives shape responses to trafficking on micro, mezzo, and macro levels. An intersectional framework is necessary to understand both the nature of trafficking risks and barriers to service access and utilisation, and criminalisation. While we focus on the intersectional framework in this paper, we note that queer theory, critical race theory, transnational feminism, and post-colonialist feminism likewise have long histories of interrogating Western and essentialist frameworks of commercial sex and human trafficking, and key readings from such scholars should be included in social work curricula.[26]

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[24]  E Bernstein, 'Militarized Humanitarianism Meets Carceral Feminism: The politics of sex, rights, and freedom in contemporary antitrafficking campaigns', *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, vol. 36, issue 1, 2010, pp. 45–71; A Hill, 'The Rhetoric of Modern-Day Slavery: Analogical links and historical kinks in the United Kingdom's anti-trafficking plan', *PhiloSOPHIA: A Journal of Transcontinental Feminism*, vol. 7, issue 2, 2017, pp. 241–260, https://doi.org/10.1353/phi.2017.0023; E Shih, 'Not in My "Backyard Abolitionism": Vigilante rescue against American sex trafficking', *Sociological Perspectives*, vol. 59, issue 1, 2016, pp. 66–90, https://doi.org/10.1177/0731121416628551; J Musto, *Control and Protect: Collaboration, carceral protection, and domestic sex trafficking in the United States*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 2016.

[25]  M Dank *et al.*, *Locked In: Interactions with the criminal justice and child welfare systems for LGBTQ youth, YMSM, and YWSW who engage in survival sex*, Urban Institute, Washington, D.C., September 2015; A Farrell *et al.*, 'Failing Victims? Challenges of the police response to human trafficking', *Criminology & Public Policy*, vol. 18, issue 3, 2019, pp. 649–673, https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9133.12456.

[26]  C N Butler, 'A Critical Race Feminist Perspective on Prostitution & Sex Trafficking in America', *Yale Journal of Law and Feminism*, vol. 27, issue 1, 2015, pp. 95–139.

## Social Work Practice Frameworks

*The Limits of Cultural Competency and Humility*

US social work curricula are dominated by cultural competency and cultural humility. Cultural competency is intended to increase social workers' knowledge of the client's realities, systems, norms, and beliefs, so that they can better understand and empower their clients.[27] At the micro level, cultural competency has traditionally involved using knowledge of particular communities as well as strategies to engage clients who are different from the practitioner.[28] At the mezzo-level, social workers collaborating with multiple organisations can use culturally competent frameworks to emphasise interactions between clients, social workers and therapists, and actors in various systems (e.g., legal, child welfare, or healthcare).[29] One potential problem with emphasising a cultural competency framework only is the connotation that one can become fully culturally competent and therefore be done with one's learning,[30] which can lead to a rationalised form of stereotyping.[31] Such limitations should be explored by discussing practice examples of how culturally competent practice can positively and negatively impact clients. In contrast, cultural humility seeks to enhance understanding and appreciate differences in health or social behaviours by

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[27]   J Chu *et al.*, 'A Model for the Theoretical Basis of Cultural Competency to Guide Psychotherapy', *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, vol. 47, issue 1, 2016, pp. 18–29, https://doi.org/10.1037/pro0000055.

[28]   D W Sue, P Arredondo, and R J McDavis, 'Multicultural Counseling Competencies and Standards: A call to the profession', *Journal of Counseling & Development*, vol. 70, issue 4, 1992, pp. 477–486, https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.1992.tb01642.x; A L Whaley, K E Davis, and L Arthur, 'Cultural Competence and Evidence-Based Practice in Mental Health Services', *American Psychologist*, vol. 62, issue 6, 1996, pp. 563–574, https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.62.6.563; S R Lopez, 'Cultural Competence in Psychotherapy: A guide for clinicians and their supervisors', in C R Watkins (ed.), *Handbook of Psychotherapy Supervision*, Wiley, Hoboken, NJ, 1997, pp. 579–588; S Sue *et al.*, 'The Case for Cultural Competency in Psychotherapeutic Interventions', *Annual Review of Psychology*, vol. 60, issue 1, 2009, pp. 525–548, https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.60.110707.163651; J Y Wang *et al.*, 'A Conceptual Model of the Psychological Health System for U.S. Active Duty Service Members: An approach to inform leadership and policy decision making', *Military Medicine*, vol. 178, issue 6, 2013, pp. 596–606, https://doi.org/10.7205/MILMED-D-12-00429.

[29]   Lopez; Whaley, Davis, and Arthur.

[30]   C Foronda *et al.*, 'Cultural Humility: A concept analysis', *Journal of Transcultural Nursing*, vol. 27, issue 3, 2016, pp. 210–217, https://doi.org/10.1177/1043659615592677.

[31]   S T Stevens *et al.*, 'Cultural Competence: A form of stereotype rationality', in C L Frisby and W T O'Donohue (eds.), *Cultural Competence in Applied Psychology: An evaluation of current status and future directions*, Springer, Cham, 2018, pp. 651–664, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78997-2_26.

putting the responsibility on social workers to seek out information from clients about their worldviews.[32] Cultural humility can help social workers reflect on the limitations of their knowledge and perspectives, and emphasise that no amount of knowledge learnt in the classroom can make them experts of their clients' lives.[33] Social workers using a culturally humble framework are encouraged not to view a particular group as monolithic, but to allow for differences to be emphasised.[34] Students can be taught to support and believe persons who disclose experiences of discrimination, bias, and identity-based oppression.[35]

Like all practice frameworks, instructors must emphasise the importance of applying these frameworks across different social work levels. For example, social workers are advised to work with interpreters who are trained and adequately prepared to provide accurate interpretation of potentially traumatic and difficult situations within a cultural context.[36] Social workers should be prepared to work collaboratively with clients and interpreters or bring in other social workers to serve as 'cultural brokers' in order to link immigrant families to resources and mediate any differences between cultures.[37] Although these recommendations are situated at the micro level, they will not be successful in organisations with funding mechanisms that do not prioritise such practices or the need to arrange (and compensate) interpreters.

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[32]  B L Beagan, 'A Critique of Cultural Competence: Assumptions, limitations, and alternatives', in *ibid.*, pp. 123–138, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78997-2_6; R Danso, 'Cultural Competence and Cultural Humility: A critical reflection on key cultural diversity concepts', *Journal of Social Work*, vol. 18, issue 4, 2018, pp. 410–430, https://doi.org/10.1177/1468017316654341.

[33]  T Bryant-Davis and P Tummala-Narra, 'Cultural Oppression and Human Trafficking: Exploring the role of racism and ethnic bias', *Women and Therapy*, vol. 40, issue 1–2, 2017, pp. 152–169, https://doi.org/10.1080/02703149.2016.1210964.

[34]  Bennett and Gates.

[35]  Bryant-Davis and Tummala-Narra; T Bryant-Davis, 'Cultural Considerations of Trauma: Physical, mental and social correlates of intimate partner violence exposure', *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, vol. 2, issue 4, 2010, pp. 263–265, https://doi.org/10.1037/a0022040.

[36]  D L Sidun *et al.*, 'Report of the Task Force on Trafficking of Women and Girls', American Psychological Association, Washington, D.C., 2014; R C Y Chung, 'Cultural Perspectives on Child Trafficking, Human Rights & Social Justice: A model for psychologists', *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, vol. 22, issue 1, 2009, pp. 85–96, https://doi.org/10.1080/09515070902761230; J Cwikel and E Hoban, 'Contentious Issues in Research on Trafficked Women Working in the Sex Industry: Study design, ethics, and methodology', *Journal of Sex Research*, vol. 42, issue 4, 2005, pp. 306–316, https://doi.org/10.1080/00224490509552286.

[37]  S Lindsay *et al.*, 'Social Workers as "Cultural Brokers" in Providing Culturally Sensitive Care to Immigrant Families Raising a Child with a Physical Disability', *Health & Social Work*, vol. 39, issue 2, 2014, pp. e10–e20, https://doi.org/10.1093/hsw/hlu009.

The limitations of both cultural competency and humility should also be taught to students. First, 'culture' is often reduced to focusing solely on race, ethnicity, and immigration status, which may not allow for an intersectional framework or a focus on other important identities. 'Culture' can be expanded to include other identities, such as gender, which would include increasing knowledge of the use of heteronormative and non-gender affirming language.[38] Instructors can highlight the importance of avoiding assumptions that a romantic partner is of the opposite sex, intake forms that are outdated and list sex and gender identity as either female or male, or referring to the individual as she or he if they have not indicated which gender pronouns they use.[39] Second, the culturally humble and competent education suggest that clients may hold differing marginalised or oppressed identities than that of the social workers, particularly regarding race and ethnicity. While it is true that the majority of US social workers are white, non-Hispanic cis-women,[40] these discussions could ostracise students who identify as BIPOC or LGBTQ+ by using white, cisgender, heterosexual social workers as referents. In addition, cultural humility may lead to tokenisation, as clients who are asked to describe pieces of their identity or experiences may feel that they are being asked to represent their entire culture and teach their social worker about oppression.[41] Finally, these frameworks do not actively challenge white supremacy and other identity-based dominations, which is essential.

*Anti-oppressive Practice*

Anti-oppressive practice (AOP) is the reflective and critical process of actively challenging domination at an interpersonal and structural level.[42] This framework acknowledges inequality, discrimination, and marginalisation particularly within

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[38] D E Smith and T M Moore, 'Family Violence and Aggression and Their Associations With Psychosocial Functioning in Jamaican Adolescents', *Journal of Family Issues*, vol. 34, issue 6, 2013, pp. 745–767, https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X12450841; F Anthias, 'The Intersections of Class, Gender, Sexuality and "Race": The political economy of gendered violence', *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, vol. 27, issue 2, 2014, pp. 153–171, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10767-013-9152-9.

[39] M P Andrasik *et al.*, 'Exploring Barriers and Facilitators to Participation of Male-to-Female Transgender Persons in Preventive HIV Vaccine Clinical Trials', *Prevention Science*, vol. 15, 2014, pp. 268–276, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11121-013-0371-0.

[40] Salsberg *et al.*

[41] A Lorde, *Sister Outsider: Essays and speeches,* Crossing Press, Berkeley, 1984, pp. 110–114.

[42] M B Cohen and A Mullender, 'The Personal in the Political: Exploring the group work continuum from individual to social change goals', *Social Work with Groups*, vol. 28, issue 3-4, 2005, pp. 187-204, https://doi.org/10.1300/J009v28n03_13.

and enacted globally by Western societies that require critical reflection.[43] Like cultural humility, social workers use this framework to examine social identities and gain awareness in addressing biases among people.[44] However, a key principle of AOP is for social workers to work towards acknowledging their own roles in perpetuating oppression and homogenising experiences in client groups. AOP demands specific worker actions towards equalising the power and position, particularly of client groups who enter spaces with various degrees of power.[45] Social workers using this framework actively prepare to address sexism, racism, heterosexism and other -isms that manifest individually, in groups, and across all cultural, legislative, and political practices.[46]

Instructors who teach social work students about AOP must highlight the importance of using an intersectional framework in discussing anti-racism. AOP reflects the intersectionality of oppression across identities, rather than focusing on anti-racist social work by itself.[47] Anti-racist social work and AOP should be linked because focusing on racism is an essential starting point for the anti-oppressive, anti-racist pathway in social work and the critically conscious approaches to understanding social workers' own power, privilege, and positionality.[48] For example, a social worker facilitating a support group of mixed-race, cisgender, heterosexual women survivors of trafficking must acknowledge the trauma of racism that has impacted the women of colour in the room.[49] Group participants will have likely experienced sexism that is inherent in gender-based violence and state responses to it, but acknowledging the intersectional role of racism is critical. This example bridges research to practice and uses an anti-oppressive, intersectional framework to addressing participants' trauma. At the policy level, AOP may facilitate students' learning about how prostitution

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[43] T Mattsson, 'Intersectionality as a Useful Tool: Anti-oppressive social work and critical reflection', *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work*, vol. 29, issue 1, 2014, pp. 8–17, https://doi.org/10.1177/0886109913510659.

[44] L Dominelli, 'Anti-oppressive Practice in Context', in R Adams *et al.* (eds.), *Social Work*, Palgrave, London, 1998, pp. 3–22, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-14400-6_1.

[45] Cohen and Mullender.

[46] *Ibid*; L Parrott, 'Constructive Marginality: Conflicts and dilemmas in cultural competence and anti-oppressive practice', *Social Work Education*, vol. 28, issue 6, 2009, pp. 617–630, https://doi.org/10.1080/02615470903027322.

[47] Mattsson.

[48] Dominelli.

[49] L B Gerassi, 'Experiences of Racism and Racial Tensions Among African American Women Impacted by Commercial Sexual Exploitation in Practice: A qualitative study', *Violence Against Women*, vol. 26, issue 5, 2020, pp. 438-457, https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801219835057; L B Gerassi, 'How Adult Women Who Trade Sex Navigate Social Services: A grounded theory study', *Feminist Criminology*, vol. 15, issue 2, 2020, pp. 196–216, https://doi.org/10.1177/1557085119885444.

policies impact people who experience intersectional oppressions across race, gender, sexual orientation, and class.

There are some documented debates in implementing AOP throughout curricula. Some scholars suggest that focusing on anti-racism alone is essential due to the whiteness of the social work landscape in the US,[50] while others note, and we agree, that AOP is inclusive of anti-racism.[51] Furthermore, it is not uncommon for social workers and social work students to struggle to connect AOP theories to practical skills associated with cognitive and behavioural interventions at the micro-level.[52] Such lack of connections underscores the need to demonstrate practical examples in the classroom that connect AOP to the micro, mezzo, and macro level social work.

## Applied Theoretical and Practice Frameworks in Curricula

Intersectional and AOP theoretical and practice frameworks should be integrated throughout social work curricula on trafficking as a means to give instructors opportunities to analyse and translate evidence into practice and action. To increase the practical nature of our courses, we draw from research and teaching experiences to provide examples that reinforce theoretical and practice frameworks through assignments, case examples, activities, and discussions.

*Micro Level Curricula*

Micro level curricula predominantly focus on individual level prevention, identification, and trauma-informed care to clients who have experienced or are at risk of trafficking for sexual exploitation. Above all, a focus on intersectional identities and AOPs should be maintained in lectures and small group experiences. For example, a class on prevention may integrate a lecture component critically

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[50]   C Williams, 'Connecting Anti-Racist and Anti-Oppressive Theory and Practice: Retrenchment or reappraisal?', *British Journal of Social Work*, vol. 29, issue 2, 1999, pp. 211–230, https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.bjsw.a011443.

[51]   M Graham, 'Honouring Social Work Principles—Exploring the connections between anti-racist social work and African-centred worldviews', *Social Work Education*, vol. 19, issue 5, 2000, pp. 423–436, https://doi.org/10.1080/026154700435959.

[52]   M L Raineri and V Calcaterra, 'Social Work Strategies against Crisis in Everyday Practice: An anti-oppressive case study', *International Social Work*, vol. 61, issue 1, 2018, pp. 130–142, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020872815606793; R Bhuyan, R Bejan and D Jeyapal, 'Social Workers' Perspectives on Social Justice in Social Work Education: When mainstreaming social justice masks structural inequalities', *Social Work Education*, vol. 36, issue 4, 2017, pp. 373–390, https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2017.1298741.

analysing readily available prevention curricula. Assigned readings could demonstrate that many prevention campaigns are targeted towards female, cisgender girls and may not be inclusive of a range of diverse identities.[53] Instructor-led discussions could challenge students to apply their theoretical knowledge to the prevention campaigns: who is this campaign targeted towards? Who is left out? What are some of its potential consequences? In small groups, students can then be asked to create and plan a prevention campaign initiative while integrating an AOP framework. Discussions should explore to what extent identity-based oppression is acknowledged in terms of how victimisation risk and commercial sex involvement manifests.

Similarly, trafficking risk assessments and direct practice (e.g., case management or therapy) should emphasise a person-centred approach that addresses the individual's intersectional identities. For example, a lecture on assessment strategies can guide students on conducting non-judgmental assessments that ask clients' permission to discuss any sex trading and emphasise clients' needs and wants. Diverse case examples can facilitate student discussions about trafficking red flags that may be observed in clients and the questions that might be relevant and helpful for social workers to explore with their clients. While these case examples can be drawn from documentaries, research studies, or survivor memoirs, it is essential that they be diverse in presentation and critically examined (i.e., from whose perspective is the story being told? What are the conditions under which the survivor may have published it? Is it possible the telling of their story was coerced in some way through a non-profit organisation to reproduce a formulaic survivor narrative?). Efforts should be made to prioritise those who experience intersecting forms of oppression and evaluate how such identities are de-emphasised in anti-trafficking discourses. Students should be asked to discuss how identity-based issues are relevant to the case presentation in individual or group work. For example, support groups that address trauma and substance use among survivors should also address the trauma of racism for BIPOC people in the groups, and explore how experiences of racism may have impacted some people differently than others.[54] Identity-broaching, the process of considering

[53]  Gerassi and Nichols; A J Nichols, 'Prevention and Outreach to At-Risk Groups', in A J Nichols, T E Edmond and E C Heil (eds.), *Social Work Practice with Survivors of Sex Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2018, pp. 358–379; L Goldblatt Grace *et al.*, 'Preventing the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children: The my life my choice model', in *ibid.*, pp. 335–357; L S Peffley and A J Nichols, 'Challenges to Sensational Imagery Used in the Antitrafficking Movement and Implications for Practice', in *ibid.*, pp. 380–404.

[54]  Gerassi, 'Experiences of Racism and Racial Tensions'; L J Guth *et al.*, 'Ten Strategies to Intentionally Use Group Work to Transform Hate, Facilitate Courageous Conversations, and Enhance Community Building', *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work*, vol. 44, issue 1, 2019, pp. 3–24, https://doi.org/10.1080/01933922.2018.156 1778.

how sociopolitical factors such as race influence clients' concerns, could be discussed as a strategy to develop skills to increase clinical alliances and alleviate distress for clients and counsellors who hold differing racial, ethnic, cultural, gender, sexual orientation, or other identities.[55] These lessons should build on other foundational social work coursework that address microaggressions in practice.[56] Throughout the class activities, an intersectional, AOP framework can be emphasised by translating theoretical concepts into discussions and advocacy actions for individuals, families, and groups.

*Mezzo Level Curricula*

On an organisational level, it is important that students understand that staff of diverse racial, ethnic, sexuality, and gendered backgrounds are part of organisations at all levels, so clients can see themselves reflected in the organisations.[57] Similarly, language and images on websites and organisational materials should also reflect diverse populations to avoid marginalisation and potential barriers to service access. Students should be prepared to advocate for organisations' inclusion in hiring practices and materials. In addition, mezzo level practice typically joins law enforcement, social service providers, healthcare providers, students, survivors, and researchers in the form of coordinated community responses (CCRs)[58] to share knowledge, potential resources, and coordinate services.[59] The importance of CCRs should be stressed to students, as some evidence suggests that CCR models can broadly reduce victimisation, increase well-being, and result in higher

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[55] N L Day-Vines *et al.*, 'The Multidimensional Model of Broaching Behavior', *Journal of Counseling and Development*, vol. 98, issue 1, 2020, pp. 107–118, https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12304; N L Day-Vines, J Bryan and D Griffin, 'The Broaching Attitudes and Behavior Survey (BABS): An exploratory assessment of its dimensionality', *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, vol. 41, issue 4, 2013, pp. 210–223, https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-1912.2013.00037.x.

[56] M S Spencer, 'Microaggressions and Social Work Practice, Education, and Research', *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, vol. 26, issue 1–2, 2017, pp. 1–5, https://doi.org/10.1080/15313204.2016.1268989.

[57] L B Gerassi and S Skinkis, 'An Intersectional Content Analysis of Inclusive Language and Imagery Among Sex Trafficking-Related Services', *Violence and Victims*, vol. 35, issue 3, 2020, pp. 400–417, https://doi.org/10.1891/VV-D-18-00204.

[58] Also known as multidisciplinary teams.

[59] K Foot, *Collaborating Against Human Trafficking: Cross-sector challenges and practices*, Rowman & Littlefield, London, 2016.

satisfaction with services for survivors.[60] However, instructors should prepare students for the diverse theoretical frameworks and tensions that can occur among CCR members regarding differing perspectives of agency and victimisation in the sex trade as well as language choices made (e.g., modern slavery, sex trafficking, sex work).[61] CCRs may result in the unintentional or intentional exclusion of some individuals involved in commercial sex and survivors of trafficking, such as LGBTQ+ members. Thus, teaching students about the benefits and challenges of CCR involvement as well as using practice-based case examples can facilitate students' critical reflections and advocacy. For example, a class exercise may prompt students to discuss social service provision with a new coalition member, who indicates that their housing services require participants to attend faith-based, abstinence-only education groups. Their programme also 'saves lives, saves souls, and changes futures' and they are committed to 'rescuing women and girls' and 'helping the helpless locally and globally'. Discussing the organisation's strengths (i.e., a housing programme in a field that has a dearth of services) and problematic practices (i.e., the racist, heterosexist and cisgenderist nature of their services, as well as the intersection of this type of language with white saviourism) as well as strategies for meeting clients' needs is a fruitful exercise for students.

Furthermore, organisations that are commonly represented in CCRs may use problematic images that reflect overt or colour-evasive racism.[62] For example, a common image used by anti-trafficking groups in the US is that of a Black man's hands over a young girl's mouth. This image perpetuates racist myths of trafficking, and mischaracterises Black men as traffickers of white, female children. Alternatively, imagery used may not be diverse at all, and only represent young

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60  M R Greeson and R Campbell, 'Sexual Assault Response Teams (SARTs): An empirical review of their effectiveness and challenges to successful implementation', *Trauma, Violence, and Abuse*, vol. 14, issue 2, 2013, pp. 83–95, https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838012470035; N E Allen, D I Bybee and C M Sullivan, 'Battered Women's Multitude of Needs: Evidence Supporting the Need for Comprehensive Advocacy', *Violence Against Women*, vol. 10, issue 9, 2004, pp. 1015–1035, https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801204267658.

61  A J Nichols, L B Gerassi and K Snider, 'What's in a Name? Benefits and challenges of anti-trafficking language in social service provider perspective', *Journal of Human Trafficking*, vol. 4, issue 1, 2018, pp. 73–85, https://doi.org/10.1080/23322705.2018.1423448; L B Gerassi, A Nichols and E Michelson, 'Lessons Learned: Benefits and challenges in interagency coalitions addressing sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation', *Journal of Human Trafficking*, vol. 3, issue 4, 2017, pp. 1–18, https://doi.org/10.1080/23322705.2016.1260345.

62  Peffley and Nichols.

white women as a manifestation of 'the ideal victim'.[63] This form of colour-evasive racism denies the disproportionate rates of trafficking for sexual exploitation experienced by BIPOC.[64] Encouraging students to question such imagery and make suggestions for change to CCR partners is an important part of education. Furthermore, some anti-trafficking trainings and community presentations often exclude LGBTQ+ people. Educating students to advocate for inclusive training curricula rooted in evidence is necessary to address oppression through omission, and to centre the lives of LGBTQ+ and BIPOC survivors in training and education endeavours.

*Macro Level Curricula*

An AOP framework is also vital for combating identity-based oppression on the macro level, typically centred on organisational or legislative policy work. Curricula drawn from evidence-based research should aim to 1) apply an intersectional framework to analyse existing policies, and 2) translate theory into action by teaching AOP and inclusive organisational, state, and federal policy development and advocacy. Providing students with scenarios and policies to analyse through the AOP theoretical framework can facilitate this type of learning. For example, the need for gender-affirming youth shelter policies supporting trans clients' access to residential space that aligns with their gender identity should be enforced. It is important that social work students learn to advocate for this type of policy at their local organisations. Policy analysis assignments can require students to apply theory when analysing the impact of any given policy on race, class, gender, ability, or sexual orientation, thereby preparing future social workers to think in terms of anti-oppressive, long-term, and potentially differential outcomes. We recommend offering reading assignments that have an intersectional focus and asking students to think critically about FOSTA-SESTA, two laws that have resulted in the closure of sites commonly used by sex workers to solicit clients, and its differential impact on those of varied race, class, gender identity, and undocumented status backgrounds.[65] More broadly, anti-trafficking education for social workers is strengthened by macro perspectives; for example, teaching the next generation of social workers about the importance of state and federal

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[63]   C Hoyle, M Bosworth and M Dempsey, 'Labelling the Victims of Sex Trafficking: Exploring the borderland between rhetoric and reality', *Social & Legal Studies*, vol. 20, issue 3, 2011, pp. 313–329, https://doi.org/10.1177/0964663911405394.

[64]   R Curtis *et al.*, *The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in New York City—Volume One: The CSEC population in New York City: Size, characteristics, and needs*, Center for Court Innovation, New York, December 2008; N G Chong, 'Human Trafficking and Sex Industry: Does Ethnicity and Race Matter?', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, vol. 35, issue 2, 2014, pp. 196–213, https://doi.org/10.1080/07256868.2014.885413.

[65]   K Albert *et al.,* 'FOSTA in Legal Context', *Columbia Human Rights Law Review,* vol. 52, issue 3, 2021, pp. 1084-1157.

policies that do not specifically address sex work or trafficking, but that support people who experience identity-based oppression such as Medicaid expansion as well as healthcare for all and living wage policies, among others. Discussions or assignments should help students draw connections between these policies and people who engage in sex work or experience trafficking, which will help them understand that broader efforts addressing weak social institutions and social safety nets will benefit many, including those experiencing trafficking. Using an AOP approach to take these actions may prevent social workers' perpetuation of violence and oppression.[66]

## Conclusion

This paper underscores the importance of using intersectional theoretical and practice frameworks that address interlocking oppressions and provide practical examples for instructors to apply such frameworks to micro, mezzo, and macro social work levels. Social work courses should highlight the importance of understanding social work implications across all three social work levels using anti-oppressive practice and an intersectional framework. The course design itself and class discussions of final projects should explicitly draw connections between the different levels. Whether education about trafficking and commercial sex involvement is a standalone class or integrated into a larger course, the design must integrate an intersectional, AOP framework that is both practice-informed and evidence-based, thereby translating knowledge into anti-oppressive action.

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[66]  Williams; Dominelli; SWCAREs.

# Human Trafficking Education for Emergency Department Providers

*Caroline Shadowen, Sarah Beaverson, and Fidelma B Rigby*

## Abstract

Many trafficked persons receive medical care in the Emergency Department (ED); however, ED staff have historically not been educated about human trafficking. In this article, we describe interventions aimed to train ED providers on the issue of trafficking. We performed a scoping review of the existing literature and found 17 studies that describe such interventions: 14 trainings implemented in the ED, two taught at conferences for ED providers, and one assessing a state-mandated training. These studies demonstrate that even brief education can improve provider confidence in screening and treating patients that experienced trafficking. We advocate for interventions to promote a team-based approach specific to the ED setting, acknowledge the importance of survivors' input on curriculum development, and assess outcomes using pre- and post-surveys.

**Keywords:** human trafficking, education, Emergency Department, healthcare provider

## Introduction

Human trafficking is a problem both worldwide and in the United States (US)[1] and it can cause a variety of health issues for survivors. Trafficking survivors are at high risk of mental health issues like complex post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), substance use disorders, and self-harm due to repeated exposure to unpredictable physical and psychological violence. Trafficking survivors also suffer higher rates of injury, untreated chronic conditions, undesired pregnancies, and sexually

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[1] 'Forced Labour, Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking', International Labour Organization, 2014, retrieved 18 October 2020, https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/forced-labour/lang--en/index.htm.

transmitted infections (STIs).[2] Since trafficking relies on secrecy and isolation, it is common for trafficked persons to come into contact with professional services only when they visit a healthcare provider.[3] Therefore, medical visits offer an opportunity for trafficked persons to receive much-needed medical assistance, as well as other resources for their complex psychosocial needs.[4]

In the US, the Emergency Department (ED) is an area of a hospital originally designated to triage and provide initial treatment for urgent or emergent medical complaints. EDs are the only care sites of the US health system mandated by federal regulation to provide care for all patients, regardless of their health condition or medical insurance coverage.[5] Due to this provision, the ED has become the primary 'medical home' for many patients who have no access to other forms of healthcare.[6] Over time, the ED has evolved to provide general medical care for patients with non-urgent issues (e.g., medication refill or preventative Pap smear) and to generate referrals for patients to see other providers (e.g., social workers or specialist physicians).[7] The ED is a critical location for care provision to individuals such as trafficked persons who would otherwise have no access to medical services.

Most trafficked persons in the US interact with the medical system primarily in the ED because they lack medical insurance, regular or legal status in the country, or access to other medical care.[8] Despite frequent contact with trafficked persons,

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[2]   LJ Lederer and CA Wetzel, 'The Health Consequence of Sex Trafficking and Their Implications for Identifying Victims in Healthcare Facilities', *Annals of Health Law,* vol. 23, issue 1, 2014, pp. 61–91.

[3]   'Social Isolation and Sex Trafficking', Samuel Centre For Social Connectedness, 7 December 2015, https://www.social- connectedness.org/links-between-bullying-isolation-and-sex-trafficking.

[4]   L Waugh, 'Human Trafficking and the Health Care System', *NCSL Legisbrief*, vol. 26, issue 14, 2018, pp. 1–2.

[5]   WW Fields *et al.*, 'The Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act as a Federal Health Care Safety Net Program', *Acad Emerg Med*, vol. 8, issue 11, 2008, pp. 1064–1069, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1553-2712.2001.tb01116.x.

[6]   K Primm, D Muraleetharan, and T Gilreath, 'Use of Emergency Departments for Preventative Care Among Adults in the United States: Estimates from the 2017 National Health Interview Survey', *Public Health in Emergency Medicine*, vol. 57, issue 4, 2019, pp. 578–586, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jemermed.2019.06.004.

[7]   LS Zun and L Downey, 'Adult Health Screening and Referral in the Emergency Department', *South Med J*, vol. 99, issue 9, 2006, pp. 940–948, http://doi.org/10.1097/01.smj.0000224130.29337.19.

[8]   M Chisolm-Straker *et al.*, 'Health Care and Human Trafficking: We are seeing the unseen', *J Health Care Poor Underserved*, vol. 27, issue 3, 2016, pp. 1220–1233, https://doi.org/10.1353/hpu.2016.0131.

ED personnel have historically not received adequate education and training about trafficking.[9] Doctors, nurses, and other healthcare workers in the ED are often ill-equipped to recognise trafficked persons, screen them, or refer them to appropriate services. This lack of education and training contributes significantly to negative health outcomes for this population.[10]

A recent systematic review of human trafficking educational interventions demonstrated that educating healthcare providers can improve their confidence and the care they deliver to trafficked patients.[11] Despite this evidence and the disproportionately high use of the ED by trafficked persons, there has been no thorough review of educational interventions on trafficking for ED providers. A review is necessary to determine how ED providers are currently educated about trafficking and where the gaps lie in training.

This article provides a scoping review of the literature on trafficking educational interventions for ED providers. We describe the interventions, summarise common themes among them, and discuss our recommendations for future educational tools, as well as describe opportunities for future research.

## Methodology

We utilised the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis Extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR)[12] to conduct a scoping review. We chose a scoping review because our objective was to explore the existing literature on a topic that has not been reviewed in either a scoping or systematic protocol, rather than to systematically evaluate and compare current

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[9]   P Arulrajah and S Steele, 'UK Medical Education on Human Trafficking: Assessing uptake of the opportunity to shape awareness, safeguarding and referral in the curriculum', *BMC Med Educ*, vol. 18, issue 1, 2018, article no. 137, https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-018-1226-y.

[10]  M Chisolm-Straker, LD Richardson, and T Cossio, 'Combating Slavery in the 21st Century: The role of emergency medicine', *J Health Care Poor Underserved*, issue 3, 2012, pp. 980–987, https://doi.org/10.1353/hpu.2012.0091.

[11]  HE Fraley, T Aronowitz, and HM Stoklosa, 'Systematic Review of Human Trafficking Educational Interventions for Health Care Providers', *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, vol. 42, issue 2, 2020, pp. 131–142, https://doi.org/10.1177/0193945919837366.

[12]  AC Tricco, *et al.*, 'PRISMA Extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR): Checklist and explanation', *Ann Intern Med*, vol. 169, issue 7, 2018, pp. 467–473, https://doi.org/10.7326/M18-0850.

literature on the topic.[13]

*Research Question*

The objective of this study was to investigate evidence addressing the research question: 'What studies exist in the current literature that aim to educate ED providers on the issue of human trafficking?'

*Study Identification*

We searched the following databases from their inception until 2 November 2020: MEDLINE/PubMed, Ovid EMBASE, CINAHL, ERIC, MedEdPortal, Sociological Abstracts, and Academic Search Complete. The search strategies were drafted by first author Shadowen and further refined through discussion with an experienced academic librarian. We piloted the search in MEDLINE and included the following terms: ('Human Trafficking'[MeSH] OR human trafficking OR sex trafficking) AND ('Emergency Service, Hospital'[MeSH] OR 'Emergency Medical Services'[MeSH] OR 'ED' OR 'emergency department' OR 'emergency room'). Terms were subsequently adapted to and searched in each of the included databases. A total of 757 records were identified. These references were exported into EndNote. After first author Shadowen removed duplicates, 493 unique publications remained.

As a secondary source, we searched Google Scholar from the inception of the database through 5 April 2021. First, the search included the following terms [allintitle: (education OR training) AND ("human trafficking") AND ("emergency department" OR "ED")]. Two results were identified. Next, we searched (allintitle: [education OR training] AND ["human trafficking"]). As a result of this search, 107 results were identified.

*Study Selection*

We used the following inclusion criteria to determine if the articles were eligible for final selection: (1) performed on human subjects; (2) related to human trafficking; (3) included an educational intervention specific to US-based ED healthcare professionals; and (4) published in English. We screened article titles

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[13] A **systematic** review is a method of research synthesis that utilises a structured protocol of retrieving and evaluating current literature to answer a research question, thereby minimising bias. A **scoping** review, while still considered rigorous, aims more so to evaluate gaps in knowledge in the current literature regarding a specific topic, often with the goal of acting as a precursor for a future systematic review. See Z Munn, *et al.*, 'Systematic Review or Scoping Review? Guidance for authors when choosing between a systematic or scoping review approach', *BMC Med Res Methodol*, vol. 18, 2018, article 143, https://doi.org/10.1186/s12874-018-0611-x.

and abstracts of the 602 publications that remained after our database search and excluded 557 articles because they did not meet the above criteria.

Some systematic review papers include snowballing of citations, which is when authors use a paper's citation or reference list to find additional relevant papers for the current review.[14] This approach can be considered when results from a primary literature search are especially limited. Since we determined our primary and secondary searches to be adequately exhaustive, and our research team had limited resources, we chose not to perform snowballing of citations for this paper.

Authors Shadowen and Beaverson completed a full-text review for the remaining 45 articles based on the same criteria listed above. After the full-text review, 28 additional articles were excluded, and 17 articles remained.

*Data Extraction*

During the full-text review, the research team extracted the following information from each of the 17 included articles: citation information; article objective(s); clinical setting (e.g., urban versus rural hospital or annual patient census); description of educational intervention (e.g., time requirement or in-person versus virtual); outcomes (if measured); and unique features of each. We used a spreadsheet to track the information abstracted for each study. We decided not to assess the quality of each study using any standardised quality measure because our study was exploratory in nature and aimed to describe the existing literature on this topic and gaps therein, rather than to describe or compare the academic rigor of each study.

## Findings

Overall, our scoping review yielded 17 articles describing the results of an educational intervention on human trafficking for ED providers. We summarise these studies in chronological order.

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[14]  C Wohlin, 'Guidelines for Snowballing in Systematic Literature Studies and a Replication in Software Engineering', Proceedings of the 18th International Conference on Evaluation and Assessment in Software Engineering, Blekinge Institute of Technology, https://www.wohlin.eu/ease14.pdf.

## Table 1. Summary of studies in the literature evaluating HT educational interventions for ED providers (n=17).

| Resource | Setting | Participants | Educational Intervention | Findings |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chisolm-Straker *et al.* (2012) | - **4 EDs in Northeast United States** (all with annual census >100,000) | - pre: n=180, intervention/ post: n=104 - **nurses, physicians, PAs, social workers, medical students** | - **didactic training session using narrative of actual encounter** | - 98% had never received formal training on clinical presentation of trafficked persons - **pre: 19.2% (very) confident in identifying/ treating; post: 90.3%** - developed toolkit specific to ED providers (humantraffickingED. com) |
| Grace *et al.* (2014) | - **20 San Francisco Bay Area EDs** - implemented in division/ department meetings or educational Grand Rounds | - n=258 - **majority ED physicians** - **physicians, nurses, and social workers** | - developed w/ local police + HT educators - **in-person PowerPoint including local cases, referral options** - short (25min) and long (60min) versions | - **pre: 7.2% (very) knowledgeable about referral resources; post: 59%** - **pre: 24% knew who to call; post: 100%** - no significant differences between short and long versions |
| Lamb *et al.* (2015) | - **ED in Southwestern Texas** (annual census 173,225) - at time of study, no identified HT cases in ED | - n=34 - **attending and resident physicians, nurses, and medical students** | - **in-person, one-hour, multimedia, interactive presentation** - provided participants w/ ID badge card w/ key resources | - **pre: knowledgeable 3.2 (on 5-pt Likert scale); post: 4.2** - **pre: trauma-informed 2.2; post: 4.1** - implemented additional training into continuing education |
| Cosgrove (2016) | - **urban ED in South Philadelphia, PA** (annual census 43,000) | - n=114 - **new nurses in ED, security staff, other 'key personnel'** | - **training from The Philadelphia Anti-Human Trafficking Coalition** (pre-tested) | - 100% participants had not received previous HT training - **pre: confidence 1.65 (on 5-pt Likert scale); post: 4.01** - EMR evaluated x6mos, did not identify any suspected trafficked persons - implemented additional training into nurse triage training and skills fair |
| Egyud *et al.* (2017) | - **ED of level 2 trauma center in Southwest Pennsylvania** (annual census 41,000) - implemented at change of shift | - n=102 - **nurses, physicians, lab, social services, radiology, administration, transport** | - **in-person training w/ supplementary video materials** developed by interprofessional team - binder with materials kept at nursing station | - **post-survey: 97% committed to changing practice** - **post: 74% stated education improved competence** - EMR evaluated x5mos, identified 38 potential victims |
| Ford (2017) | - **ED in Maine hospital system** (annual census 100,000) - implemented in nursing huddle | - n=19 - **nurses** | - **in-person 5-minute presentation given during nursing huddle** | - **pre: confidence 15%** - **pre: >50% thought it was a problem in their community, but >50% did not know proper resources** - significant improvement in knowledge questions |
| Cole *et al.* (2018) | - **annual meeting of Society for Academic Emergency Medicine** | - n=19 - **attending and resident ED physicians** | - **in-person 'train-the-trainer' approach: clinical scenarios + teaching scripts** | - **pre- and post-survey all w/ p<0.001** - largest difference between pre- and post-scores: ability to instruct others |
| Normandin (2018) | - **ED of urban, pediatric and adult, level 1 trauma center in Boston, MA** | - n=18 - **nurses** - majority w/ >20years ED experience | - **online training** - included information about identifying and referring patients | - no previous HT education: 88.9% - **pre score: mean 14.06, post: 28.14** (significant increase, p<0.001) |
| Sakamoto (2018) | - **ED of women and children's hospital in Honolulu, Hawai'i** (annual census 44,000) - implemented during departmental meeting | - pre: n=38, intervention: n=38, post: n=48 - **ED providers, nurses, and non-clinicians** - majority nurses w/ >10years ED experience | - **in-person training in the ED** - included screening questions for provider use + smart phrase in EMR - focus on Hawai'i data | - **pre: (somewhat) knowledgeable 47.3%; post: 80.0%** - **pre: (somewhat) confident 39.5%; post: 50.0%** - EMR evaluated x4mos, identified 2 reports of suspected trafficking |

| Resource | Setting | Participants | Educational Intervention | Findings |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Alderman (2019) | - rural ED in Virginia | - n=19<br>- nurses, physicians, PAs, social workers, NPs, nurse assistants, security<br>- majority nurses, nurse assistants | - used HEAL Trafficking and Hope for Justice Protocol Toolkit (pre-tested)<br>- in-person seminar | - improvements in awareness, recognition signs/sxs, interviewing, intervention by median 1 point on Likert scale |
| Donahue *et al.* (2019) | - ED of community hospital in suburban Pennsylvania (annual census 170,000) | - pre survey: n=75, post: n=56<br>- nurses, physicians, NPs, PAs, registration, techs<br>- majority nurses w/ >2 years ED experience<br>- | - evidence-based online training module w/ PowerPoint + case studies (HTEmergency. com)<br>- 20 minutes | - pre: 89% had not received previous HT training<br>- pre: <50% had comprehensive understanding of HT; post: 93%<br>- pre: confidence in treating trafficked person 4/10; post: 8/10 |
| Noyes (2019) | - implemented at quarterly sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE) training in New Hampshire | - intervention: n=28, post-survey: n=14<br>- SANEs attending training | - in-person, 60-minute education course with PowerPoint<br>- provided victim identification tool (validated) | - overall agree/strongly agree that information was helpful<br>- comments positive |
| Adelung (2020) | - surveyed ED providers in New Jersey | - post: n=110<br>- nurses, physicians, PAs, NPs<br>- majority nurses w/ >10yr ED experience | - mandated training (varied by location) w/ average time of 1.85hrs<br>- PROTECT survey instrument* (pre-tested) modified for the study | - generally, perception of training impact was positive<br>- 80% training increased HT awareness 'some' to 'a lot'<br>- less of an impact on their ability to treat trafficked patients |
| Cummings (2020) | - ED of small community hospital in Pennsylvania | - pre: n=38, pre + intervention: n=26, post or all 3: n=17<br>- nurses | - education included validated screening tool<br>- survey designed based on evidence in literature | - no statistically significant differences between pre- and post-tests<br>- postulated possibly due to previous knowledge |
| Derr (2020) | - ED of large private hospital in SoCal | - pre: n=139, post: n=129<br>- all ED staff including environmental services (EVS) | - validated training algorithm including resources, red flags, reporting<br>- provided signs with pull tabs throughout the department<br>- training to EVS in English and Spanish | - yes/no questions: pre confidence to report 83; post 110<br>- pre knowledge 48; post 112<br>- EMR evaluated x12mos: 41 possible physical abuse, 38 possible sexual abuse, 19 possible exploitation |
| Tiller *et al.* (2020) | - ED of academic, urban county hospital in North Carolina (annual census 85,000) | - faculty, learners, ancillary staff | - used HEAL Trafficking and Hope for Justice Protocol Toolkit** (pre-tested)<br>- in-person lecture given by law enforcement | - no surveys<br>- emphasised importance of teamwork and how to give resources to patients who decline assistance |
| Greiner-Weinstein *et al.* (2021) | - ED of urban academic hospital in Chicago (annual patient census 24,000) | - nurses + social workers | - e-learning educational tool focusing on red flags -<br>validated pre/post-test<br>- included EMR protocol | - exam scores: pre 77%; post 93%<br>- 89% would apply to practice |

\*    C Ross *et al.*, 'Human Trafficking and Health: A cross-sectional survey of NHS professionals' contact with victims of human trafficking*', BMJ Open*, vol. 5, issue 8, e008682, 2015, https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2015-008682.

\*\*    SB Baldwin, J Barrows, and H Stoklosa, 'Protocol Toolkit for Developing a Response to Victims of Human Trafficking', HEAL Trafficking and Hope for Justice, 2017, https://healtrafficking.org/protocol-toolkit-for-developing-a-response-to-victims-of-human-trafficking-in-health-care-settings.

Generally, pre-intervention surveys indicated a lack of knowledge and confidence amongst all levels of ED staff, regardless of hospital location or the type of participants included (e.g., clinical versus non-clinical). Interventions were completed both online and in-person and most typically took place during shift changes or at department-wide meetings. Post-intervention surveys consistently demonstrated significant improvement in providers' understanding of the issue of trafficking and their confidence interacting with trafficked patients.

The settings of studies reflect the diversity of the US healthcare system, with studies taking place all over the country, including many different categories of ED staff, and in a wide variety of EDs. Interventions were implemented in locations across the US, including California,[15] New Hampshire,[16] and Hawai'i.[17] Most interventions were implemented *in vivo* in their respective ED, each of which served an annual patient census ranging from 24,000 to 173,000.

The total number of participants included in each intervention ranged from 14 (Noyes) to 258 (Grace *et al.*). Most of the studies included multiple categories of ED staff, while a few focused on specific groups: nurses;[18] sexual assault nurse examiners or SANES (Noyes); or physicians (Cole *et al.*). Participants in one-third of the interventions[19] involved non-clinical staff: registration and security

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[15] AM Grace *et al.*, 'Educating Health Care Professionals on Human Trafficking', *Pediatr Emerg Care*, vol. 30, issue 12, 2014, pp. 856–861, https://doi.org/10.1097/PEC.0000000000000287 and L Derr, 'Human Trafficking 2.0: Awareness, assessment & assistance beyond the emergency care center', *St. Joseph Hospital, Orange, CA. Evidence Based Practice Conference*, 26, 2020.

[16] CL Noyes, 'Human Trafficking Recognition and Response Training for Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners in New Hampshire Emergency Departments', *Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Projects,* 182, 2019.

[17] KK Sakamoto, 'Sex Trafficking Assessment Protocol for Medical Professionals in the Emergency Department', University of Hawai'i at Manoa DNP Thesis, 2018.

[18] KA Cummings, 'An Educational Intervention to Increase Emergency Department Nurse's Knowledge and Confidence in Recognizing Victims of Human Trafficking', *Regis University Student Publications*, thesis 982, 2020; PA Normandin, 'Human Trafficking Online Educational Training to Increase Emergency Nurses' Knowledge, Self-Efficacy, Skills in Identification, and Referral of Human Trafficking Survivors', Tufts Medical Center & Floating Hospital for Children, 2018; and Ford.

[19] C Cosgrove, 'Increasing Awareness about Human Trafficking: Education for frontline healthcare providers', Master of Public Health Thesis and Capstone Presentation, Thomas Jefferson University, presentation 198, 2016; SL Alderman, 'An Education Implementation Project in an Emergency Department to Increase Awareness and Referral for Trafficked Person Encounters', Doctoral Dissertations and Projects, Liberty University, project 2002, 2019; S Donahue, M Schwien, and D LaVallee, 'Educating Emergency Department Staff on the Identification and Treatment of Human Trafficking Victims', *J Emerg Nurs*, vol. 45, issue 1, 2019, pp. 16–23, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jen.2018.03.021; as well as Egyud *et al.*, Sakamoto, Derr, and Tiller *et al.*

personnel, patient transporters, and environmental service workers. Only a few studies[20] involved learners, such as medical students, in their interventions. A unique feature of one study (Derr) was that it offered participants the choice between an English and a Spanish language version of the intervention.

Methods for delivering the educational material similarly reflected the dynamic nature of the ED setting: two studies (Grace *et al.* and Sakamoto) implemented their brief training at departmental meetings or didactic sessions, and two others were delivered at shift change meetings—one multidisciplinary[21] and one nursing huddle.[22] Two of the interventions (Noyes and Cole *et al.*[23]) were implemented at conferences for ED providers, and one consisted of a survey emailed to professional listservs of ED providers to assess the impact of a state-mandated human trafficking training.[24] Several of the studies mentioned a lack of awareness in their particular EDs on the issue of trafficking despite high numbers of trafficking cases reported locally.[25]

Intervention design also varied widely, with some trainings consisting of a few online modules[26] and others carried out in-person (Grace *et al.*, Lamb *et al.*, Egyud

[20]  J Tiller and S Reynolds, 'Human Trafficking in the Emergency Department: Improving our response to a vulnerable population', *West J Emerg Med*, vol. 21, issue 3, 2020, pp. 549–554, https://doi.org/10.5811/westjem.2020.1.41690; as well as Chisolm-Straker *et al.*, 2012, Lamb *et al.*

[21]  A Egyud, *et al.*, 'Implementation of Human Trafficking Education and Treatment Algorithm in the Emergency Department', *J Emerg Nurs*, vol. 43, issue 6, 2017, pp. 526–531, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jen.2017.01.008.

[22]  S Ford, 'Sexual Trafficking: Developing a teaching strategy for emergency department registered nurses', Honors College, 2017, https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/honors/299.

[23]  MA Cole, *et al.*, 'A Theory-based Didactic Offering Physicians a Method for Learning and Teaching Others About Human Trafficking', *AEM Educ Train,* vol. 2, issue s1, 2018, pp. S25–S30, https://doi.org/10.1002/aet2.10206.

[24]  M Adelung, 'Human Trafficking: The efficacy of a mandatory training on the competency of emergency department providers', Sigma's VIRTUAL 31st International Nursing Research Congress, 2020, https://sigma.nursingrepository.org/bitstream/handle/10755/21211/Adelung_Abstract.pdf.

[25]  GS Lamb and C Tsai, 'Human Trafficking Educational Initiative in a Pediatric Emergency Department: A multidisciplinary approach', American Academy of Pediatrics National Conference & Exhibition, paper 32238, 2015, https://aap.confex.com/aap/2015/webprogrampress/Paper32238.html.

[26]  G Greiner-Weinstein, A Klopp, and V Bacidore, 'Implementing an Interprofessional Human Trafficking Program in the Emergency Department: An evidence-based quality improvement initiative', Loyola Palmer Research Symposium, Asynchronous Poster #7, 2021, https://ecommons.luc.edu/loyola_palmerresearchsymposium/2021/Asynchronous_Posters; as well as Donahue *et al.* and Normandin.

*et al.,* Ford, Cole *et al.*, Sakamoto, Alderman, Noyes, and Tiller *et al.*). In general, trainings covered how to recognise signs of trafficking, local resources, and other elements like advice from law enforcement officers and tips from social workers in the community. Four studies contained narratives of actual encounters between providers and patients (Chisolm-Straker *et al.*, 2012, Grace *et al.,* Cole *et al.,* and Donahue *et al.*), with one of those including de-identified information from cases that had taken place locally (Grace *et al.*). The time required to complete the interventions ranged from 5 (Ford) to 111 minutes (Adelung). One unique study (Grace *et al.*) provided both a short (25-minute) and a long (60-minute) version of their educational tool. Survey instruments and trainings were all evidence-based, with three containing a validated component (Noyes, Derr, Greiner-Weinstein *et al.*), and four containing a pretested component (Cosgrove, Alderman, Adelung, and Tiller *et al.*)

Interventions were shown to be quite effective overall in improving provider-reported knowledge and confidence. All studies but one (Tiller *et al.*) utilised pre- or post-surveys or tests to evaluate outcomes; most utilised both pre- and post-surveys, and three assessed post-survey responses only (Egyud *et al.*, Noyes, and Adelung).

Pre-tests demonstrated a general lack of previous training on trafficking, with up to 98 per cent (Chisolm-Straker *et al.*, 2012) and 100 per cent (Cosgrove) of participants reporting they had never received formal training on the topic. Pre-test confidence was quite low amongst most participants: 15 per cent of Ford's nursing cohort indicated confidence identifying trafficked persons, and Cosgrove's participants rated their confidence a mean of 1.65 on a 5-point Likert scale, with 5 being highest confidence.

All but one of the studies (Cummings) that assessed post-survey knowledge or confidence found significant improvement post-intervention. For example, Donahue's pre-test indicated that less than 50 per cent of participants had a comprehensive understanding of trafficking, while post-test results increased to 93 per cent. In that same study, overall confidence in treating trafficked persons was 4/10 pre-test and increased to 8/10 post-test. By contrast, Cummings postulated that the lack of significant improvement post-intervention among its participants could have been due to high levels of knowledge prior to the intervention.

In addition to assessing outcomes of an intervention on providers, several studies evaluated the Electronic Medical Record (EMR) to investigate impacts on patients. Derr evaluated the EMR for 12 months after the intervention, finding nearly 100 cases of possible physical abuse, sexual abuse, or exploitation. Cosgrove evaluated the EMR for six months post-intervention and did not identify any suspected trafficked persons. Egyud evaluated the EMR for five months post-intervention and identified 38 potential victims. Sakamoto assessed the EMR for four months and found two suspected trafficked persons.

Several studies included an extra component to aid staff in making necessary changes to their clinical care for suspected trafficked patients. Lamb provided participants with a card to attach to their ID badge with key local resources to share with patients. Sakamoto's and Greiner-Weinstein's clinical participants were given a smartphrase (an abbreviation that inserts a pre-programmed paragraph of written content into the note) or recording protocol to help with patient documentation in the EMR. The SANE participants in Noyes' study were provided with a validated victim identification tool to use when screening patients after their training. The hospital where Derr's study took place was provided with posters to hang in the ED that included local resources written on pull tabs for patients to take as needed.

## Discussion

Our literature review demonstrated that all but one study assessed outcomes of a human trafficking educational intervention, demonstrating that training increased provider comfort with recognising and treating trafficked persons. Furthermore, several studies investigated patient outcomes, illuminating increased identification of and resource provision for patients post-intervention. Though there is a dearth of studies describing and evaluating human trafficking trainings for ED providers, even brief educational initiatives—especially those tailored to the unique physical and logistical constraints of an ED and informed by survivors—can improve awareness of and clinical competence in this critical area. Trafficking education has historically not been integrated into training for ED personnel and, consequently, staff have had limited confidence in their ability to address the issue. There is no evidence to our knowledge of any of the reviewed approaches being superior to the others, and comparative studies have not yet been conducted. Further research is needed to compare and validate these ED-specific educational interventions to close gaps in the current literature.

Though we found an overall lack of peer-reviewed studies on the topic of human trafficking education for ED providers, there has been increased awareness in recent years, with studies emerging in the 'grey literature' in the form of poster presentations and theses. These data support the ED as a critical place of opportunity to engage with trafficked persons in care, as well as the notion that when ED providers feel knowledgeable about how to triage and treat trafficked persons, these patients' medical care improves.[27] Because the ED is often a primary 'medical home' for many vulnerable patients, it is increasingly viewed as a place

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[27] CL Hua, AR Bardo, and JS Brown, 'Mistrust in Physicians Does Not Explain Black-white Disparities in Primary Care and Emergency Department Utilization: The importance of socialization during the Jim Crow era', *J Natl Med Assoc*, vol. 110, issue 6, 2018, pp. 540–546, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jnma.2018.01.006.

where providers should receive training to give comprehensive, non-judgmental care.[28] When patients feel that they are in a safe and non-biased environment, they may be more comfortable to speak about their situation and ask for resources.[29] While the goal of treatment of trafficked patients is not to force disclosure, it is imperative for ED providers to create an atmosphere of support and expertise to optimise patient interactions. Comprehensive training can increase confidence and the ability to produce a safer setting.

*Mandated Training on Human Trafficking*

All of the studies we reviewed that assessed provider-reported measures found deficiencies prior to the educational intervention. Lack of knowledge and confidence are major barriers to optimal care provision for trafficked persons. As attention is drawn to the issue, more resources are being allocated to develop triage protocols and care partnerships.[30] For example, many US states now require training on human trafficking when providers recertify their licenses.[31] One of the studies we reviewed (Adelung) found that mandated training was efficacious for participants because it increased baseline awareness of trafficking across different training levels. Because literature on other healthcare issues reveals that increased provider confidence can improve patient outcomes,[32] our hope is that increased provider confidence in interacting with trafficked patients may improve those outcomes as well. ED administrators and providers need to be educated on trafficking as an important issue so that resources and protocols can be in place for the proper screening and treatment of patients. For example, an ED can have universal screening questions in place that ED providers ask all patients. ED providers may also be given an algorithm to follow if a patient screens positive, such as alerting a social worker and using a template to document their findings in the EMR. Furthermore, EDs can consider incorporating training materials at department meetings or educational conferences.

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[28] K Ruben, K Mortensen, and B Eldridge, 'Emergency Department Referral Process and Subsequent Use of Safety-Net Clinics', *J Immigr Minor Health*, vol. 17, issue 5, 2015, pp. 1298–304, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10903-014-0111-y.

[29] RM Hermann, E Long, and RL Trotta, 'Improving Patients' Experiences Communicating with Nurses and Providers in the Emergency Department', *J Emerg Nurs*, vol. 45, issue 5, 2019, pp. 523–530, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jen.2018.12.001.

[30] Tiller and Reynolds.

[31] 'Michigan Human Trafficking: Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs required mandatory human trafficking training for health professionals', Biologix Solutions, retrieved 30 March 2021, https://blxtraining.com/human-trafficking-training; 'Human Trafficking', FL HealthSource, https://www.flhealthsource.gov/humantrafficking, retrieved 11 July 2021.

[32] K Owens and S Keller, 'Exploring Workforce Confidence and Patient Experiences: A quantitative analysis', *Patient Experience Journal*, vol. 5, issue 1, 2018, pp. 97–105.

*Focusing Interventions on the ED*

In addition to evaluating the impact of an educational intervention, one of the studies we reviewed aimed to develop a human trafficking screening tool specific to the needs of an ED (Chisolm-Straker *et al.*, 2012). Despite the high prevalence of trafficking and its interface in the ED, there are few standardised screening protocols for how ED providers should treat potentially trafficked patients. When surveyed, survivors of trafficking noted that they repeatedly visited the ED and wondered why the frequency and nature of their visits did not 'raise a red flag'.[33] This finding indicates the potential missed opportunities that occur for providers to connect with patients and screen them for trafficking.

For EDs that do have screening protocols, the most common assessment method are universal questions on feelings of safety (e.g., asking every patient, 'Do you feel safe at home'?).[34] Many healthcare institutions—EDs in particular—have attempted to develop screening protocols to identify and treat trafficked patients.[35] Methods for quick, universal screenings in the ED are currently in process of validation,[36] which is greatly needed for effective care. We know from the ED literature that screening tools in the ED are most effective when they are short, computer-based, and given to patients while waiting to see a provider.[37] These same characteristics should be applied to screening measures focused on potentially trafficked persons.

Several of the studies we reviewed gave nurses and physicians specific 'red flag' medical complaints to be aware of when attempting to identify trafficked persons. In the ED, trafficked persons often present themselves with acute physical manifestations of physical and sexual violence (e.g., pelvic pain, STIs, or injuries).

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[33] 'A Roadmap for Systems and Industries to Prevent and Disrupt Human Trafficking Health Care', Polaris, retrieved 6 October 2020, https://polarisproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/A-Roadmap-for-Systems-and-Industries-to-Prevent-and-Disrupt-Human-Trafficking-Health-Care.

[34] JD Dols, *et al.*, 'Human Trafficking Victim Identification, Assessment, and Intervention Strategies in South Texas Emergency Departments', *J Emerg Nurs*, vol. 45, issue 6, 2019, pp. 622–633, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jen.2019.07.002.

[35] VJ Greenbaum, *et al.,* 'Multi-level Prevention of Human Trafficking: The role of health care professionals', *Prev Med*, vol. 114, 2018, pp. 164–167, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ypmed.2018.07.006.

[36] M Chisolm-Straker *et al.*, 'Building RAFT: Trafficking screening tool derivation and validation methods', *Acad Emerg Med*, vol. 27, issue 4, 2020, pp. 297–304, https://doi.org/10.1111/acem.13888.

[37] SG Weiner, JA Hoppe, and MD Finkelman, 'Techniques to Shorten a Screening Tool for Emergency Department Patients', *West J Emerg Med*, vol. 20, issue 5, 2019, pp. 804–809, https://doi.org/10.5811/westjem.2019.7.42938.

Their acute physical complaints may also manifest as traumas from hazardous work or living conditions (e.g., weight loss or dehydration).[38] Even when trafficked persons do not arrive at the ED with a life-threatening physical symptom, they need to be thoroughly examined and screened. Trafficked persons have been shown to have higher rates of chronic diseases, which may present themselves in more insidious and nuanced ways than acute conditions.[39] Additional research is needed to evaluate the incorporation of trafficking-informed care into primary care, where these chronic diseases can be more thoroughly addressed and treated.

*Strengths of Survivor Input on Training*

The content of trafficking training is critical to its usefulness in the clinical setting. Historically, there have been multiple misrepresentations and misguided principles perpetuated in trafficking education; for example, trainings have at times over-emphasised trafficking in the sex trade and under-emphasised trafficking in other sectors,[40] both of which may narrow the scope of 'who' is anticipated to be a potential victim. Similarly, instructing health care providers to only focus on 'red flags', though helpful in some cases, may rely on the experience (and biases) of the providers[41] and therefore impact who is screened or treated. Training, therefore, must involve a nuanced conversation about different forms of trafficking in the context of the respective local areas, including a frank dialogue about the appropriate involvement of law enforcement.

Human trafficking training for healthcare providers must be informed by survivors. One of the studies discussed in this review included what the authors referred to as a 'rescue plan' in the resources given to providers (Egyud *et al.*). Though treatment plans have historically stated goals like patient 'rescue' and 'disclosure', trafficking advocates called for a move away from such terminology and aims, toward a trauma-informed approach focused not on 'rescue' but rather on universal education and violence prevention that acknowledges that all patients

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[38]  'Labor Trafficking in the US: A closer look at temporary work visas', Polaris, 2015, retrieved 8 October 2020, https://polarisproject.org/resources/labor-trafficking-in-the-us-a-closer-look-at-temporary-work-visas.

[39]  SJ McConkey, *et al.,* 'Sex Trafficking in Ireland from a Health Care Perspective', *Ir Med J,* vol. 107, issue 9, 2014, pp. 270–272.

[40]  T Bonilla and CH Mo, 'The Evolution of Human Trafficking Messaging in the United States and Its Effects on Public Opinion', *Journal of Public Policy*, vol. 39, issue 2, 2019, pp. 201–234, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0143814X18000107.

[41]  Q Capers IV, DA Bond, and US Nori, 'Bias and Racism Teaching Rounds at an Academic Medical Center', *Chest Journal*, vol. 158, issue 6, 2020, pp. 2688–2694, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chest.2020.08.2073.

may benefit from some form of safety contingency planning.[42] We know from the literature that survivors benefit when given the opportunity to lead training development and that training is more effective with their input.[43] When survivors take part in developing curricula, results are consistently culturally aware, victim and survivor-centred, and trauma-informed, which creates a more robust training for providers.[44] Trafficking survivors, advocates, and community stakeholders should participate in developing educational measures to ensure appropriate and consistent goals, protocol, and language.

Several of the studies highlighted that many providers may be uncomfortable with the topic of trafficking, and trafficked persons often experience forms of trauma that providers are unfamiliar with. We advocate for providers to be reassured that their discomfort is understandable, yet it need not interfere with the care they provide. Administrators should have the resources in place to support practitioners. For example, providers who interact with a suspected trafficked patient may need to see a counsellor to discuss their experience, and they should be excused from work duties in order to do so. Further, administrators should encourage partnerships between providers and forensic nurses, social workers, and other specialists to provide trauma-informed, patient-centred care. A way to encourage such collaboration is to host trainings and discussions (trafficking-specific and otherwise) with providers from different disciplines.

*Importance of a Team-Based Approach*

Most studies we reviewed emphasised the team approach to emergency care in the ED, highlighting the distribution of educational interventions comprised of a variety of staff including physicians, technicians, and even non-clinical employees. We value this 'team-based' model and extend it to providers beyond the ED, because ED nurses, physicians, and social workers cannot be responsible for addressing all aspects of trafficked persons' health and social circumstances. Rather, this kind of comprehensive treatment requires a long-term multidisciplinary team. ED providers should focus on addressing urgent or emergent needs, and ED-specific training measures must equip them to do so.

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[42] 'Lecture: Screening to identify trafficking survivors', HHS Health and Trafficking Symposium, 28 November 2018, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/otip/symposium_panel_3_screening_to_identify_trafficking_survivors.pdf.

[43] R Lloyd, 'From Victim to Survivor, from Survivor to Leader', Girls Educational and Mentoring Services, https://issuu.com/gems/docs/from_victim_to_survivor__from_survivor_to_leader.

[44] H Stoklosa, A Grace, and N Littenberg, 'Medical Education on Human Trafficking', *AMA Journal of Ethics*, vol. 17, issue 10, pp. 914–921, https://doi.org/10.1001/journalofethics.2015.17.10.medu1-1510.

Providers can then refer patients for primary care, mental health treatment, and other support, hopefully through established connections with service providers in their communities. Care for trafficked persons is most effective when it is comprehensive (addresses more than one body system) and integrated (addresses social, emotional, and legal needs).[45] Therefore, the ED healthcare provider is a significant part of a team that can begin to delegate the often-complex needs of trafficked patients to appropriate experts.

*Incorporating Training into Healthcare Education*

Three studies reviewed here included learners, such as medical and nursing students, in their participant pool. Consistently in the literature, medical and nursing trainees report a lack of formal education on human trafficking in their curricula, with one survey of medical schools in the United Kingdom showing that 72 per cent did not provide trafficking education of any kind and 70 per cent had no plans for doing so.[46] The few trainings that focused on students showed promising outcomes, including increased student confidence in interacting with trafficked patients and increased trainee interest in pursuing trafficking as a research topic.[47] Diverse educational formats like simulation and case-based learning can be impactful on students' interactions with trafficked patients when they encounter them in the hospital setting.[48] More research is required in the medical and nursing school education domain to determine how interventions for students and institutions can be effective on a long-term basis.

*Prioritising Marginalised Groups*

One study highlighted the importance of recognising patients at higher risk of being trafficked, including youth and racially or ethnically minoritised groups, and individuals who do not have work or residency permits (Cole *et al.*). In addition to survivor participation in education, we agree with the recommendations given by The Survivor Council from the Presidential Task Force on Human Trafficking that there should be increased funding for research and treatment for these underserved groups in the trafficking domain, including boys and men, LGBTQIA+ individuals, indigenous populations, and people with special

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[45]   C Zimmerman, *et al., The Health Risks and Consequences of Trafficking in Women and Adolescents: Findings from a European study*, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, London, 2003.

[46]   Arulrajah and Steele.

[47]   RM Lutz, 'Human Trafficking Education for Nurse Practitioners: Integration into standard curriculum', *Nurse Educ Today*, vol. 61, 2018, pp. 66–69, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2017.11.015.

[48]   H Stoklosa, *et al.*, 'Medical Education and Human Trafficking: Using simulation', *Med Educ Online*, vol. 22, issue 1, 2017, https://doi.org/10.1080/10872981.2017.1412746.

needs or disabilities. These marginalised groups face structural discrimination that increases the risk of being trafficked. Furthermore, because they are often excluded from awareness efforts, their health outcomes may be more negatively impacted.[49] We therefore advocate for future educational interventions to include informed awareness of and focus on these gaps.

*Limitations*

The limitations of our study include the decreased rigor of a scoping compared with a systematic review. We chose a scoping review due to our study objective, which was exploratory rather than to rigorously assess the quality of each study through a validated measure. One strength of our study is the inclusion of poster presentations, abstracts, and thesis papers from the 'grey literature', which highlight how the topic of human trafficking education for ED providers is rapidly emerging.

Overall, our review found a lack of studies, but also promising outcomes for providers and patients when training is implemented. We advocate for the development of educational interventions that are team-based (e.g., involve all ED team members and relevant community partners); include self-reported outcomes measures (e.g., pre- and post-surveys); and are patient-centred and informed by survivors. Additionally, we endorse the development of interventions that fit with the unique timing and physical constraints of the ED workflow. More research is needed to develop a validated educational tool for ED providers and compare interventions for participant and patient outcomes. Future studies might also consider investigating patient outcomes pre- and post-intervention in addition to provider perceptions.

## Conclusion

Human trafficking education is a critical opportunity to increase ED staff preparedness and positively impact outcomes for trafficked patients. Though the ED may be considered a challenging place to care for trafficked patients due to the nature of this busy, fast-paced environment, our review demonstrates that, if staff are adequately trained and protocols are in place, the ED can be an ideal setting to engage these patients in care. Educational interventions need to fit into the busy environment of an ED, ideally to be completed through flexible modalities (either online or in-person) during work hours, and include as many members of clinical and non-clinical staff as possible. Education must allow

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[49]  United States Advisory Council on Human Trafficking, *Annual Report 2020*, US Department of State, 2020, https://www.state.gov/united-states-advisory-council-on-human-trafficking-annual-report-2020.

space for providers' discomfort with the topic of trafficking while recognising the ED encounter as a window of opportunity in a trafficked patient's journey. We strongly recommend that states and countries mandate trafficking training— with pre- and post-test results—in recertification programs for ED staff. Such trainings should be developed in conjunction with survivors because they are the experts on content, and their expertise should be valued and compensated.

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# Pedagogical Approaches to Human Trafficking Through Applied Research Laboratories

*Laura A Dean*

## Abstract

Human trafficking is a phenomenon that lends itself to hands-on pedagogical practices and undergraduate research that, in turn, can create localised knowledge with anti-trafficking stakeholders. Research labs focused on human trafficking are one-on-one or small group applied research settings that build a bridge between the university and anti-trafficking stakeholders over multiple semesters. In this paper, I argue that one way of involving students in the anti-trafficking field is through research laboratories, like the Human Trafficking Research Lab (HTRL). I explore how the HTRL develops pedagogical practices to enable students to work collaboratively with a faculty member and carry out the research process from idea to final draft. Multiple learning outcomes were found, including mentorship, a larger understanding of political science as a discipline, data compilation, presentation and critical thinking skills, and job or graduate school placement. I determined that the HTRL at Millikin offers students hands-on experience with community-engaged projects, including grappling with the ethical implications of knowledge production in social justice advocacy.

Over the past two decades, human trafficking has increasingly become a topic of research interest to students in higher education due to hands-on pedagogical practices through research laboratories. Human trafficking research labs are a broad term for one-on-one or small group applied research projects with or about local stakeholders that bridge university and community settings. Universities are sites of research and innovation, and working with students in these different settings raises important issues of power and knowledge. These issues are particularly salient in the context of human trafficking research because the people most affected by exploitation are often not central to law, policy, or collected knowledge about such experiences. In this paper, I examine the high-impact practices in research laboratories as classes or independent studies for undergraduate students at small to mid-sized universities.

Laboratories for undergraduate research are widespread in the natural sciences and have become more prevalent in the social sciences and humanities. The traditional approach to working with students in social sciences is one-on-one as research assistants or through mentorships with faculty. By contrast, research labs offer an opportunity for résumé building and collaborative research projects in a structured environment while earning course credit over multiple semesters. Additionally, the work with anti-trafficking stakeholders produces benefits for students and universities, fostering connections within the local community that lead to networking opportunities for students and applied research skills, which increase local knowledge on human trafficking and social justice issues. Undergraduate research collaborations that blend teaching and research improve social science and have been found to produce scientific breakthroughs.[1] Studies indicate a number of ways that designing and implementing undergraduate research produces tangible benefits for students by reinforcing lessons with practical applications, motivating students,[2] strengthening mentoring relationships, and teaching students about teamwork through listening and compromise.[3] Research also shows that student research labs produce an increased understanding of complex concepts, problem solving, public speaking skills, and educational outcomes, such as student retention and graduation rates.[4] This hands-on approach

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[1]   S Herrick, W Matthias and D Nielson, 'How Collaborations with Undergraduates Improve Both Learning and Research: With examples from international development experiments', *PS: Political Science & Politics*, vol. 48, issue 1, 2015, pp. 48–52, https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096514001590.

[2]   *Ibid.*

[3]   C Elman, D Kapiszewski and D Kirilova, 'Learning Through Research: Using data to train undergraduates in qualitative methods', *PS: Political Science & Politics*, vol. 48, issue 1, 2015, pp. 39–43, https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096514001577.

[4]   M Becker, 'Importing the Laboratory Model to the Social Sciences: Prospects for improving mentoring of undergraduate researchers', *Journal of Political Science Education*, vol. 16, issue 2, 2020 pp. 212–224, https://doi.org/10.1080/15512169.2018.1505523.

allows students to learn the underlying aspects of research processes and reveals the non-linear and sometimes convoluted ways research is conducted in real world social science.

As a global phenomenon, human trafficking is a topic that can be studied with different levels of analysis and governance, focusing on small and large N studies, and using a variety of methodologies. The salience of human trafficking as a topic also draws in students who are interested in learning more about the complexities of the phenomenon beyond the headlines and movies. It is a topic of cultural significance where students in labs can combat stereotypes and gain hands-on experience researching with local anti-trafficking stakeholders.

In this paper, I reflect on my experience developing an undergraduate research lab, the Human Trafficking Research Lab (HTRL) at Millikin University, which is focused on political science but also includes interdisciplinary themes from gender studies, migration studies, sociology, and criminal justice. First, I describe the varieties of research opportunities and pedagogical approaches offered in different research labs focusing on human trafficking around the world. Then, I discuss how I organised and conducted the HTRL at Millikin and the overall structure that lends itself to undergraduate research. Finally, I examine positionality, ethical implications, and learning outcomes by focusing on the localised implications of trafficking research for students in the lab.

## Research Labs in Context

The concept of research laboratories began in the late nineteenth century as industrial research laboratories or chemical labs in Germany and the United States (US), and then expanded to electrotechnical labs mostly housed in for-profit companies.[5] After World War II, research labs became an educational learning tool in universities, and only over the past two decades have they expanded from the natural sciences to social sciences and humanities disciplines. With the introduction of service learning and high-impact practices in the twenty-first century, laboratory models have grown across undergraduate education and are used to recruit potential students. Laboratories paid for by the state are an extension of European culture and lauded not only for the research they produce but also for their ability to educate a large number of people on scientific processes and mould future citizens 'to perform effectively (and responsibly) in industrial

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[5]   M de Vries, 'The History of Industrial Research Laboratories as a Resource for Teaching about Science-technology Relationships', *Research in Science Education*, vol. 31, 2001, pp. 15–28, https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1012610328351.

economies and mass electoral politics.'[6] Thus, as places of knowledge production, laboratories are inherently political, rooted in for-profit business models, and can reproduce and privilege certain kinds of knowledge, research questions, and methodology over others. The Western roots of this type of learning model and its power dynamics can also perpetuate colonial relations of power that extract knowledge from victims and survivors of human trafficking.[7] The HTRL and all research labs on human trafficking should cultivate approaches to examining trafficking that uphold practices of equitable access to knowledge and knowledge production and acknowledge the role of universities in perpetuating unequal power dynamics and colonial relations of knowledge production. Students in the HTRL read and engage decolonised research, grapple with the legacies of transatlantic slavery, and work to not perpetuate human trafficking stereotypes. We also try to educate community partners on these stereotypes since community partners can reproduce them by focusing on trafficking for sexual exploitation and only one type of female trafficking victim or racialised ideas of 'white slavery'. In addition, students and professors reflect on how to create transparent relationships with local stakeholders in order to work against the reproduction of an 'us versus them' dichotomy that reifies the ivory tower dynamic.

It is important to consider the power dynamics of research as human trafficking labs are becoming more common. A cursory glance at the most notable labs shows that they range from large interdisciplinary research consortiums to a few professors working on a specific aspect of human trafficking. Social work and criminal justice are the most prevalent disciplines, but other disciplines such as geography, anthropology, sociology, and political science are included in some labs, which reveals the interdisciplinary nature of the topic of human trafficking. Most labs discuss the link between university teaching and learning and the community by providing policy guidance, research support, or other collaborations. One notable research lab on human trafficking is the University of Nottingham's Rights Lab, which has more than eighty scholars. They work with organisations, businesses, and policy partners on their research agenda, focusing on different programme streams such as Data and Measurement, Communities and Society, Ecosystems and the Environment, Law and Policy, and Business and Economies.[8] Another prominent research lab is the Human Trafficking Center at the University of Denver, which began in 2002 and now consists of ten students and seven faculty, evolving from a task force to a non-profit research and

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6    R E Kohler 'Lab History: Reflections', *Isis*, vol. 99, issue 4, 2008, pp. 761-768, https://doi.org/10.1086/595769.

7    J Kaye, *Responding to Human Trafficking: Dispossession, colonial violence, and resistance among Indigenous and racialized women*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 2017.

8    'About the Rights Lab', University of Nottingham Rights Lab, 2020, retrieved 28 September 2020, https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/research/beacons-of-excellence/rights-lab/about/index.aspx.

advocacy organisation.[9] Other examples of labs with fewer researchers include the Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Initiative at the University of Kansas and the Asian Research Center for Migration at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok.[10] The Modern Slavery Research Center at the BRICS Policy Center is a think tank affiliated with the Institute of International Relations of the Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro that interrogates the legacy of colonial slavery in Brazil to examine 'place-based anti-slavery strategies [with] local government and law enforcement efforts with voluntary and community-based actors.'[11] These examples reveal that there are a variety of topics and approaches to human trafficking research based on faculty expertise, funding, and university priorities.

Overall, research labs are a form of experiential learning defined as a 'first-hand experience, active learning, experimentation and adaptation in new environments, and reflection' on the phenomenon being studied.[12] Research labs differ from research seminars or in-class research projects because they happen over numerous semesters and include a much deeper mentoring experience across the research process, which is not possible in a single semester course. Multiple semesters in the lab allow for participatory action research methods and community engagement. Working with community partners in the lab context means that students consider why research is conducted and what its possible impacts may be. As such, students contemplate the ethical implications and limitations of the laboratory model to challenge power dynamics. Finally, while more labour-intensive, a student-driven (rather than faculty-driven) approach engages students as active partners in research processes.[13] Most labs in the natural sciences are faculty-driven and arranged in a semi-hierarchical structure with weekly meetings or lab interactions that move faculty research forward.[14] Alternatively, a collaborative

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[9]   'Who We Are', Human Trafficking Center at the University of Denver, 2020, retrieved 28 September 2020, https://humantraffickingcenter.org/who-we-are.

[10]  'The ASHTI Story', Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Initiative, 2020, retrieved 28 September 2020, https://ipsr.ku.edu/ASHTI; 'Projects', Asian Research Center of Migration, Chulalongkorn University, n.d., retrieved 6 March 2021, http://www.arcmthailand.com/aboutourwork.php.

[11]  'Modern Slavery Research Center', BRICS Policy Center, n.d., retrieved 6 March 2021, https://bricspolicycenter.org/en/projects/modern-slavery-research-center.

[12]  J A Moon, *Handbook of Reflective and Experiential Learning: Theory and practice*, Routledge, New York, 2004; D A Kolb, *Experiential Learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1984, as cited in K H Kenyon, 'Bringing the Field into the Classroom: Methods and experiential learning', *Politics*, vol. 37, issue 1, 2017, pp. 97–112, https://doi.org/10.1177/0263395716633905.

[13]  K Bauer, 'Early Challenges and Successes from Adapting the Laboratory Model to Undergraduate Teaching Institutions', *APSA Preprints*, 2020, https://doi.org/10.33774/apsa-2020-lb1rc.

[14]  Becker.

student-driven model mobilises student interests and equal engagement in research collaborations.[15] This is the HTRL model, which is ideal at small liberal arts colleges such as Millikin University.

## Design and Structure of Human Trafficking Research Labs

In the Human Trafficking Research Lab, students work with faculty and learn in a 'community and context where the knowledge is used' and students become members of the lab.[16] HTRL mentorship is important because even at liberal arts colleges, only a small percentage of students work one-on-one with professors as co-authors on research projects. In the lab, there are formal and informal semi-structured mentoring opportunities. While formal mentoring includes meetings and feedback on research, informal mentoring includes spending time in the lab space, doing research in a coffee shop, or taking research assistants to lunch. The lab provides a plethora of opportunities to build different skills. In the beginning, the HTRL was not a physical lab space. Instead, the students and I met in my office at a table with a whiteboard and sketched out our research progress. Due to the visibility of the lab, after a few years we were given a collaborative lab space. Students initially work for course credit, but I also look for ways to fund student research assistants through Millikin's undergraduate research fellows programmes.

Together, we devise a syllabus for independent research that outlines the stages of the research process week by week over the course of multiple semesters. Then we set our assessment (i.e., research goals) for each semester, usually in the form of a final paper or research analysis using conferences or other presentations as benchmarks denoting our progress. Students are expected to be working towards the final research paper but also to update their progress and presentations on the HTRL website in a blog post format at least once a month.[17] We plan our research project so it can be completed in an academic year and to ensure that students experience all stages of the research process from idea to manuscript. Our research ideas come from working with the Central Illinois Human Trafficking Task Force and community partners who we update on our progress, research impediments, and results. I recruit students for the HTRL from my stand-alone Human Trafficking class, and every research assistant has taken this class during their time at the lab. There are no prerequisites for working in the HTRL; it is open

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[15]   Bauer.

[16]   T Dahlberg *et al.*, 'Improving Retention and Graduate Recruitment Through Immersive Research Experiences for Undergraduates', *ACM SIGCSE Bulletin*, vol. 40, issue 1, 2008, pp. 466–470, https://doi.org/10.1145/1352322.1352293.

[17]   'Research Blog', Human Trafficking Research Lab, n.d., retrieved 6 June 2021, https://www.humantraffickingresearchlab.org/search/label/Research%20Blog.

to anyone interested in the issue of human trafficking and committed to doing a multiple-semester research project. Thus, some research assistants have no prior knowledge of human trafficking and the learning curve is steeper, while others have read extensively on the topic. In the HTRL, we define human trafficking in accordance with the US *Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA)* of 2000.[18] We use this definition in our research on laws because most of the cases in our sample are charged under these statutes, but we also discuss the problems with legal definitions and their application, including how anti-trafficking agendas prioritise criminalisation. For instance, in one project on human trafficking task forces, we analysed their over-emphasis on 'sex trafficking' to critically evaluate the US legal definition. In short, although we use 'human trafficking' as an encompassing term, we acknowledge it is a complex and contested issue and we take a critical approach to US legal definitions. This approach is reflected in our research.[19]

The work conducted in the HTRL is done in close connection with the Central Illinois Human Trafficking Task Force and local organisations. We attend meetings and are active players in shaping different task force policies and procedures through the research we conduct. As such, work in the lab often emerges from our engagement with these organisations. For example, after the task force applied unsuccessfully for an Enhanced Collaborative Model Task Force to Combat Human Trafficking grant, a research assistant and I examined different task forces to see what types of task forces are supported with these grants. We gave a presentation to the task force and published a policy brief on our findings that influenced future task force work and how it applied for grants thereafter. At the same time, while our engagement is centred on this task force, students learn about the general anti-trafficking field as well. They also witness the impact of problematic stereotypes, intersections with immigration law, and the consequences of the emphasis on policing. Students relate this first-hand experience to the anti-trafficking literature and deepen their understanding of the relevance and potential impact of research.

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[18]   The TVPA divides human trafficking into two phenomena: sex trafficking as 'the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purposes of a commercial sex act, in which the commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age' and labour trafficking as 'the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purposes of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery'.

[19]   See L A Dean and J Sierra, 'Multi-Sector Human Trafficking Task Forces in the United States: Typologies and overlapping jurisdictions', under review. See also other research on our website: 'Research', Human Trafficking Research Lab, n.d., retrieved 6 June 2021, https://www.humantraffickingresearchlab.org/p/research.html.

The HTRL manual outlines its mission statement, priorities, and values. More recently, a recommended reading list was included to provide students with more background information and contested issues in human trafficking. It includes Siddharth Kara's *Sex Trafficking: Inside the business of modern slavery*; Jesse Sage and Liora Kasten's *Enslaved: True stories of modern day slavery*; and Jennifer Musto's *Control and Protect: Collaboration, carceral protection, and domestic sex trafficking in the United States*. A recent addition to the reading list is Julie Kaye's *Responding to Human Trafficking: Dispossession, colonial violence, and resistance among Indigenous and racialized women*. This is just a small sample and not an encompassing list of the readings that students engage with when learning about the topics. I highlight these texts because they are approachable for an undergraduate audience delving into the human trafficking literature and students have noted that these texts are among their favourites on the reading list.

The HTRL promotes a performance learning approach in dialogue with the critical service-learning literature that 're-imagines the roles of community members, students, and faculty in the service-learning experience … to deconstruct systems of power so the need for service and the inequalities that create and sustain them are dismantled.'[20] This approach is especially important because the root causes of human trafficking are complex. The research in the HTRL aims to address inequities, including the exercise of care and making an impact beyond the research while paying attention to concerns about involving 'students in the community in a way that perpetuates inequality and reinforces an "us-them" dichotomy'.[21] Students take the lessons they have learned through their research and actively engage in critical thinking concerning task force members and their role in the anti-trafficking apparatus. For example, students have noted the questionable views of some police members when discussing sting operations and the carceral approach to human trafficking. Problematic terminology and power dynamics related to 'rescue' and 'saving' victims is another issue we have raised with the task force, such as when a member of Immigration and Customs Enforcement wanted all trafficking victims to be vetted by their office. One of my students told the task force about how that approach could be harmful for foreign-born trafficked persons with unclear immigration statuses. Students have also noted the growth of organisations working on human trafficking in our region and the singular focus of some organisations that only rehabilitate certain victims. These examples demonstrate how students take the critical approach from the lab and apply it to our interactions with community partners. This balance can be delicate because students learn to weigh this critical lens and constructive feedback with the possibility of alienating local partners.

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[20] T D Mitchell, 'Traditional vs. Critical Service-Learning: Engaging the literature to differentiate two models', *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, Spring 2008, pp. 50–65.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 51.

The performance learning approach with third-party stakeholders, i.e., local partners, leads to critical perspectives about the task force as students are often surprised at the lack of human trafficking knowledge possessed by some task force members, as well as the critical perspectives mentioned previously. In our research on task forces, we highlight how anti-trafficking approaches perpetuate inequality by focusing on female victims of trafficking in the sex industry. We share our research findings and criticisms with the task force because one way to combat these stereotypes is to confront how the task force and member organisations can perpetuate them. Our task force research includes Indigenous- and Native-centred task forces, often left out of existing research on anti-trafficking task forces in the US. In our adjudication research project, we are examining the race and gender of people arrested for trafficking crimes, demonstrating different concepts of intersectionality in how these crimes are charged in the US. Acknowledging and not reproducing stereotypes in research and interactions with the anti-trafficking community are a necessary component of research labs on human trafficking: it should embrace a service-learning approach that 'emphasize[s] the skills, knowledge, and experiences required of students to not only participate in communities, but to transform them as engaged and active citizens.'[22] The research we presented did not avoid criticisms and offered opportunities to improve anti-trafficking advocacy. Most community members welcomed the feedback. Overall, we allow for disagreements, and there are research approaches from the lab that task force members do not support, but thus far disagreements have been handled respectfully.

## Research Lab Operation

I have experimented with different ways to include students in research through the operation of the lab. I offer a stand-alone Human Trafficking class and integrated pre-tests as assignments for students that influence a longer research project. I found that my class on human trafficking is a great testing ground to determine if research ideas are worth investigating further. For example, I assigned a paper on human trafficking task forces in the United States that asked students to conduct background research and analysis on one task force. I took this preliminary information and used it as the basis for a paper with a student from the class under the auspices of the HTRL. We were able to obtain summer funding for the student who then registered for an independent study with the HTRL during the academic year to complete the research and write up the results. We examined and mapped more than 200 task forces throughout all 50 states and Puerto Rico and outlined the origin, scope, and variation of this anti-trafficking institution in the US.[23]

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[22]   *Ibid.*, p. 52.

[23]   Dean and Sierra.

Moreover, I have used my Political Science Research Methods course as an opportunity for undergraduate research with the HTRL. As a small class of 12 students, we conducted research on human trafficking cases in Illinois, tracking human trafficking charges and their outcomes. Collaboratively, I taught students how to conduct research with the hands-on approach from the HTRL by actually doing the research. We began thinking about research questions, compiled and tracked court cases in numerous Illinois counties, and analysed results. I then chose one student from the class to work in the HTRL the next semester, continuing the work by finalising data collection and the literature review. We will present findings at the poster session at the Day of Scholarship and hope to publish the final article in a peer-reviewed journal. Since this work was done during the COVID-19 pandemic, presenting at an academic conference with students was unlikely, but it would normally be an option and professional development opportunity for the students.

Another rendition of collaborative undergraduate research experience is the traditional one-on-one model where students conduct an independent study with me and work on a designated research project. To plan the development of the project, we outline the goals and assignments for every week during the summer or semester and recalibrate the outline if tasks take longer than estimated or other external factors impede research progress. Students in the lab provide peer reviews on drafts to each other, which lends another level of feedback and engagement with the literature. Though much of the research work is autonomous and conducted physically outside of the HTRL, students still receive a significant amount of time and accountability on the project with a research professional in the field. Table 1 outlines the basic HTRL tasks list that shows the short-term and long-term tasks for student research assistants.

## Table 1: Human Trafficking Research Lab Tasks List

| Task | Description | Outcomes |
|---|---|---|
| Complete an annotated bibliography entry for our study | Using Google Scholar, find articles that we have not yet cited but could be relevant to our current research study. Then read and write-up an annotation with key ideas that are linked to our research project and a full citation. | Annotated bibliography |
| Write a blog post on your work or a recent article related to human trafficking | You are required to post at least one update a month on the Human Trafficking Research Lab blog (https://www.humantraffickingresearchlab. org). If you have extra time during your week you could write an additional post on your work or respond to an article that you read on human trafficking. | Completed blog post |
| Write an SSN research brief | Write a research brief for one of my published articles on the Scholars Strategy Network (SSN). | SSN research brief |

## Long-Term tasks (Ongoing throughout the semester)

| Task | Description | Outcomes |
|---|---|---|
| Data compilation | Enter case data on arrests and charges into our database on the Google Docs folder. Then code the cases according to our predetermined coding scheme. Highlight the new cases that you add so I can double-check them. | Research update |
| Fix bibliographic citations to match the journal style | Aligning citations to journal style is a required task for many researchers and many times citations need to be reformatted to fit a different journal. Your task is to change the sources to fit the journal style. | Input citations in the draft of our manuscript |
| Send an email or stop by my office and ask for other research tasks | There are always many research tasks to complete, including finding literature, proofreading, reference checking, or formatting. If you run out of tasks to complete for the week let me know and I can send you some other research tasks. | Submit your work on a task-by-task basis |

Note: The Human Trafficking Research Lab Tasks List is used with students in the lab if they have finished their weekly tasks and have extra time during a given week to perform additional research duties. Adapted from colleagues Amy Delaney[24] and Rebecca Kreitzer.

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[24] A L Delaney and G Singleton, 'Information and Relationship Functions of Communication Between Pregnant Women and Their Health Care Providers', *Communication Studies*, vol. 71, issue 5, 2020, pp. 800–822, https://doi.org/10.1080/10510974.2020.1807376.

We have weekly lab meetings during the semester to discuss research progress and impediments. These discussions create a community of learners, and even though students might be working on different projects, they bring questions and problems to the entire group, and we work through them together. In meetings, we outline common goals for the week, facilitate group discussion to move research forward, and synthesise ideas to advance the knowledge about human trafficking. We also choose research questions and topics that are approachable for undergraduate students, which influences the research we undertake. We try to focus on more local research projects that build knowledge and present it to the task force, which is a good sounding board for our findings. This collaboration builds confidence and connects student research to the efforts of task force members working in our local community. We always formulate a one- to two-page research brief and circulate it to the task force, which can also help organisations with grants or donors and shows the impact of the HTRL, as part of the task force's work in our community.

Presenting to local anti-trafficking stakeholders helps students practise giving professional presentations and demonstrates the value of research for local anti-trafficking advocacy. Moreover, having students as research assistants influences the potential impact of our research as some community members are more willing to answer challenging questions posed by students. Given that most task force members do not read academic research on human trafficking, our research has the potential to bridge scholarly and policy communities. The lab produces knowledge through academic presentations and publications, it builds knowledge on campus and in our community through our annual human trafficking awareness month talk, and educates the task force by sharing our ideas and research related to local anti-trafficking efforts.

## Educational Challenges and Tensions

The work at the HTRL is not without its challenges and tensions. The competition for grants both in and outside of the university to fund the lab employs a neoliberal ideology where the lab is seen as an entrepreneurial entity that can maximise human capital to benefit the university.[25] This dichotomy creates tensions as universities might seek to gain from housing research labs on human trafficking. There are also tensions from government-funded projects and other funding agencies that might have strings attached to grant opportunities that clash with the research lab's mission. Additionally, internal funding opportunities for research

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25    E M Vazquez and J S Levin, 'The Tyranny of Neoliberalism in the American Academic Profession', American Association of University Professors, January-February 2018, retrieved 29 April 2021, https://www.aaup.org/article/tyranny-neoliberalism-american-academic-profession#.YIq2M7VKhPY.

assistants are competitive and can create tensions among the different research labs within the university as more social science and humanities-based labs compete with the natural sciences for a finite set of resources.

Within this context, the positionality of a researcher is an important component to research labs focused on human trafficking. In the lab, we promote an intersectional and victim-centred perspective that seeks to decolonise human trafficking research by acknowledging the legacies of slavery and exploitation in the US. We enact this positionality in the ways that we approach our projects, such as including Indigenous-led groups in our task force paper and examining the adjudication of trafficking cases where we determined that some cases were charged with lower statutes and ended in plea deals. Additionally, we critique the rescue mentality and the racialised approach to 'rescue' operations focused on white women when the data show that trafficked persons in the US are disproportionately people of colour.[26]

At the same time, my status as an educated white woman affiliated with an academic institution affords privileges and access to spaces and conversations with community partners. While students come from more diverse backgrounds, most of the anti-trafficking stakeholders we interact with are white, which means many times the students are among a handful of people in the room from historically excluded communities. There are also tensions and dynamics with community partners who might not agree with our intersectional research methods. The community partners in social services are mostly white women and the police and states attorneys are mostly white men. Gender, race, and class differences among the students influence how we navigate community relationships. Likewise, my positionality affects the mentor/mentee relationships because there is always a power dynamic, especially if the student takes the lab as a class for a grade. Most of the research assistants are political science students so seeking paid opportunities in the lab also produces an employer/employee relationship. Research assistants have diverse backgrounds that lend perspectives on the dynamics with community partners and inform aspects of the research. For example, some students have fraught relationships with the US immigration regime's treatment of undocumented or refugee relatives because some immigration policies may actually facilitate, rather than prevent, trafficking. Students from racially marginalised groups have added perspectives on the problematic racial dimensions of trafficking charges in our adjudication research. Being in a university-based research lab allows us to research topics of interest to us and this position influences how the research is conducted and the social contexts that inform it. All participants in human trafficking research

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26 'Racial Disparities, COVID-19, and Human Trafficking', Polaris Project, 29 July 2020, retrieved 29 April 2021, https://polarisproject.org/blog/2020/07/racial-disparities-covid-19-and-human-trafficking.

labs need to think about their place in the community and cultivate critical engagement given their positions and the tensions that are a part of conducting community-based research.

For students, one challenge is how to cope with midterm and final exams as well as other commitments (e.g., family, work, education costs, mental health) while conducting research at the lab. This is why I allow them to take a week off and make up their hours. The feedback in lab meetings helps to manage students' research expectations and gives them time to reformulate work that did not meet course expectations. Students have the freedom to make mistakes and fix them because we work on projects for an extended period. Although we initiate research ourselves, labs that include work with clients, survivors, or victims should balance distressing human trafficking topics and consider if they are appropriate for students. Lab directors need to be cognisant of the limits of research projects with students, especially undergraduates, and how research can trigger student experiences with trauma. Students in the lab are allowed mental health days and campus mental health resources are listed in the lab manual and are available for students working with difficult topics or situations.

Tensions can also arise between the lab and community organisations that are members of the research subcommittee because they may have different goals than the research lab; for example, members have advocated against including certain variables (e.g., gender and race) in task force survey design. However, the lab has been a member of the task force almost since its establishment and tensions have been rare. Including community partners in the research and reporting of our research progress helps stave off the ivory tower dynamic where researchers parachute in to obtain data and leave just as abruptly. Instead, task force members view our lab as an accessible partner, which mitigates tensions.

Another challenge of research labs are the ethical implications of having students doing unpaid academic research where they pay tuition to obtain course credit. This dynamic could be considered exploitative. These types of quandaries are important to think about when establishing a research lab on human trafficking because researchers need to create working conditions that do not exploit students. As researchers and teachers, we need to focus on ways to ensure students are compensated for their work and to delineate the educational and professional benefits to lab work. The research experience coupled with mentoring and assistance with job placement or graduate school recommendations offers several benefits for students. However, seeking out other funding opportunities for students when available is an important way to show the value of student research and keep exploitative labour practices to a minimum.

Finally, there are myriad of ethical issues when research includes victims and survivors of human trafficking. In addition to robust and ongoing conversations about ethical research practices, students are trained (and certified) through the university's Institutional Review Board. While it is impossible to 'do no harm', we engage practices that avoid re-traumatisation and are trauma-informed.[27] This ethical commitment means seeking out and listening to community members' needs. It is vital not to perpetuate stereotypes and incorrect data on human trafficking and to not tokenise survivor perspectives. Sometimes, this commitment entails educating local stakeholders on problematic statistics or their singular focus on certain trafficking victims.

## Learning Outcomes

Student research assistants gain practical skills in the HTRL and have demonstrated increased educational ownership by working in the lab. One student wrote on our research blog, 'Through this research lab, I have been exposed to better researching techniques and my research has improved'.[28] First, students gain a greater understanding of political science as a discipline and they are able to assess research and data published in academic papers, as well as in the local media and by think tanks with an anti-trafficking lens. By organising and tracking human trafficking data, students learn data compilation and dataset management skills, which some mention as one of the most useful skills obtained in the lab. They learn how to analyse this data through statistical investigation or content analysis and coding, and by conveying the findings to both academic and non-academic audiences. These data management and analysis skills facilitate professionalisation, time management, and project management that can help in students' future career.

Second, the lab teaches students survey question development and data compilation as the HTRL sends surveys to different agencies to collect data on human trafficking trainings. Students have learnt how to create data visualisations that bring the lab's research to fruition in basic graphs and tables in Excel and in mapping software such as Tableau. A student commented on our research blog that 'one of the many skills I have been able to gain and strengthen through my position on the [HTRL] is my spreadsheet creation and maintenance on programs

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27  R Surtees and A Brunovskis, 'Doing No Harm—Ethical challenges in research with trafficked persons', in D Siegel and R de Wildt (eds.), *Ethical Concerns in Research on Human Trafficking*, Studies of Organized Crime, vol. 13, Springer, Cham, 2016, pp. 137–154, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-21521-1_9.

28  'Working On The Lit Dump', Human Trafficking Research Lab, 16 February 2019, retrieved 12 March 2021, https://www.humantraffickingresearchlab.org/2019/02/working-on-lit-dump.html.

such as Google Sheets and Microsoft Excel'.[29] Third, the HTRL fosters increased understanding of complex concepts and problem-solving skills as we study a phenomenon that is not always clear and locate hidden data to uncover more about different human trafficking dynamics.

Due to the number of presentation opportunities in the lab, students develop public speaking skills and learn to present complex information to the public. One student wrote after presenting at our poster symposium, 'I felt as if I was extremely prepared despite not having any notecards to rely on because of the numerous presentations given before the poster symposium … Most of the people I explained our research to were unaware of the countrywide efforts of the United States government and I was proud to be able to provide them with that information.'[30] This comment attests to how the HTRL builds knowledge on human trafficking in our community through the skills that students gain. Working in the lab cultivates collaboration skills even with students who dislike group projects. When working on joint research projects, students pull their weight and do the assigned research. Even in the larger class applications of the lab, students see the assignments as having a 'real-world' impact that motivates them to produce quality projects. Students who have graduated now work in a variety of industries, including migrant rights organisations. Working as a research assistant in the HTRL is not just a line on a résumé because the lab builds many applicable skills and learning outcomes that are hard to replicate in other classroom-based educational experiences.

## Conclusion

The HTRL at Millikin University gives students the opportunity to work collaboratively with a faculty member and carry out the research process from idea to final draft. In this paper, I discussed three different research approaches using the HTRL as a pre-test trial for larger research ideas; as a part of a research methods class to showcase hands-on research from idea to full paper draft; and as a one-on-one collaborative research model with select students working on different themes related to human trafficking. Several learning outcomes were found including mentorship, a larger understanding of political science as a discipline, data compilation, presentation and critical thinking skills, and job or graduate school placement. Though there are ethical implications involved in human trafficking research labs that researchers must keep in mind, for the most

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29  'Sheets Experience', Human Trafficking Research Lab, 16 March 2019, https://www. humantraffickingresearchlab.org/2019/03/sheets-experience.html.

30  'Winning Third Place at Millikin's 2019 Celebration of Scholarship Poster Symposium', Human Trafficking Research Lab, 1 May 2019, retrieved 12 March 2021, https://www. humantraffickingresearchlab.org/2019/06/winning-third-place-at-millikins-2019.html.

part, labs offer students hands-on experience with community-informed projects that build knowledge and social justice work with implications beyond academia.

Human trafficking research labs conducting research with stakeholders are a valuable pedagogical tool for undergraduate research. Due to the shared local knowledge of anti-trafficking stakeholders, students gain hands-on experience with the complexities of human trafficking through high-impact educational practices. Interactions between students in the lab and local community members have the potential to contribute diverse voices to the anti-trafficking field and produce innovative scholarship that challenges the status quo. Research labs are effective models for the hard sciences but applying them to complex topics in the social sciences and humanities takes adaptation and attention. Undergraduate students require more hands-on communication, interactions, and training than similar research lab models in think tanks and research clusters made for researchers with advanced degrees. Student-driven models promoting students as research partners are the most equitable approach when working with complex topics, but they are also time-consuming and labour-intensive endeavours, especially for faculty with heavy teaching loads. Future research could take this case study further and examine the comparative impacts of student-faculty collaborative research labs focused on human trafficking around the world. The ethical implications raised could be explored further as bigger labs with larger government and private funding streams likely encounter more tensions balancing ethical research and teaching. Overall, I found that human trafficking research labs disseminate knowledge and combat stereotypes that increase knowledge on human trafficking dynamics and characteristics in the local community.

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# Postcolonial Frameworks with Survivors' Voices: Teaching about contemporary and historical forms of slavery and forced labour

*Sallie Yea*

## Abstract

Much of the information for educating students and the public about human trafficking only involves survivors' direct experiences as brief excerpts from more complex and detailed narratives. In this paper, I draw on a postcolonial framework to argue that sidelining survivors' voices can bolster anti-slavery stakeholders' agendas by selectively using survivors' narratives to illustrate narrow constructions of slavery and forced labour. As part of education and awareness efforts, such approaches to understanding slavery and forced labour also perpetuate stereotypes that trafficked persons are powerless and lack agency. Therefore, I present an alternative educational approach to remedy these tendencies by viewing and discussing narratives by, and about, trafficked persons. This paper uses a university-level humanities and social science subject on trafficking and slavery, and related assessment tasks, as a case study to demonstrate the potential of survivors' voices in teaching about slavery.

## Introduction

There is now considerable scholarly literature on teaching about human trafficking, slavery, and forced labour, and an extensive literature on the role of representations in anti-trafficking work, including awareness-raising among and education of students, the public, and at-risk groups. It is well documented that educating

about slavery and forced labour—both in their historical and contemporary forms—is encumbered by stereotypes that reproduce narrowly-construed victim and survivor typologies and experiences.

Representations play a central role in educating diverse audiences about slavery and related issues, including human trafficking. The narratives of victims/ survivors[1] are often popularly depicted in ways that reduce complex and discrepant experiences into a narrow range of 'perfect victim' stereotypes.[2] Narrowing trafficking to a particular notion of a perfect victim damages efforts to educate people. For example, one prominent stereotype is the conflation of human trafficking with 'sex trafficking'[3] and a focus on extreme cases of child 'sex slavery'.[4] Such representations limit understandings of human trafficking, particularly as a phenomenon characterised by a lack of agency by trafficked persons, whilst often privileging anti-trafficking stakeholders' voices and agendas.

To address this educational tendency, in this paper, I argue that learning approaches could benefit from critically engaging with the potential and actual impacts of victim stereotypes, and that survivor narratives are instrumental for dislodging these stereotypes. The case study for this paper emerges from the design and delivery of my senior undergraduate subject,[5] *From Slavery to Human Trafficking*, at an Australian university. In my subject, I advance a pedagogical approach to (un) learning about historical and contemporary forms of slavery and forced labour. This approach is grounded in postcolonial perspectives that are woven into the subject content and rationale. Students are introduced to the broad tenets and

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[1]   I use the terms victim and survivor interchangeably in this paper, though I am aware there are differences between them.

[2]   R Andrijasevic and N Mai, 'Trafficking (in) Representations: Understanding the recurring appeal of victimhood and slavery in neoliberal times', *Anti-Trafficking Review*, issue 7, 2016, pp. 1–10, https://doi.org/10.14197/ atr.20121771; E Kinney, 'Victims, Villains, and Valiant Rescuers: Unpacking sociolegal constructions of human trafficking and crimmigation in popular culture', in M J Guia (ed.), *The Illegal Business of Human Trafficking*, Springer, Cham, 2016, pp. 87–108, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-09441-0_7.

[3]   C S Vance, 'Innocence and Experience: Melodramatic narratives of sex trafficking and their consequences for law and policy', *History of the Present*, vol. 2, issue 2, 2002, pp. 200–218, https://doi.org/10.5406/ historypresent.2.2.0200; A I Fukushima, *Migrant Crossings: Witnessing human trafficking in the U.S.*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2019.

[4]   S Yea, *Trafficking Women in Korea: Filipina migrant entertainers*, Routledge, London, 2015.

[5]   'Subject' is used in this paper to mean a specific unit of study at university. In some other national contexts, the equivalent term is 'course'.

goals of postcolonialism, particularly the idea that the history and agency of marginalised subjects can be reclaimed.[6] Students are encouraged to consider postcolonialism as not only an approach to knowledge and voice, but also as a methodology, which then opens up avenues to analyse discourses that produce and perpetuate stereotypical representations of slavery and human trafficking.[7]

This subject engages students with two types of media that aim to help them understand how and why representations can be both problematic and empowering. First, students view and discuss narratives by former slaves, forced labourers, and trafficked persons. Second, students view documentaries and films about human trafficking and slavery that are authored by actors different from victims/survivors or freed slaves.[8] These diverse media work to counter existing stereotypes by inserting experiences and voices of survivors, whose narratives can depart markedly from externally-imposed understandings (as will be drawn out in more detail in subsequent sections of this paper). These media also enable students to recognise the role of representations, such as fictional films or docudramas, in organising understandings of victim profiles and scenarios of slavery and human trafficking.

This paper's aim is to provide suggestions for those who are teaching about slavery and forced labour in order to enhance ethical education. This is done by

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[6] A Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, 3rd edition, Routledge, London, 2015.

[7] L Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonising Methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples,* Bloomsbury, London, 2012.

[8] Although this subject discusses a wide range of historical and contemporary expressions of human trafficking, slavery, and forced labour, it very deliberately avoids suggesting equivalence between historical forms of slavery (including chattel slavery and serfdom) and contemporary practices, which are themselves multifidous. In the first week of the subject, students are asked to identify key differences between different types of unfree labour. Student responses are re-visited at key points throughout the subject and in the final week. The purpose of this exercise is to ensure that modern-day slavery and human trafficking are not equated with historical practices. These distinctions are important not only for definitional clarity, but also because of the unhelpful political and policy consequences such conflations can entail. Hill, for example, has detailed the way 'trafficking rhetoric' is used by the government in the United Kingdom to justify restrictive and punitive migration agendas and policies, suggesting that underlying racism becomes an important construct for restrictive migration controls when considered in light of this historical conflation with contemporary human trafficking. See A Hill, 'The Rhetoric of Modern-Day Slavery: Analogical links and historical kinks in the United Kingdom's anti-trafficking plan', *philoSOPHIA*, vol. 17, no. 2, 2017, pp. 241–260, https://doi.org/10.1353/phi.2017.0023.

drawing out the role and power of representations, voice, agency, and experiences of survivors of slavery and forced labour, and the role of other stakeholders circulating knowledge—and stereotypes—of slavery, forced labour, and human trafficking. In the next section, I provide a literature review on trafficking education. Then, I offer a brief overview of the subject, *From Slavery to Human Trafficking*, the degree in which it sits, and the student audience to which it is oriented. The main part of this paper presents the educational approach that guides the subject's focus on agency, voice, and representation in understanding slavery and forced labour, including a description of the assessment tasks associated with this mode of learning. A brief conclusion follows where I consider possible ways to avoid problems emerging from narrow constructions of slavery and human trafficking based on my teaching experience. I also build on the limited literature exploring approaches to classroom teaching about trafficking.[9]

## Education about Slavery and Forced Labour

The literature on anti-trafficking education and related forms of modern-day slavery is diffuse in its targeted audiences and intention. For example, it is often practitioner-oriented, aiming to improve victim identification processes and interventions by diverse groups of professionals, including nurses,[10] social workers,[11] and law enforcement.[12] Education in tertiary settings is not necessarily disassociated from practical actions, such as reducing personal risk and improving

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[9]    See, for example, M Dragiewicz, 'Teaching about Trafficking: Opportunities and challenges for critical engagement', *Feminist Teacher*, vol. 18, no. 3, 2008, pp. 185–201, https://doi.org/10.1353/ftr.0.0007; and N B Busch-Armendariz, M Nsonwu, and L Cook Heffron, *Human Trafficking: Applying research, theory, and case studies*, Sage, Los Angeles, 2017.

[10]   P Arulrajah and S L Steele, 'UK Medical Education on Human Trafficking: Assessing uptake of the opportunity to shape awareness, safeguarding and referring in the curriculum', *BMC Medical Education,* vol. 18, article no. 137, 2018, https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-018-1226-y.

[11]   J Thompson and M Haley, 'Human Trafficking: Preparing counselors to work with survivors', *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, vol. 40, issue 3, 2018, pp. 298–309, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10447-018-9327-1.

[12]   A Farrell, R Pfeffer, and K Bright, 'Police Perceptions of Human Trafficking', *Journal of Crime and Justice*, vol. 38, issue 3, 2015, pp. 315–333, https://doi.org/10.1080/0735648X.2014.995412.

victim identification.[13] Further, anti-trafficking education conducted by non-government organisations may have as a key objective garnering support or raising funds to further the work of particular organisations or groups. Education by anti-trafficking organisations has been subject to scrutiny for its potential to distort the issue of human trafficking, and to use trafficking as a means of gaining (and misappropriating) funds.[14] There is also an increasing number of celebrity interventions in the construction of knowledge about victims of trafficking, with these famous individuals relying on their status to influence campaigns to counter trafficking.[15]

Despite the steady increase in education and awareness-raising about human trafficking and modern-day slavery, there is currently no compiled, international database listing the number or orientation of awareness-raising activities. Nonetheless, several studies have critically reviewed individual campaigns.[16] In a review of the literature, Szablewska and Kubacki identified problems with

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[13]   M Lemke, 'Educators as the "Frontline" of Human-Trafficking Prevention: An analysis of state-level education policy', *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, vol. 18, issue 3, 2019, pp. 284–304, https://doi.org/10.1080/15700763.2017.13 98337.

[14]   E Shih, 'Freedom Markets: Consumption and commerce across human trafficking rescue in Thailand', *Positions*, vol. 25, issue 4, 2017, pp. 769–794, https://doi.org/10.1215/10679847-4188410.

[15]   S Majic, 'Publicizing the (In)visible? Celebrities, anti-human trafficking activism, and feminist ideologies'*, Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society*, vol. 28, issue 1, 2021, pp. 94–108, https://doi.org/10.1093/sp/jxz040; S Majic, 'Real Men Set Norms? Anti-trafficking campaigns and the limits of celebrity norm entrepreneurship', *Crime, Media, Culture*, vol. 14, no. 2, 2018, pp. 289–309, https://doi.org/10.1177/1741659017714518; S L Steele and T Shores, 'More Than Just a Famous Face: Exploring the rise of the celebrity expert-advocate through anti-trafficking action by the Demi and Ashton Foundation', *Crime, Media, Culture*, vol. 10, issue 3, 2014, pp. 259–272, https://doi.org/10.1177/1741659014558434.

[16]   Steele and Shores; S Yea, 'Girls on Film: Affective politics and the creation of an intimate anti-trafficking public through film screenings in Singapore', *Political Geography*, vol. 45, 2015, pp. 45–54, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2014.08.009; S Stiles, 'I Am Elena: Rhetorical analysis as the first step to a "best practices" formula for sex trafficking public service announcements', *Visual Communication*, vol. 11, issue 2, 2012, pp. 185–206, https://doi.org/10.1177/1470357211434031; C Nieuwenhuys and A Pécoud, 'Human Trafficking, Information Campaigns, and Strategies of Migration Control', *American Behavioural Scientist*, vol. 50, issue 12, 2007, pp. 1674–1695, https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764207302474.

information and education campaigns, which are key concerns that motivate my interest in critical approaches to learning about trafficking. As they state, 'a thematic analysis of the studies identified problems in eight areas that require attention in the future development of anti-human trafficking campaigns: stereotyping, compounding human trafficking with migration, conflating prostitution with human trafficking, sexualization/erotization of women, victimization, role of anti-human trafficking organizations, data shortcomings, and oversimplification of human trafficking.'[17] *From Slavery to Human Trafficking* attempts to develop an approach to knowledge about slavery and forced labour that moves beyond frames that may (inadvertently) reinforce the stereotypes we seek to recognise and challenge.

## Postcolonial Frameworks in Education about Slavery

At secondary and tertiary levels, there is a significant debate about the methods and content of history education in the Australian curriculum, which varies from state to state since education is a state portfolio. This controversy is particularly pronounced in relation to Australian history but also relating to particular aspects of world history, including war and conflict, slavery, human rights, and race.[18] In the last decade, debate has focused on the importance of education in decolonising Australia's histories of slavery, not only acknowledging episodes of slavery, but also enabling the voices of Indigenous and Pacific Islander scholars, advocates,

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[17] N Szablewska and K Kubacki, 'Anti-Human Trafficking Campaigns: A systematic literature review', *Social Marketing Quarterly*, vol. 24, issue 2, 2018, pp. 104–122, p. 104, https://doi.org/10.1177/1524500418771611.

[18] The debates reached a public crescendo in early 2020 when Prime Minister Scott Morrison commented on the #BlackLivesMatter movement, declaring how fortunate Australia was to not have a history of slavery. The backlash to Morrison's comments came from academics and activists alike, who were concerned about the Prime Minister's elision of the slavery of Indigenous Australians, the bonded labour of Pacific Islanders under the Blackbirding schemes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the more recent episodes of forced labour and slavery in the sex industry and beyond it. Indigenous Labour politician and spokeswoman for Indigenous Affairs, Linda Burney, commented that Morrison should better understand Australian history. See, M Koslowski, '"It's Just Denial": Bruce Pascoe, Labour condemns PM's "no slavery in Australia" claim', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 June 2020, retrieved 22 November 2020, https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/it-s-just-denial-bruce-pascoe-labor-condemn-pm-s-no-slavery-in-australia-claim-20200611-p551jo.html.

and survivors to be audible within the curriculum.[19]

Education can have a decolonising potential. I suggest that questions about the political stakes of learning should therefore carry equal weight as subject content. Further, education should demonstrate knowledge acquisition and a commitment to postcolonial principles that challenge the 'production and reproduction of marginalised racial, and gendered others in new contemporary times.'[20] Scholarly work on race, memory, and agency in education by researchers Heidi Mirza,[21] and Leon Tikly and Tim Bond,[22] inform the shape of this subject by incorporating approaches to learning based on critical readings of historical texts and contemporary media. Simultaneously, recent scholarship on the role of biographical narratives authored or produced by marginalised individuals and groups informs this subject by foregrounding the voices and experiences of survivors themselves. Andrews, for example, reflects on the value of slave narratives in challenging perspectives of slavery emerging from accounts by historians.[23] He draws attention to the ways that slave narratives indicate the importance of caste and class in illuminating the living conditions of slaves and the intra-community dynamics among slaves. Coletu analyses the role of autobiographical and personal narratives and argues that questions of political economy should be kept in mind when using narratives in education because exposure and disclosure can lead to surveillance by subjectification to a bureaucratic gaze.[24] The type of intervention made by Coletu is important for asking not only why to draw on these narratives, but also how their use may have political implications that exceed their telling.

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[19]  L Tikly, 'Education and the New Imperialism', in R S Coloma (ed.), *Postcolonial Challenges in Education*, vol. 369, Peter Lang Publishers, New York, 2009, pp. 23–45.

[20]  H S Mirza, 'Plotting a History: Black and postcolonial feminisms in "new times"', *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, vol. 12, issue 1, 2009, pp. 1–10, p. 1, https://doi.org/10.1080/13613320802650899.

[21]  *Ibid.*

[22]  L Tikly and T Bond, 'Towards a Postcolonial Research Ethics in Comparative and International Education', *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education,* vol. 43, issue 4, 2013, pp. 422–442, https://doi.org/10.1080/030 57925.2013.797721.

[23]  W L Andrews, 'Caste and Class in Nineteenth Century Slave Narratives', *a/b: Auto/Biography studies*, vol. 32, issue 2, 2017, pp. 225–227, https://doi.org/1 0.1080/08989575.2017.1288003.

[24]  E Coletu, 'Introduction Biographic Mediation: On the uses of personal disclosure in bureaucracy and politics', *Biography*, vol. 42, no. 3, 2019, pp. 465–485, https://doi.org/10.1353/bio.2019.0055.

# From Slavery to Human Trafficking: Critical histories

*From Slavery to Human Trafficking* is a semester-long subject for undergraduate students in the academic discipline of History, but the subject attracts enrolments from other Humanities and Social Science departments, including Legal Studies, Sociology, Politics, and Geography/Planning. It is run annually at La Trobe University across all campuses and normally attracts well over one hundred enrolees. It consists of a combination of lectures, tutorial discussions, and online activities. Each week, students are introduced to a new topic, with the organisation of the subject following an historical timeline. The subject assumes no prior knowledge of human trafficking or slavery, and so the design needed to try to balance a broad geographical and historical scope with specific and detailed materials within each topic. The topics are as follows:

- Topic 1 is a general introduction that provides definitions of the key terms, including slavery, human trafficking, forced labour, and debt bondage, as well as introducing debates on researching human trafficking and estimating its scale and scope;
  Topic 2 overviews slavery in the Ancient World, with a focus on Ancient Greece and Rome;
- Topic 3 provides an introduction to slavery and Indigenous Peoples, with a case study focus on Native American slavery practices;
- Topics 4 & 5 focus on the transatlantic slave trade and the antebellum United States
- Topics 6 & 7 focus on slavery in Australia;
- Topic 8 examines slavery during wartime through a focus on forced labour of prisoners of war and sexual slavery of the Comfort Women;
- Topic 9 examines the links between human trafficking and disasters, including displacement through conflict and as a result of climate change;
- Topic 10 explores trafficking for forced labour through four case studies that include agricultural, construction, paid domestic work, and global fishing industries;
- Topic 11 examines organ trafficking/the commercial brokering of organs, with the kidney trade in the Philippines acting as the main case study;
- Topic 12 provides an overview of how slaves and victims of trafficking leave these situations and what their post-trafficking/-slavery trajectories are.

By selecting historical and geographical representations of slavery and human trafficking, the subject explores their origins and historical development and manifestations across time and different geographical and cultural contexts. *From Slavery to Human Trafficking* contains a series of key themes, with the most relevant for discussion in this paper being: agency/voice, experiences and trajectories, responses/anti-slavery, memory/memorialisation, and (dis)continuities in

historical and contemporary slavery. Additionally, students receive guiding questions that elaborate on these themes in the context of each week's topic.

The key themes and guiding questions provide a basis for students' critical engagement with issues of voice, agency, and representation in human trafficking and slavery, both historically and at present. The guiding questions are:

- How do we learn about the experiences of enslaved people and survivors of human trafficking?
- How do sources (historical and contemporary) realise these understandings?
- What does the diversity of experiences and situations of slavery and human trafficking tell us about economic, social, and cultural contexts?
- How is slavery remembered and memorialised? Who is excluded or silenced?

These questions are amended each week to align more closely with the specificities of each week's topic (discussed further in the next section).

## Teaching about Trafficking: Agency, voice, and representation

In this section, I discuss the use of two different types of narratives about slavery and human trafficking in the educational material. I draw on examples from four of the twelve weekly topics in *From Slavery to Human Trafficking* to illustrate the role and use of materials: survivor-authored narratives, and narratives about trafficking produced by anti-trafficking stakeholders.

*Survivors' Voices in Learning About Slavery and Human Trafficking*

The subject introduces narratives of former slaves and survivors of trafficking in all weekly topics, but they are foregrounded most fully in the topics of the antebellum United States, the Comfort Women during World War II, contemporary forced labour, and the relationship between displacement and human trafficking.[25] In the topic of the antebellum US, issues of agency and voice of formerly enslaved people are most explicitly introduced, drawing on Solomon Northup's narrative, *12 Years a Slave*. Students are introduced to Northup's written narrative about his life as a slave and the film based on his narrative. The description of the topic is provided as follows:

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[25] For the Australian context, students are introduced to the documentary *Servant or Slave* (2016, SBS Australia) which narrates the story of siblings separated from each other and removed from their parents under Australia's policy of 'Aboriginal Protectionism' in the first half of the twentieth century.

> The narratives of slavery are often obscured in both historical and contemporary understandings of slavery and human trafficking. The antebellum United States, along with countries such as Brazil (where slavery was also widespread and profoundly violent), have produced some rich and detailed accounts of slavery by former slaves themselves. … This week we examine one of these narratives: Solomon Northup's memoir, *12 Years a Slave*, which was made into a full-length film in 2013. Solomon Northup was a New York State-born free African American man who was kidnapped in Washington, D.C. by two conmen in 1841 and sold into slavery. Northup was put to work on plantations in the state of Louisiana for 12 years before being released.

The guiding questions for student discussion of the film and selections of Northup's written narrative include:

- *Agency & Representation:* How do narratives of slavery differ between scholarly and popular accounts?
- *Experiences of Slavery:* What new insights about the experience of slavery are learned through filmic representation? How are differences between the various roles that produce systems of enslavement represented (owners, overseers, managers, and so on)?
- *Gender & Aspects of Identity:* In what ways does gender impact experience and representation?
- *Agency & Resistance:* What forms does resistance to slavery take in representation and what are the results?

These questions link to the key themes of the subject: particularly voice, representation, and agency; and gender. To support students' critical engagement with *12 Years a Slave*, the preceding week introduces the transatlantic slave trade and the antebellum United States in general terms. Secondary readings foreground how slaves were able to exercise agency, shape a sense of identity, and resist the violence of their owners. The readings discuss slave truancy and practices of 'everyday resistance'[26] on US plantations, with a particular focus on the ways these practices are distinctly gendered, and shape slave identity in positive terms, and demonstrate that resistance practices need not always take the form of open

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[26]   J C Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1990.

defiance and slave rebellion.[27] Introducing gendered experiences of slavery and resistance prompts students to recognise distinctive experiences, dislodging constructions of a singular slave trajectory or persona. The topic question focused on the differences between slave owners and other non-slave characters in *12 Years a Slave,* thereby extending the discussion of difference and disjuncture between non-slave characters and reinforcing the suggestion that plantation identities are complex and irreducible to stereotypes of slave and master. A fourth reading for this topic discusses several key Anglo characters in *12 Years a Slave* and provides insights into the various motivations for purchasing a slave, and the financial and social circumstances of slave owners in the United States.[28] The themes introduced in the topic of the antebellum United States on agency, voice, and representations are reaffirmed and extended by the topic of the Comfort Women, which relates the violence of Japanese colonisation in the Asia-Pacific region and the Pacific theatre of World War II. The experiences of the Comfort Women are situated in the broader historical context of Japanese colonisation of, and expansionism in, the Asia-Pacific.[29] Key questions for students in this topic are:

- *Agency & Resistance:* What do the narratives of former prisoners of war and former Comfort Women tell us about the experiences of being slaves during wartime? And how do these narratives add to and extend scholarly accounts?
- *Justice, Memory & Evidence:* What are some of the ways former Comfort Women have sought to realise justice? And to what extent has testimony and 'evidence' played a role in this process?

Students are given a link to oral testimony by former Comfort Woman Kim Bok Dong,[30] and written narratives of or by several other women,[31] which were

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[27] 'Beyond the Plantation' (Chapter Three) in S Lussana, *My Brother Slaves: Friendship, masculinity and resistance in the antebellum South*, University of Kentucky Press, Lexington, 2016, pp. 71–98; S M H Camp, '"I Could Not Stay There": Enslaved women, truancy and the geography of everyday forms of resistance in the antebellum plantation South', *Slavery and Abolition*, vol. 23, issue 3, 2002, pp. 1–20, https://doi.org/10.1080/714005245.

[28] W Johnson, *Soul by Soul: Life inside the antebellum slave market*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1999, pp. 78–116.

[29] As in K H Chen*, Asia as Method: Toward deimperialization,* Duke University Press, Durham, 2010.

[30] Stephen Park, 'Life as a "Comfort Woman": Story of Kim Bok-Dong', Asian Boss, 28 October 2018, retrieved 4 August 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qsT97ax_Xb0&t=43s.

[31] Asian Women's Fund, 'Testimonies of the Victims', Digital Museum: The Comfort Women Issue and the Asian Women's Fund, n.d., retrieved 16 November 2020, https://www.awf.or.jp/e3/oralhistory-00.html.

later published as a book.[32] The introduction of the Comfort Women as a topic also enables students to debate the role of advocacy and support organisations in representing human trafficking and slavery. These forms of intervention are particularly fraught in discussions of 'sex slavery'[33] because of the tendency to equate human trafficking with trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation and slavery with sex slavery. The principal organisation claiming to advocate for the former Comfort Women is the Korean Council for Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan (hereafter, the Korean Council). Sarah Soh's book[34] challenges the Korean Council's representation of the Comfort Women, including the construction of a nationalist narrative of Korean victimhood and Japanese aggression and invasion. Soh also critiques the selective use of narratives by former Comfort Women to advance this nationalist victim agenda. During this topic, students engage with questions of representation and the appropriation of victimhood narratives that serve broader organisational and national agendas. This appropriation is crystallised in discussions around the Korean Council's advice to former Comfort Women to reject compensation offered under a private Japanese fund. This topic illustrates the ways interest groups can influence the representation of an issue and use narratives of victims of slavery to pursue a particular advocacy agenda.

The final example of critical learning given in this paper is developed through a topic on trafficking for forced labour. This topic contains case studies of forced and trafficked labour within the agricultural, construction, paid domestic work, and global fishing industries. Students can choose one case study to engage with in detail through visual media and published academic work; however, the case study of the construction industry is the core sector with which all students engage. The male construction workers' narratives introduced here emphasise the mundane aspects of exploitation, such as the relationship between everyday experiences and broader structural regimes of immigration and labour that enable the conditions by which marginality and exploitation are reproduced. Students reflect on these narratives and are encouraged to reflect on the fact that, despite legislative and policy tools criminalising human trafficking, labour exploitation continues to exist and flourish within the regimes that govern international labour migration. For many students, that human trafficking exists beyond the sex industry and is applicable to men and boys as well as women and girls is, in

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32   K Howard, *True Stories of the Korean Comfort Women*, Cassel, London, 1996.

33   L M Agustín, *Sex at the Margins,* Zed Books, London, 2007.

34   C S Soh, *The Comfort Women: Sexual violence and postcolonial memory in Japan and Korea*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2008.

itself, a startling revelation.[35]

Whilst all case studies centre the narratives of trafficked persons, the suggestion that trafficked persons' voices are valuable and insightful is brought to the fore most fully in the case study of migrant construction workers. Beyond the core secondary reading provided for the construction sector case study, students are assigned chapters from a series of edited volumes of migrant construction worker diaries and recounts.[36] The volumes are the primary outputs of a scholar-activist project to provide a forum for precarious migrant workers to articulate their experiences on their own terms and through their own frames of reference via detailed written narratives. This aim is explained in the introduction to the third volume:

> The Diaries Project explores the everyday aspects of exploitation of transient migrant workmen from South Asia in Singapore, particularly after they exit exploitative workplaces to pursue remedial justice. Whilst there is an increasing number of scholarly and popular accounts of migrant workers in Singapore and elsewhere, it is almost impossible to find any that are written by workers themselves. We believe opportunities for transient migrant workers to articulate their experiences through a range of forums and modes of expression are an important step in dislodging their mutability and redressing discrimination towards them. The inability of migrant workers to narrate their own stories on their own terms can unwittingly reinforce policies and practices that continue to marginalize them in Singapore, by supporting stereotypes of them as uneducated or only as sources of 'cheap labour' and not individuals with multi-faceted lives, interests, relationships and cultural repertoires.[37]

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[35] It is emphasised to students that the case study of men and boys as labour trafficking victims should not be read as meaning 'only men and boys are trafficked for labour exploitation, while women and girls are trafficked for sexual exploitation'. The inclusion of a case study on migrant domestic workers in this topic helps situate labour exploitation as a problem that is not gender-exclusive.

[36] S Yea, B Balakrishnan, and D Fordyce (eds.), *A Thousand and One Days: Stories of migrant worker hardship in Singapore*, Volume 3, Thirumagal Publications, Kuala Lumpur, 2018; S Yea, R Haque, and D Fordyce, *A Thousand and One Days: Stories of migrant worker hardship in Singapore*, Volume 2, Bangla Kantha Publications, Dhaka, 2015; S Yea, A K M Mohsin, and D Fordyce, *A Thousand and One Days: Stories of migrant worker hardship in Singapore*, Volume 1, Bangla Kantha Publications, Dhaka, 2013.

[37] *Ibid.,* Volume 3, p. 2.

Through the reading of selected chapters by Bangladeshi and Tamil construction workers in Singapore, reading these volumes aims to reinforce the importance of transnational labourers' voices. Students reflect on the *processes* by which migrant labourers become unfree through an engagement with narratives of forced labour and human trafficking by the migrants themselves. Additionally, students are introduced to feminist participatory action research principles used by several anti-trafficking NGOs, including the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW).[38] The narratives of the South Asian migrant construction workers serve another important role in this subject: namely, challenging reductionist stereotypes of human trafficking as a problem that applies principally to the sex industry, which privileges the victimhood of women and girls, and rests on cases of extreme violence and unfreedom. Situating the experience of human trafficking through frames that foreground it in sectors outside of the sex industry supports LeBaron's understanding of unfree labour, contextualising the problem in 'broader relations of inequality and hierarchical social relations'.[39] In this understanding, unfree labour is not exceptionalised or disembedded from the 'social relationship(s) of insecurity and exploitation' central to capitalist globalisation. This understanding problematises frames of unfreedom that individualise and sensationalise incidents of 'neo-slavery' and are associated with liberal, moral approaches to (sex) trafficking.

There is a risk of continuing to exceptionalise trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation in efforts to foreground labour exploitation in other sectors and amongst groups apart from women and girls. With this in mind, *From Slavery to Human Trafficking* attends to contemporary expressions of trafficking in the sex industry. First, in the topic on the Comfort Women, the lecture and readings examine the characteristics of sexual slavery in this historical context. Here students are encouraged to consider how sexual slavery manifests during wartime, but also to move beyond stereotypes of sexual violence, physical abuse, and dehumanisation to consider how gender inequality and discrimination created vulnerability causally tied to the recruitment of Comfort Women. Students are introduced to the role of gender inequality in trafficking as a concern that extends beyond the Comfort Women topic through lecture-based content drawing on Cambodia, the Philippines, and Viet Nam as comparative contexts. Second, students are introduced to contemporary expressions of human trafficking in

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[38] Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW), *Reclaiming Migrant Women's Narratives: A feminist participatory action research project on "safe and fair" migration in Asia,* GAATW, Bangkok, 2019, retrieved 18 November 2020, https://www.gaatw.org/publications/Reclaiming%20Migrant%20 Women's%20Narratives.pdf.

[39] G LeBaron, 'Unfree Labour Beyond Binaries: Insecurity, social hierarchy and labour market restructuring', *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, vol. 17, issue 1, 2015, pp. 1–19, p. 1, https://doi.org/10.1080/14616742.2013.813160.

South Korea involving US military forces as clientele. Selections from my[40] and Cheng's[41] ethnographies of migrant entertainers deployed in bars and clubs around US military bases are provided. The purpose of using a comparative lens in this topic is twofold. First, it enables students to establish the structural and geopolitical embeddedness of global economies of sexual exploitation.[42] Second, it introduces problems of labour exploitation in ways that draw connections to other forms of exploitation, including commercial sexual exploitation. Through Yea's chapter 'Re-thinking Trafficking in *gijichon*', students consider migrant entertainers' exploitation related to labour conditions issues as well as sexual exploitation. Such a discussion challenges, at least in part, the tendency to create 'silos' in which different forms of human trafficking are treated as entirely separate and unrelated.

In sum, the topics in the subject are organised to centre trafficked persons and former slaves' narratives. The narratives are contextualised through secondary readings that draw out the importance of victims' agency in articulating their experiences and through scholarly analyses of the resistance and re-working practices in which slaves and trafficked persons engage. Through these primary and secondary sources, both historical and contemporary, *From Slavery to Human Trafficking* unsettles and challenges narrow stereotypes about the gendered and racialised identities of trafficked persons and their experiences as well as the degree of agency which they express. The subject supplants stereotypes by introducing students to the complexities and nuances of trafficked persons and former slaves' lives in ways that foreground their frames of reference and concerns. The subject does use materials produced by people who have not experienced trafficking, including those working for NGOs and community-based organisations (CBOs), and advocating for trafficked and enslaved persons. Students engage with how these advocates construct narratives to serve particular agendas and interests, which helps students to think about how information about trafficking is communicated and for what purposes. Critical engagement skills are built and reinforced through a major assessment task, to which I now turn.

*Educational Assessment Tasks to Develop Critical Engagement Skills*

A postcolonial methodology promotes critical reading of dominant representation frames for their colonising potential, while also facilitating modes of representation that work to recover the voices of those subject to this discursive pigeonholing. In this sense, the methodological engagement with voice and representation through students' own work is equally as significant as the subject content. The major

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40    Yea, 2015.

41    S L Cheng, *On the Move for Love: Migrant entertainers and the U.S. military in South Korea*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2010.

42    K Moon, *Sex Among Allies: Military prostitution in U.S.-Korea relations*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1997.

assessment task for *From Slavery to Human Trafficking* takes the form of an in-depth essay, developed to consolidate the key learning outcomes from the topics. The essay allows students the choice of further engaging with representations and narratives of slavery and human trafficking through two question options. The first is a critical textual analysis of a documentary, film, or other work written about human trafficking or slavery. The assignment question for this topic asks students to choose a narrative of slavery or human trafficking and critically examine the way the issue is presented. The essay response should focus on what key themes and tropes are used to represent the issue. The discussion should engage with debates about the potential of anti-slavery and anti-trafficking campaigns to sensationalise the issue, and with the effects that particular narrative constructions of trafficking and slavery can have on responses to the problem.

Students have several options available for analysis, including the films *Lilja 4-ever*, *Fields of Mudan, Buoyancy*, and *Servant or Slave*. Background readings are provided to develop an understanding of scholarly arguments about the potential of human trafficking films and documentaries to create reductionist frames and stereotypes.[43]

The other option for this essay assignment invites students to trace the work of an individual or organisation involved in counter-trafficking or in historical abolitionism. Students can choose from a range of options, including contemporary organisations and individuals, such as the International Justice Mission (IJM), Kevin Bales and Free the Slaves, and GAATW. In analysing these organisations, students may trace the ways in which their moral, religious, or political stance shapes their anti-trafficking work, and with what effects. Within this essay question, students are also given the option of examining an historical figure associated with the historical abolitionist movement, including the former slaves Ottobah Cugoano, Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, and Olaudah Equiano, as well as other actors in the abolitionist movement, including Thomas Paine and William Wilberforce. Through responses to this essay question, students further consider the agency and voice of former slaves as advocates and activists. Befitting the location of the subject in the discipline of History, students are required to include primary sources in their essays, which requires them to read documents written by former slaves themselves (such as Harriet Jacobs' autobiography, *Incidents of a Slave Girl*, published in 1861).[44] For some former slaves, who were illiterate and unable to write their own autobiography, the use of ghost writers enables students to gain further insight into the ways slaves' narratives can be selectively edited to meet the goals of various agendas,

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[43]   Yea, 2016; R Andrijasevic, 'Beautiful Dead Bodies: Gender, migration and representation in anti-trafficking campaigns', *Feminist Review,* vol. 86, issue 1, 2007, pp. 24–44, https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.fr.9400355.

[44]   H Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl,* Thayer & Eldridge, Boston, 1861.

including abolition.[45]

In sum, the major assessment task enables students to either critically engage with the work of a former slave or advocate in either the contemporary anti-trafficking movement or historically in the abolitionist movement, or to assess the role and impact of representations of human trafficking and slavery. Because of the importance of primary sources in historical research, students are able to engage with a primary text as a source of voice and agency or externally imposed representation. The researching and writing of these essays thus reinforce learnings from weekly topics, and in ways that enable students to pursue particular topics and narratives in ways that reflect their particular interests.

## Conclusion

A postcolonial pedagogy is a political act, at once recognising the coloniality of authoritative representations and challenging the bases of accepted knowledge and authority.[46] Teaching about trafficking and all forms of slavery and forced labour in a tertiary context begs us to move beyond the acceptance of authoritative discourses, including academic ones, to engage with and challenge the coloniality of power in many accounts of slavery, forced labour, and trafficking. This is important in a post/neo-colonial liberal context, such as Australia, where secret histories of slavery are imbricated with ongoing race-based violence and exploitation. The task of teaching about trafficking through content and methodologies that challenge students to think critically on what constitutes knowledge about slavery and trafficking is a first but important step in developing a postcolonial politics of anti-trafficking that is both subversive and transformative.

Beyond the case study in this paper, there are several ongoing questions that I believe are important to continue debating and discussing in relation to learning about human trafficking in a tertiary education context. Foremost, these questions include whether and to what extent students can take these critical understandings forward in challenging narrow stereotypes about slavery and trafficking, both in their lives and in broader society. For students who go on to work in the anti-trafficking sector, institutional change, particularly within the NGO sector, may be difficult at best, especially where anti-trafficking work is intertwined with moral,

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45   J Larson, 'Converting Passive Womanhood to Active Sisterhood: Agency, power, and subversion in Harriet Jacobs' "Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl"', *Women's Studies*, vol. 35, issue 8, 2006, pp. 739–756, https://doi.org/10.1080/00497870600945618.

46   For a comparative discussion of a transformative pedagogy, see L Bristol, *Plantation Pedagogy: A Postcolonial and Global Perspective,* Global Studies in Education, Volume 16, Peter Lang Publishing, New York, 2012.

religious, or nationalist agendas. Further, taking forward critical perspectives on the construction of trafficking victimhood gained through university education can unsettle dominant representations of slavery and trafficking in ways that present challenges to entrenched political positions. Reiterating the complexities of human trafficking may not sit well with the capacity-building training of bureaucrats or NGO actors, for example, who have minimal time or interest in exploring the power of representations and the politics of agency and voice. To address these challenges adequately is beyond the scope of an undergraduate humanities subject. As with any humanities subject, nurturing students' critical thinking and acting provides a corrective to narrow stereotypes of slavery and trafficking, and it is this humble aim to which the subject discussed in this paper aspired.

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# Civically Engaged and Inclusive Pedagogy: Facilitating a multidisciplinary course on human trafficking

*Annjanette Ramiro Alejano-Steele*

## Abstract

For university instructors who teach human trafficking as a comprehensive course, design decisions often begin with determining scope, disciplinary orientation, and learning goals. Further decisions involve pedagogical approaches and how to best support and sustain student learning. With civic engagement principles, universities can situate themselves within local anti-trafficking initiatives by offering courses to expand organisational capacities to end human trafficking. Using Human Trafficking 4160 at Metropolitan State University of Denver as an example, this paper provides key design questions to create a civically-engaged multidisciplinary course, partnered with agencies statewide, and equipped to support students primed for social justice and systems change. It offers suggestions for community partnerships to deliver content and co-create learning activities. It also provides pedagogical techniques to facilitate inclusive, trauma-informed learning spaces.

*My hope emerges from those places of struggle where I witness individuals positively transforming their lives and the world around them. Educating is always a vocation rooted in hopefulness.[1]*

*The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow.[2]*

## Background

The year 2000 marked a time of global and national significance in the fight to name, define, and address human trafficking. As definitions emerged from a transnational organised crime perspective, universities—known for their roles as knowledge producers and disseminators— worked to advance language and descriptions of human trafficking and amplify public awareness. The early offerings of definition-focused content began as single lectures on global human trafficking, situated within larger courses in international studies graduate programmes and law schools.[3] At that time, course content focused on global and national definitions, funding sources, and emerging laws that shaped anti-trafficking responses. Far less attention was given to content delivery or attention to trauma-informed, multidisciplinary and inclusive pedagogies to support student learning. Based on offering Human Trafficking 4160 for more than thirteen years and teaching nearly 675 students, in this paper, I present key course design considerations, using a civic engagement perspective in order to bridge theory and practice. I also offer course design questions to build a multidisciplinary course with social justice facilitation tools to deliver content. Course design begins by first considering university support systems in place for community partnerships, disciplinary bias of instructors, geographic scope of course coverage, and historical context to guide operational definitions and frameworks.

## The Civically Engaged University

Universities[4] with civic engagement orientations conduct their academic work in partnership with community sectors and agencies—among them social services,

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[1]  b hooks, *Teaching Community: A pedagogy of hope*, Routledge, Oxon and New York, 2003, p. xiv.

[2]  P Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed (revised)*, Continuum, New York, 2003, p. 61.

[3]  Early syllabi designs were gathered by the Protection Project at Johns Hopkins University in a resource database. See http://www.protectionproject.org/donate/association-of-scholars/syllabi.

[4]  While the term used throughout this paper references universities, civic engagement efforts also occur in a range of other academic institutions.

government and business sectors, community foundations, and non-profit community organisations. Together, universities and their partners share authority in the co-creation of knowledge to address societal issues, and value democratic participation as a central purpose of higher education.[5] In the early 2000s, many universities reframed their missions to provide education and support to communities, building on the women's and civil rights movements that demanded diversity and inclusion in higher education.[6] Since then, hundreds of institutions have seen increases in student civic participation, student retention, and dedication to social change issues.[7] In the United States, the Association of American Colleges & Universities has noted the value of civic engagement as providing 'high-impact learning opportunities that engage student(s) in solving unscripted, real-world problems across all types of institutions, within the context of the workforce, not apart from it.'[8] As universities grapple with student retention during the COVID-19 pandemic, civic engagement approaches are more relevant than ever.

Many civically engaged universities have institutional structures to sustain community partnerships (e.g., internship and career centres), and have evaluation structures that value publicly engaged faculty who serve as academic stewards of change. Driven by a commitment to creating socially just and equitable societies,

5   J Saltmarsh and M Hartley, 'A Brief History of the Civic Engagement Movement in American Higher Education', in C Dolgon, T D Mitchell and T K Eatman (eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Service Learning and Community Engagement*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2017, p. 112.

6   L J Vogelgesang, 'Diversity Work and Service-Learning: Understanding Campus Dynamics', *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning,* vol. 10, no. 2, 2004, pp. 34–43.

7   There is a long history of evaluations and meta-analyses on civically engaged partnerships in the community that go well beyond the scope of this paper. See J Saltmarsh and M Hartley (eds.), *'To Serve a Larger Purpose': Engagement for democracy and the transformation of higher education*, Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 2011; T H Peterson, 'Engaged Scholarship: Reflections and research on the pedagogy of social change', *Teaching in Higher Education*, vol. 14, issue 5, 2009, pp. 541–552, https://doi.org/10.1080/13562510903186741; D Trudeau and T P Kruse, 'Creating Significant Learning Experiences Through Civic Engagement: Practical strategies for community-engaged pedagogy', *Journal of Public Scholarship in Higher Education,* vol. 4, 2014, pp. 12–30; J A Boland, 'Orientations to Civic Engagement: Insights into the sustainability of a challenging pedagogy', *Studies in Higher Education*, vol. 39, issue 1, 2014, pp. 180–195, https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2011.648177; S B Gelmon, B A Holland, and A Spring, *Assessing Service-learning and Civic Engagement: Principles and techniques*, Stylus Publishing, Sterling, 2018.

8   A Unger, 'How Higher Ed Survives: Affordable, high-impact civic engagement', Association of American Colleges & Universities, 19 August 2020, retrieved 15 May 2021, https://www.aacu.org/blog/how-higher-ed-survives-affordable-high-impact-civic-engagement.

publicly engaged faculty honour the transdisciplinary nature of knowledge that is co-created in and with community[9] as they support students in the hope that they will become community leaders. Further, many publicly engaged scholars can facilitate 'third space'[10] classrooms as conceptualised by bell hooks and Paulo Freire. Third space facilitators address community problems, using pedagogical tools that validate student identities, community knowledge, and resilience as essential to effective teaching and learning.[11] As a result, students graduate with greater sensitivity to community needs, having gained hands-on experience and empathy. How different universities offer students civic engagement experience varies widely; an example highlights the combination of curriculum and high-impact teaching practices.

An Example of Civic Engagement

Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSU Denver) was established in 1965, and is federally designated as a Hispanic-serving urban institution. MSU Denver's mission is to provide high-quality, accessible education with steadfast commitment to serving diverse communities. Its modified open-admissions policies have afforded education to those who would not otherwise gain access, spanning a range of socioeconomic backgrounds, race and ethnic groups, disability, and military veteran and citizenship status, among others. Forty-eight per cent of students are from a low-income background; forty per cent are non-traditional (age 25 or older); fifty-six per cent are first-generation students; and eighty per cent are working adults. Contrary to stereotypes about 'at-risk and underserved' student populations, MSU Denver students are living proof of perseverance and resilience.

The university's reputation and mission are the direct result of carefully cultivated partnerships with a range of community sectors and agencies. Together, scholarly inquiry and knowledge is co-created to combine classroom experience with community-based service on issues that, for example, affect undocumented communities, individuals experiencing homelessness, and migrant workers. Examples of MSU Denver accolades for civic engagement work have included

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9    E Ward and A Miller, 'Next-generation Engaged Scholars: Stewards of change', in P Levine and T K Eatmen (eds.), *Publicly Engaged Scholars: Next-generation engagement and the future of higher education,* Stylus Publishing, Sterling, 2016, p. 184.

10   K Gutierrez, B Rymes, and J Larson, 'Script, Counterscript, and Underlife in the Classroom: James Brown versus Brown v. Board of Education', *Harvard Educational Review*, vol. 65, issue 3, 1995, pp. 445–472, https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.65.3.r16146n25h4mh384.

11   hooks; Freire; R Tarlau, 'From a Language to a Theory of Resistance: Critical pedagogy, the limits of "framing," and social change', *Educational Theory*, vol. 64, issue 4, 2014, pp. 369–392, https://doi.org/10.1111/edth.12067.

fire and injury prevention education to refugees and immigrants; practical experience gained through working with adults with major mental illnesses; and study abroad opportunities to develop humanitarian engineering innovations (e.g., pulse jets or water filtration systems) with community leaders in other countries.[12] MSU Denver's civically engaged faculty empower students to advance social change with the tenet of education as freedom, and third space classrooms invite students to discuss tensions between lived experiences and theory. For example, first generation students and undocumented students make sense of their community in the context of broader social, political, and economic forces,[13] developing greater understanding of their precarity for exploitation broadly, and human trafficking specifically. MSU Denver's civic engagement orientation and students' lived experiences anchored the design of Human Trafficking 4160, honing its focus upon Colorado.

My background as a dually-tenured professor in Psychology and Gender Studies at MSU Denver began with disciplinary training as health psychologist whose community-based work focused on underserved women and social determinants of health in the areas of pregnancy, stress, and violence. My disciplinary biases frame how I see the development and well-being of humans within societal structures, and I have brought these lenses to my work in the anti-trafficking field over the last sixteen years. In addition to my work on campus, I am also the co-founder of the Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking (LCHT), a non-profit separate from the university that has provided education, community-based research, and the statewide anti-trafficking hotline and textline since 2005. I co-designed the course with my co-founder Amanda Finger, other LCHT staff, and the added input of community practitioners[14] with a flexible range of topics that reflect the ever-evolving community response. Within MSU Denver, eight cross-listed departments engaged in discussion and formal curriculum review to ensure that learning objectives met disciplinary programme needs.

HT 4160 is facilitated by instructors and guest lecturers with years of practical experience in the anti-trafficking field. Together, they blend multidisciplinary theories and frameworks with field applications to illustrate the complexities of anti-trafficking responses across Colorado. Civic engagement opportunities deepen student learning, providing hands-on experience as individuals or in groups. The course's cross-listed design mirrors comprehensive community

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[12] MSU Denver's long history and impact on the communities it has served can be found at https://www.msudenver.edu/our-past/our-history.

[13] G A Garcia, *Becoming Hispanic-serving Institutions: Opportunities for colleges and universities,* Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2019, p. 91.

[14] Throughout the paper, 'community practitioners' refers to guest lecturers from various sectors (e.g., government, human services, health, nonprofit) and advocacy groups, including survivor leaders.

responses to human trafficking specifically, within a context of human rights advances in Colorado. Course delivery has also been integrated with both student support services and broader Colorado anti-trafficking resources. Over the last 14 years, all six of HT 4160's instructors have been affiliated with LCHT, including survivors, co-founders, board members, and staff. This collaborative civic engagement design ensures connection to current statewide anti-trafficking efforts, and further guarantees that community voices, collaborations, and resources remain central to the course.

*Colorado-based Course Design*

Historical and geographic context has directed how HT 4160's content has evolved over the years; its design was driven by the needs of students, community systems, and local anti-trafficking initiatives. As course design developed in 2006, many US states like Colorado were developing coordinated responses to human trafficking in the wake of the adoption in 2000 of the *Trafficking Victims Protection Act* (TVPA). US policies shaped state-level responses through funding. The Bush administration set its Department of Justice funding priorities upon training law enforcement and catalysing faith-based organisations to coordinate service provision. Early funding also prioritised support for victims of trafficking in the sex industry, excluding people trafficked in the formal economy.

Colorado's human trafficking efforts were amongst the first to benefit from federal funding for protection and prosecution; funding also supported prevention outreach to 'at-risk' communities (e.g., detention centres, migrant farm workers, or youth experiencing homelessness). The response protocols encompassed all forms of human trafficking with added requirements to partners, thus coordinating a variety of actors, among them, law enforcement, local community agencies, and faith-based groups. Federal funding also professionalised the responses to trafficking, namely in the areas of law enforcement and service provision, effectively shutting out survivors and community advocates. Over time, federal funding fluctuations created instabilities to sustain many human trafficking responses.

The year 2006 also saw Colorado enact legislation which defined trafficking in children (§18-6-402 C.R.S., 2006) and coercion of involuntary servitude (§18-13-129 C.R.S., 2006) to accompany legislation for trafficking in adults (§ 18-13-127 C.R.S., 2006), whereby '(1)(a) – A person commits trafficking in adults if he or she sells, exchanges, barters or leases an adult and receives any money or other consideration or thing of value for the adult as a result of such transaction; or (b) – Receives an adult as a result of a transaction'. Colorado's legislation diverged from the TVPA, which created legal challenges for prosecutors. In light of the differences between federal and state legislation, HT 4160 defined human trafficking as 'a severe form of exploitation for labor (including sex), through the use of force, fraud or coercion'. Doing so allowed for frameworks

and lecturers to address a continuum of exploitation, within which human trafficking is situated. It was equally important to link efforts to the work of Colorado human rights trailblazers who paved the way for immigrants, refugees, children, and crime victims, among others; these efforts are named as the work of affinity movements. Establishing a geographic focus and multidisciplinary approach added considerations for shaping content to meet civically engaged learning objectives as the next step in course design.

## Civic Engagement Design Questions

Drawing upon design structures offered by civic engagement scholars,[15] instructors designing a human trafficking course can incorporate civic activities to support learning objectives through partnerships. This collaborative design allows students to apply theory by learning from community practitioners and engaging with opportunities in the community. For each question posed, examples from HT 4160 illustrate a few decision points.

**What are the learning goals of the course? Where can civically engaged learning be infused?**

1. Offer the course from a social justice foundation, countering dominant narratives of human trafficking by focusing on how a global issue affects Colorado communities.

HT 4160's foundation is grounded in multidisciplinary, intersectional, comparative, and global scholarship of gender studies,[16] where students are encouraged to analyse and challenge structures of inequality inherent in all forms and situations of human trafficking. Social justice frameworks that challenge injustice and value diversity[17] help students understand the history of decision-making power and

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[15] S Dudziak and N J Profitt, 'Group Work and Social Justice: Designing pedagogy for social change', *Social Work With Groups,* vol. 35, issue 3, 2012, pp. 235–252, https://doi.org/10.1080/01609513.2011.624370; Trudeau and Kruse; C Forestiere, 'Promoting Civic Agency Through Civic-Engagement Activities: A guide for instructors new to civic-engagement pedagogy', *Journal of Political Science Education*, vol. 11, issue 4, 2015, pp. 455–471, https://doi.org/10.1080/15512169.2015.1066684; Peterson.

[16] C M Orr, 'Women's Studies as Civic Engagement: Research and recommendations', A Teagle Foundation White Paper, The Teagle Working Group on Women's Studies and Civic Engagement and the National Women's Studies Association, 2011, https://www.teaglefoundation.org/Teagle/media/GlobalMediaLibrary/documents/resources/Womens_Studies_as_Civic_Engagement.pdf.

[17] C Caravelis and M Robinson, *Social Justice, Criminal Justice: The role of American law in effecting and preventing social change*, Routledge, New York, 2015, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315647432.

dominant narratives that frame vulnerability and survivorship.[18] Students first learn to honour the history of affinity movement efforts that were hard-fought and established long before human trafficking was legislated. Students learn to enter communities with humility, developing an openness to learning and personal transformation. For many students, this orientation shifted from a 'saviour/missionary' orientation of community service to one attuned to power imbalances and working with community leaders. Students go beyond identifying Colorado's root causes that create vulnerability to violence and exploitation by also examining the stigma associated with 'problematic identities' that create barriers to identification and receiving support and assistance. Pedagogical approaches to support this learning are expanded below.

Building upon its social justice foundation that centralises systemic privilege and oppression, the course incorporated multidisciplinary topics ranging from globalisation, root causes, and economic complexities to legislative and policy development. Discussions and debates have included an array of topics: contrasting federal and state framing of human trafficking; survivor voices and divides; complexities of labour trafficking responses; situating anti-trafficking efforts within labour rights movements; contrasts between chattel slavery and human trafficking; contrasting abolitionist and regulationist approaches to sex work and implications for anti-human trafficking responses; harm reduction efforts for individuals experiencing housing insecurity and managing addictions; human trafficking situated amongst current movements (among them #MeToo; #BlackLivesMatter and #StopAsianHate); COVID-19-exacerbating vulnerabilities for essential workers; and immigration as framed by several federal administrations, among others. Over the years, the course was modified in accordance with changing policies and evolving practices.

In contrast to an international scope with a transnational organised crime focus that was present in 2006, HT 4160 countered global narratives by focusing on Colorado's community-based efforts to address root causes of human trafficking. The course was designed to illuminate gaps and analyse federal mandates and their impact on Colorado. As new groups emerged to address trafficking, the course content followed suit. Focusing on Colorado allows students to examine how a global issue is manifested at a state level; students can look at differences in geography and how human trafficking is portrayed in the middle of the United

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18  For critiques on framing, see A I Fukushima, *Migrant Crossings: Witnessing human trafficking in the U.S.*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2019; A Hill, 'How to Stage a Raid: Police, media and the master narrative of trafficking', *Anti-Trafficking Review*, issue 7, 2016, pp. 39–55, https://doi.org/10.14197/atr.20121773; J Todres, 'Law, Otherness, and Human Trafficking', *Santa Clara Law Review*, vol. 49, issue 3, 2009, pp. 605–672; R Weitzer, 'The Social Construction of Sex Trafficking: Ideology and institutionalization of a moral crusade', *Politics & Society,* vol. 35, issue 3, 2007, pp. 447–475, https://doi.org/10.1177/0032329207304319.

States in comparison to locations that have dominated both federal funding and media attention (e.g., large metropolises like New York City, or developing countries in Southeast Asia). Additionally, students learn about trends related to identity-based communities (e.g., vulnerabilities among LGBTQIA communities) and how they inform responses to ending human trafficking in other parts of the world where there may be barriers to inclusion based upon moral and religious values.

With greater focus on evolving community responses, guest speakers[19] provide community-level insight to the successes and challenges in Colorado's anti-trafficking responses. Students gain knowledge about community resources (e.g., short-term housing), systemic oppression, and gaps that are laid bare by federal and state funding priorities. In the course's early years, differences between state and federal legislation allowed students to analyse challenges presented by Colorado and federal prosecutors. When the course was first offered in 2007, no cases could successfully use the 2006 state law and statewide public awareness was still in its relative infancy.

As a result of House Bill 14-1273,[20] coupled with infusions of federal funding and persistent efforts to educate the public, anti-trafficking responses have changed and the course has followed suit. HT 4160 has afforded students the opportunity to hear directly from task force and coalition leaders as they coordinate efforts, among them the federally-led Colorado Trafficking and Organized Crime Coalition, and the Colorado anti-trafficking hotline and textline. Students quickly learn that no single sector or discipline can end human trafficking alone.

2.  <u>Structure the course to reflect the field's multidisciplinary approach and comprehensive multi-sector community response.</u>

The course was first offered in the fall of 2007, situated in Gender, Women and Sexuality Studies (GWS), the home department of the lead faculty scholar. Reflecting the language of the time, GWS 390J, entitled 'Human Trafficking and Modern Day Slavery', was initially cross-listed with Africana Studies, Criminal Justice, Honors, Human Services & Counseling, Political Science, Psychology, and Social Work. The cross-listed course design mimics the field, providing students multiple orientations (i.e., human rights, transnational organised crime, and criminal justice approaches) to human trafficking to complement the social justice

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19   Specifically, survivor practitioners are compensated monetarily for their time, while other practitioners are provided gift cards. In some cases, an exchange of guest speaking for their respective agencies have also occurred to ensure mutual benefit.

20   'Laws and Legislation', Colorado Human Trafficking Council, n.d., retrieved 10 October 2020, https://sites.google.com/state.co.us/human-trafficking-council/human-trafficking-resources/laws-legislation.

course foundation. While these departments offer the course as a programme elective, the course meets many programme requirements within all five colleges and schools, inclusive of departments such as Chicana/o Studies, Economics, Hospitality, Education and the Honors programme. Rich discussions co-facilitated by Gender Studies, Chicana/o Studies and Africana Studies faculty have made clear distinctions between the institutionalisation of slavery in the United States and human trafficking as a defined crime. A review of Colorado-focused labour and immigrant rights movements positions human trafficking within the timeline of labour rights action.

Because of the complexity of multidisciplinary analyses and managing of triggering content, the course was designed as a 4000-level course,[21] abiding by the university's curricular criteria and the standards put forth by eight departments. Students must go beyond definitions and naming because they are required to analyse, debate, and critique. In 2009, the course was renamed GWS 4160 Human Trafficking, with unanimous support of the cross-listing departments. Initially structured as an in-person sixteen-week course, it has since been offered with every imaginable delivery option: 16-week semester offerings, online, eight-week summer offerings, and two-week intensives. When offered in a 16-week format, HT 4160 dedicates the first eight weeks of content to definitions, theories, and mapping of approaches from a comprehensive response framework, inclusive of the history of Colorado's affinity movements. The second half of the course is dedicated to application of concepts honouring civic partnerships. This format facilitates deeper discussions and learning practice of theory through guest lecturers and activities. Central to the HT 4160 course structure is Colorado's research-based, comprehensive 'Four P' (4P) framework comprised of protection (services) for trafficked persons, prosecution of traffickers, prevention to keep the crime from occurring, and partnerships among different actors.

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[21]　Upper division (4000-level) numbering reflects designation for advanced-level courses in US universities.

## GUIDING FRAMEWORKS:
THE 4Ps

LCHT conducted a substantive literature review to better understand and define the key components of promising practices within each of the 4Ps. It was via the Social Ecology Theory (see page 9) that we began to articulate that these Ps happen in specific communities with unique characteristics. We gathered diverse innovative thinkers and began to think together, learn from one another, and adapt our lenses.

What does it mean to combat human trafficking? Governments and international organizations have declared that an effective response to human trafficking must include four key elements (US State Department & UNODC):

**PREVENTION**
› Training and education programs
› Awareness campaigns
› Advocacy campaigns
› Public and private sector policies
› Protection services for persons who have experienced trafficking
› Programs that address root causes of trafficking aimed at universal and selected communities

**PROTECTION**
› Social service advocacy & case management
› Housing
› Medical services
› Mental health services
› Outreach
› Legal services
› Training and education programs
› State laws on victim protection/rights
› Clothing and food
› Interpretation/translation
› Education
› Life skills training
› Employment assistance
› Community re-integration

**PROSECUTION**
› Human trafficking protocols and procedures
› Training and education
› Task forces
› State trafficking and trafficking-related legislation
› Municipal trafficking and trafficking-related legislation
› Attempted/successful civil and criminal prosecutions of trafficking cases

**PARTNERSHIPS**
› Private sector
› Public sector
› Third sector
› Protocols
› Leadership
› Group diversity
› Resource leveraging
› Trust building
› Sustainability beyond an individual
› Inclusion of vulnerable population perspectives
› Effective communication
› Conflict management
› Management of competing interests

**2** To understand the complexities of prevention, protection, prosecution and partnerships is to build up the strengths and address gaps in anti-human trafficking efforts.

Figure 1. Guiding 4P Framework from the Colorado Project to Comprehensively Combat Human Trafficking[22]

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[22] 'Colorado Project to Comprehensively Combat Human Trafficking', Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking, 2013, retrieved 1 August 2021, https://combathumantrafficking.org/our-research. This 4P framework undergirds the Colorado Governor's Council and Colorado's efforts statewide, with the purpose to bring together system-based anti-trafficking efforts from across the state; to build and enhance collaboration among communities, counties, and sectors within the state; to establish and improve comprehensive services for victims of human trafficking; to assist in the successful prosecution of human traffickers; and to help prevent human trafficking in Colorado.

**What course assignments can be co-created with partnership agencies to support and sustain public awareness and advance social change?**

1.   <u>Incorporate community practitioners to provide practical insight.</u>

Human Trafficking 4160 developed the role of 'community practitioners' to signify guest lecturers representing various perspectives of the comprehensive community response. By design, practitioners, instructors, and students benefit alike, gaining insight into Colorado-based initiatives and challenges. Discussions deepen respect for the complexities of on-the-ground practice, and the third space classroom allows students to inform guest lecturers of their community vulnerabilities and systemic barriers; they regularly pose complex questions from the perspective of their respective majors. Community practitioners benefit from the mix of multidisciplinary questions and course readings, thereby enriching and challenging biases in the way they carry out their work.

As the non-profit partner in the co-creation of HT 4160, the Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking provided important anti-trafficking expertise. In addition to providing longitudinal Colorado-based research to frame the 4P structure of the course, it provided perspectives on the evolution of anti-trafficking responses since its own inception in 2005, when the organisation's efforts first began as Polaris Project Colorado. As a representative on several task forces and the Colorado Human Trafficking Council, LCHT has engaged its own professional networks to support the course. Of equal importance is that LCHT operates the statewide Colorado hotline and textline, which not only serves survivors and practitioners but also serves as an external resource for students who disclose their trafficking survivorship while they are taking the course.

Community practitioners have included survivor leaders, representatives of the Colorado governor's council, faith-based organisations providing housing and counselling, prosecutors, sex workers, human rights attorneys, immigration attorneys, interpersonal violence advocates, and outreach workers who conduct their work with individuals located in detention centres, unhoused communities, and farms that employ migrant workers. Law enforcement representatives from State Patrol, FBI, Homeland Security, district attorneys, the Assistant Attorney General for Colorado, and many task force and coalition leaders have also made regular appearances. MSU Denver faculty from Africana Studies, Chicana/o Studies, Criminal Justice & Criminology, Social Work, and Cybersecurity have also contributed to the course. Finally, collaborations amongst Colorado universities enabled students to learn from national and global anti-trafficking leaders on other campuses.

2.    With community practitioners, co-create applied learning opportunities for students.

Since 2007, HT 4160 has incorporated applied assignments designed to cultivate student skill development for social change to support statewide anti-trafficking efforts. Applied learning also channels energies resulting from traumatic material, providing outlets for students to decide if and how they want to engage and take action.[23] During the course, students review the importance of respecting time for how community organisations approach human trafficking (e.g., from a human rights or prosecutorial perspective, among others) and ethical considerations involved in applied field opportunities, among them, the role of reciprocity, respecting community partners, and to do best by the communities served.[24]

Students learn the distinctions between 'saviour/charity' and social justice approaches that empower community members to co-create solutions.[25] For example, when services are provided to vulnerable and under-resourced community members who may be historically marginalised, students must attend to unintended consequences of perpetuating this condition for community members.[26] Time is taken to halt notions that by working in the anti-trafficking field, they are there to 'save' marginalised communities with their gifts of formal education.[27]

Over the years, students have participated in short-term civically engaged course assignments to support local movement initiatives. These co-designed assignments

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[23]   Examples of high-impact applied learning practices include capstone courses, internships and service-learning courses, undergraduate research, and collaborative assignments. See G D Kuh, *High-impact Educational Practices: What they are, who has access to them, and why they matter*, Association of American Colleges and Universities, Washington, D.C., 2008, https://provost.tufts.edu/celt/files/High-Impact-Ed-Practices1.pdf. For meta-analyses on civic engagement outcomes, see J L Warren, 'Does Service-learning Increase Student Learning?: A meta-analysis', *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, vol. 18, issue 2, 2012, pp. 56–61; A Krings *et al.*, 'The Comparative Impacts of Social Justice Educational Methods on Political Participation, Civic Engagement, and Multicultural Activism', *Equity & Excellence in Education*, vol. 48, issue 3, 2015, pp. 403–417, https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2015.1057087.

[24]   C Kwan and C A Walsh, 'Ethical Issues in Conducting Community-Based Participatory Research: A narrative review of the literature', *Qualitative Report*, vol. 23, issue 2, 2018, p. 369–386, https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2018.3331.

[25]   Boland.

[26]   T C Ellington, J A Green and J Kelkres Emery, 'Civic Engagement I: Experiential and service learning', in K A Mealy, '2013 APSA Teaching and Learning Conference and Track Summaries', *PS: Political Science & Politics*, vol. 46, issue 3, 2013, pp. 643–663, https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096513000772.

[27]   Peterson.

include: attending Colorado Human Trafficking Council meetings; creating county fact sheets to support Human Trafficking Legislative Day at the capital; delivering two-minute presentations on trafficking to connect content with public interests (e.g., awareness presentations tailored to industries such as hospitality and emergency first responders); writing research papers to support policy briefs and advocacy; offering research support for the statewide Colorado Project and its associated Action Plan; delivering group presentations on the intersections between affinity movements and human trafficking; and crafting critical papers analysing national and global anti-trafficking efforts. During the 2014-15 academic year, students contributed to university-wide public awareness through the annual '1 Book/1 Project/2 Transform' campus event with *Runaway Girl* by Carissa Phelps. Aligned with the social justice orientation of the course, voluntary opportunities with agencies who do not focus exclusively on anti-trafficking have allowed students a range of opportunities to understand root causes of human trafficking, such as participating in outreach to individuals experiencing homelessness, working with middle schoolers on 'safe-to-tell' prevention education, and volunteering on anti-violence public awareness campaigns.

Building a human trafficking course upon a strong foundation of civic engagement principles was a relatively easy task when the opportunity emerged in 2007. However, the delivery of multidisciplinary content from a social justice foundation required an additional set of tools.

**What pedagogical tools will aid content delivery to support inclusive learning space?**

1.  Gather trauma-informed facilitation tools.

MSU Denver students are master navigators of personal and systemic community challenges, which requires faculty sensitivities in delivering content on violence and exploitation. For example, many of our students have lived experience with foster care and law enforcement systems that have failed them; others have managed disabilities, combatted trauma, and dealt with food and housing insecurities. Our students come to the course skilled at managing systemic oppression and many do not trust systems and agencies designed to provide social services and uphold the law. Honouring their experience and how they engage with the course content requires sensitivity to trauma.

Trauma-informed course navigation for students begins with instructors communicating clear expectations for participation and content, due to the high probability of secondary trauma and triggering of past trauma. Syllabi provide content, as well as attendance and assessment accountability. Details about expectations for written analyses and critical thinking underscore the nature of an upper division course. On- and off-campus resources (such as the Counseling Center and statewide hotline) are listed to address primary and secondary trauma.

Finally, ground rules[28] for respectful discussion and sharing of viewpoints are included to underscore respecting community practitioners and classmates who share their lived experiences. A reading quiz on the second day of class helps students conduct a self-check to see whether they can manage sixteen weeks of content on violence that has the potential for trauma responses. Instructors alike must attend to their own self-care, disciplinary bias (e.g., psychological or criminal justice), trauma response triggers, and boundaries in order to best move students through the content.

During the first days of the course, social justice foundations are laid to sustain trauma-informed facilitation. Taking time to acknowledge individual and cultural levels of trauma must start with a foundation of knowledge defining dynamics of privilege and oppression present in individuals and community systems, such as law enforcement and human services. Further, concepts illustrating the importance of intersectional identity[29] are also reviewed. Seeing others helps with managing secondary and direct trauma to sustain them through the course. Building upon anti-racist pedagogies put forth historically by Freire and hooks, paired with institutional frameworks for Hispanic Serving Institutions, social justice pedagogies shape trauma-informed teaching by acknowledging oppression present in systems designed to support communities (e.g., law enforcement and social services), the ways in which structural violence[30] creates vulnerability and honouring and empathising with others' lived experiences.[31]

This foundation enables students to understand systems-based inequalities that create barriers to survivor identification, survivor services such as basic needs and counselling, and fair prosecutions. This structure also underscores three levels of inclusion necessary to understanding the complexities of the crime: 1) inclusion of intersectional identities of students, survivors, and practitioners in the classroom; 2) inclusion of multi-sector responses necessary to respond to human trafficking (prevention educators, service providers, and prosecution actors); and 3) inclusion of affinity movement efforts that intersect with the work of human trafficking (e.g., cases that are classified as child abuse that also meet the threshold of human trafficking).

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28   D B Faust and B C Courtenay, 'Interaction in the Intergenerational Freshman Class: What matters', *Educational Gerontology*, vol. 28, issue 5, 2002, pp. 401–422, https://doi.org/10.1080/03601270290081362-2038.

29   K Crenshaw, 'Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color', *Stanford Law Review,* vol. 43, issue 6, 1991, pp. 1241–1299, https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039.

30   K Ho, 'Structural Violence as a Human Rights Violation', *Essex Human Rights Review*, vol. 4, no. 2, September 2007, pp. 1-17.

31   Boland.

Trauma-informed facilitation tools are critical to the delivery of potentially triggering course content within a collaborative learning community inclusive of instructor(s), students, and community practitioners. Delivery of a multidisciplinary course requires instructors to facilitate complex discussions and attend to secondary trauma triggers that students may exhibit. Instructors and community practitioners with a range of academic backgrounds may not have formal training in trauma-informed teaching, and it is important to forefront this expectation and provide guidelines for all instructors.

Trauma-informed inclusive classroom facilitation involves responsible management of learning entrusted to an instructor's care.[32] While there is high probability for secondary trauma for most students, there is also likelihood that some student survivors are reframing their lived experiences as they learn course concepts. As stewards of inclusive learning spaces, instructors honour hardship and suffering, while maintaining self-care and boundaries with students. They attend to key principles of a trauma-informed approach, among them safety, transparency, collaboration, empowerment, voice and choice, and honouring cultural, historical, and intersectional identities.[33] Further, they are ready to make adaptations for trauma responses, student disclosures, and referral to resources on campus that go beyond the instructor's expertise.[34]

Facilitators acknowledge the potential that students may move beyond their comfort zones,[35] and they teach students to respectfully listen to classmates, survivors, and community practitioners who advocate for people experiencing homelessness, race inequity, or the violation of migrant rights or gay and transgender rights, among others. Students learn to analyse societal perceptions of vulnerable communities, where community members who possess 'problematised' identities may be missed for being crime victims, or may be perceived as being

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[32] E M Anderson, L V Blitz, and M Saastamoinen, 'Exploring a School-University Model for Professional Development with Classroom Staff: Teaching trauma-informed approaches', *School Community Journal*, vol. 25, issue 2, 2015, pp. 113–134; D Gutierrez and A Gutierrez, 'Developing a Trauma-informed Lens in the College Classroom and Empowering Students Through Building Positive Relationships', *Contemporary Issues in Education Research (CIER)*, vol. 12, issue 1, 2019, pp. 11–18, https://doi.org/10.19030/cier.v12i1.10258.

[33] 'SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-informed Approach', HHS Publication No. (SMA) 14-4884, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Rockville, July 2014, p. 7.

[34] K M Preble, M A Cook, and B Fults, 'Sex Trafficking and the Role of Institutions of Higher Education: Recommendations for response and preparedness', *Innovative Higher Education*, vol. 44, no. 1, 2019, pp. 5–19, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10755-018-9443-1.

[35] Dudziak and Profitt.

less worthy of aid. Examples of racially coded identities that hinder identification efforts include terms such as 'illegal migrants', 'truant runaways', and 'welfare mothers'. Students learn to reflect on societally-enforced implicit biases associated with these identities and to gather more information in order to determine if they may be potential victims or survivors of crime. Finally, these concepts teach students about the framing of human rights-based initiatives and harm reduction approaches to support vulnerable populations and inclusive social change actions.

2.  Partner with Student Affairs to support student learning.

MSU Denver has many resources for students with a diverse range of identities and experiences. During the first offering of HT 4160 in 2007, Student Affairs units were engaged to provide resources and sustain students while they were enrolled in the course. The course was specifically designed this way to be inclusive and responsive to student needs, and accentuates the ethical and social justice orientation to teaching human trafficking. Inter-institutional partnerships with HT 4160 began with training the vast array of Student Affairs departments to prepare them to support student trauma—whether secondary or triggering—as they learnt course content that featured cases of exploitation and severe violence. Throughout the years, training on human trafficking has been periodically offered to Student Affairs broadly and in individual units, including hotline and textline numbers for tailored resources and referrals. Among these units, the most critical partners have included the MSU Denver Counseling Center, the Health Center at Auraria, and interpersonal violence resources through the Gender Institute for Teaching and Advocacy and the Phoenix Center at Auraria. Other culturally-sensitive student support has been provided through the Center for Multicultural Excellence and Inclusion, ranging from identity-focused resources (e.g., Immigrant Student Services, Veterans Services, LGBTQUIA Services, etc.). Due to MSU Denver's designation as a Hispanic Serving Institution, most services are offered by bilingual and culturally-sensitive staff. Contact information for all of these resources is noted in the syllabus, along with the offer of accompaniment.

For those who disclose their survivorship, the MSU Denver Student Human Trafficking Academic Response Team (START) provides comprehensive academic case management. Comprised of fourteen MSU Denver Student Affairs units (e.g., registrar or immigrant services) and LCHT, START provides confidential academic case management to advisees who have experienced human trafficking. Since 2007, START has supported sixty-seven survivors of trafficking, most of whom are from Colorado. It is voluntarily staffed by administrators along with students who were formally served by the response team. With guidance from peer case managers, students navigate admissions and registration, and financial aid, among a wide range of student resources. START has been particularly helpful to student survivors as they move through the content they learn in HT 4160.

3.    Incorporate inclusive and reflective pedagogy.

HT 4160's civic engagement orientation underscores the importance of learning about personal values and one's identity as a citizen, practitioner or professional. As such, third space classrooms are designed for student well-being by encouraging reflection on the self and world as they learn about human suffering.[36] From day one, the inclusive learning space begins with community-building exercises centred on honouring diverse identities and developing listening skill; trust develops as a community of respectful inquiry emerges. When classroom space allows, positioning desks in a circle helps establish the importance and value of each student's presence and contribution. Doing so allows all students to be present and situated equally in the front row. Several exercises designed to respect student identities and lived experiences help to check stereotypes and keep students attentive to biases as they contribute to the community of learners. Reflection assignments allow students to deepen their learning by making personal connections with observations and detecting dissonances between theory and practice in the field.[37]

Moreover, facilitating deliberative dialogues has further encouraged students to think about human trafficking. Dialogue allows students to reflect on their own identities and privileges, as well as to recognise their position by learning from others who may have very different identities and experiences. As they listen to community practitioners and classmates, deliberative dialogue can help students better recognise biases in their advocacy positions or beliefs.[38] As part of this facilitation, instructors have been prepared to manage and support student passion and commitment. With an emotionally-laden course, instructors have managed a spectrum of emotions and developmental stages ranging from 'I care deeply about this issue so I should get an A for my passion' to social justice warrior entitlement expressed as 'I am a better advocate because I understand oppression far better than my privilege-blind classmates'. Discussing community vulnerability and oppression has led some students to challenge classmates on their naiveté, and others have laid claim as champions in the 'compassion Olympics', where they claim to be the 'best equipped' to work in the field. In rarer instances, students have displayed disturbing smiles during harrowing accounts of violence; others have become more determined to become saviour vigilantes or establish undercover rescue operations. The development of humility is part of the journey of civically engaged education, and this careful balance of managing passion and intention can be challenging for instructors to facilitate. Valuing comprehensive community

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[36]    Examples of these pedagogical approaches are asset-based education, culturally sustaining pedagogy, and active learning. For a toolkit to design learning experiences and empirical support for civic engagement approaches, see Trudeau and Kruse.

[37]    L D Fink, *Creating Significant Learning Experiences*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 2003.

[38]    Warren.

efforts and intersectional identities can curb tendencies to think there is a single correct (or superior) approach to ending human trafficking.

Students on the path to social change work have the opportunity to gain social justice dialogue tools to do the work of coalition-building. The cross-listed structure of this course makes it possible to simulate anti-trafficking community coalitions composed of law enforcement, prevention educators, and social workers, among others. In simulations, students practice inter-sector communication by suspending judgment and identifying assumptions. In post-simulation reflective assignments, they articulate their comprehension of the complexities of responding to human trafficking in a way that builds solidarity and community.[39]

## Civic Engagement Outcomes: Advancing Colorado's anti-trafficking efforts

While formal outcomes of Human Trafficking 4160 have yet to be empirically tested, there are proxy indicators of student impact and continuing work in government, business, and non-profit sectors. Anecdotal evidence illustrates how students have taken course knowledge into future endeavours, notably in the ways course alumni enter the workforce with tools and a bias to collaboration for social change.

Civic engagement research has long established the benefits that students gain through this course structure, including stronger civic ties and increased democratic engagement.[40] In HT 4160, many students gained social justice language and tools to address oppression in their own communities.[41] Reflections through discussion and writing assignments have been shown to deepen students' abilities to make a difference in the world.[42] For courses like HT 4160, civic

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[39] These steps include: 1) Forming and building relationships; 2) Exploring differences and commonalities of experience; 3) Exploring and dialoguing about tensions in human trafficking responses; and 4) Action planning and alliance building. See A Alejano-Steele and CA van Minter, 'Dialogues to Create Justice and Build Coalitions: Key practices on how the Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking is engaging groups across difference and informing a new movement', National Women's Studies Association Conference, San Juan, Puerto Rico, November 2014..

[40] Krings *et al.*, p. 410.

[41] J McArthur, 'Achieving Social Justice Within and Through Higher Education: The challenge for critical pedagogy', *Teaching in Higher Education,* vol. 15, issue 5, 2010, pp. 493–504, https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2010.491906.

[42] D E Giles Jr. and J Eyler, 'The Theoretical Roots of Service-learning in John Dewey: Toward a theory of service-learning', *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, vol. 1, issue 1, 1994, pp. 77–85.

opportunities have shown positive impact on students beyond persistence to graduation, such as citizenship and political action skills, and how openness to multiple perspectives can truly advance social change.[43]

HT 4160's final day is dedicated to closure, and we encourage students to continue supporting public awareness efforts with friends, family, and co-workers. Many students realise that they can no longer ignore the possibility of trafficking in their communities. Students leave conscious of their own purchasing behaviours and choices; they understand the importance of tenacious humility and self-care tools in leading social change.

Student evaluations have shared some of the following reflections on HT 4160's efficacy:

> *Content delivery was amazing and the environment of the class is amazing;*
> *I learned more in this class than [in] any other class in the four years I*
> *have been in school.*
> *This course is an eye opener and very necessary for exploring social justice*
> *and training for future activists and advocates.*
> *Great reading, deep explanations, and good class discussion—best class*
> *I have ever taken. I appreciated the emphasis on self-care and the service-*
> *learning opportunities to do outreach.*
> *Pushed me to think beyond the 'norm'. Great guest speakers give a broad*
> *perspective of the issue; the curriculum covered theory as well as many*
> *practical examples.*
> *The class is super deep and therefore some of the content is super depressing*
> *and carries a lot of emotions; this class has opened my eyes and help[ed]*
> *me to have new lenses when observing things in the world.*

Other comments gleaned from student evaluations have helped the course evolve and improve with time. For example, feedback regarding the quantity of readings and offering the course during two-week intensives have changed the pacing to allow for greater time for processing and discussion. The challenge of a cross-listed course remains, as different departments have varying expectations of writing, critical thinking skills, and understanding of systems of oppression inherent in many community sectors. During some semesters, the mixed range of readiness of students has led to greater time needed for covering foundational concepts, such as racism and sexism. Course evaluations regularly reflect the diverse range of student preparation. While many students appreciate the rigor and applications, others struggle with reading requirements.

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[43]   J Eyler, D E Giles Jr., and J Braxton, 'The Impact of Service-learning on College Students', *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, vol. 4, issue 1, 1997, pp. 5–15.

Since some students take HT 4160 intending to enter into the anti-trafficking field, the civically engaged design of the course allows instructors to keep abreast of job opportunities in the field. Today, Colorado agencies focused exclusively upon human trafficking continue to be relatively scarce. Many anti-trafficking sub-programmes continue to be offered in larger agencies serving broader populations with a range of complex needs (e.g., Asian Pacific Development Center, Colorado Legal Services, and Hispanic Affairs Project, among others). Over the years, community practitioners have come to appreciate HT 4160's comprehensive content, and many regularly forward internship and job opportunities, which are disseminated to students.

With the large percentage of alumni who remain in Colorado, past students have taken the lessons from the course to advance an active and vibrant democracy for the state. Following the course, students have secured non-profit and government internships and positions in the state, including the Colorado anti-trafficking hotline and textline. Others have become Colorado community leaders who think critically as they engage in existing coalitions in their respective fields.

Students have entered careers ranging from law enforcement to service provision, where they take the lenses, sensitivities and co-created knowledge into their future jobs and careers. As important, several former students have been honoured for their survivor leadership, both in Colorado's communities and nationally. Some alumni share their growth in gaining new language, theories, and frameworks to explain experiences of abuse and exploitation, which enabled them to have closure. Additionally, students' first forays into anti-trafficking action opened doors to other opportunities, enhanced career paths, and fostered a commitment to social justice work long after they graduate.

Within MSU Denver, anti-trafficking efforts have expanded. The human trafficking course in the Department of Social Work's Master's programme focuses on policy development and supports the pipeline from undergraduate to graduate study on this issue. The School of Hospitality launched a Human Trafficking Awareness Certificate as part of its foundational class on Hospitality Leadership, as a way to hold an enriched and competitive edge for alums who enter into Colorado's industry. Independent studies tailored to the departments cross-listed with Human Trafficking 4160 have also flourished, and several have been presented at the MSU Denver Undergraduate Conference, as well as local and national conferences. Since 2007, the interdisciplinary university-wide Honors programme has featured at least ten theses focusing on human trafficking, launching many students into graduate programmes and professional work in the field.

## Conclusion

Civically engaged universities support faculty, students, and community partners primed for social justice and systems change. Beyond knowledge dissemination, there are more nuanced factors that illuminate academia's role in response to human trafficking both locally and globally. Further work is needed to provide data-informed evidence to measure the impact of academic partnerships on moving the proverbial needle to end human trafficking. As academic institutions evolve ways to respond to human trafficking, bridging research and policy goals and producing civically engaged alumni are a start.

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# Truth as a Victim: The challenge of anti-trafficking education in the age of Q

*Bond Benton and Daniela Peterka-Benton*

## Abstract

The QAnon conspiracy threatens anti-trafficking education because of its broad dissemination and focus on a range of myths about trafficking. These myths are rooted in historic and ongoing misinformation about abductions, exploitation, and community threats. This article examines the extent of QAnon's co-optation of human trafficking discourses and evaluates its connection to trafficking myths, particularly related to gender, race, class, and agency. From this perspective, the article considers how anti-trafficking education can respond to these myths and build a pedagogy in the age of Q.

A 2020 post in a New Jersey Moms Facebook group reads, 'just a quick heads up my daughter was in the beauty supply down by [H]ome [D]epot and in came a large gentleman with a mask that only showed his eyes and wearing a snowsuit. He proceeded to follow my daughter through the store […], all the while motioning to a car a grey Toyota Camry type vehicle with tinted windows and a bad exhaust (**note this is common with sex traffickers**), that was waiting for him outside.' Although a concerned post about a scary interaction in a beauty supply store is not out of the ordinary, declaring the Toyota Camry the car of choice for 'sex traffickers' appears a bit surprising. Or is it? In recent years, a seemingly new group of anti-trafficking 'experts' has flooded social media. They share tips about how to spot traffickers, keep children on playgrounds protected from abductions and,

more broadly, how to 'save the children'. This social media call for concerned mothers to join the crusade against trafficking emerged from a fringe conspiracy theory about 'an elite group of child-trafficking paedophiles […] ruling the world for decades'.[1] This conspiracy theory has become the global QAnon movement.

What appears to be an absurd online conspiracy has inspired actions and activity in the 'real world'. Q's first official online post was made in 2017, but the conspiracy is largely an extension of several older conspiracies. These include Pizzagate, which alleged that coded words and symbols found in hacked emails of John Podesta, chairman of Hillary Clinton's 2016 presidential campaign, point to a secret child trafficking ring in the basement of the Washington, D.C. pizza restaurant, Comet Ping Pong.[2] The story was further amplified by far-right media personalities such as Alex Jones and automated social media accounts or bots. What many ignored as an absurd online conspiracy turned potentially deadly on 16 December 2016, when Edgar Maddison Welch drove to Washington D.C. from North Carolina armed with an AR-15 rifle and a .38 calibre handgun to investigate the pizza restaurant himself. He entered where families were enjoying their meals and made his way towards the back of the building to locate the secret entrance to the basement 'dungeon'. Fortunately, no one was hurt during the incident, but it became abundantly clear how online conspiracies could incite real actions. In fact, an FBI bulletin dated 30 May 2019 acknowledged the threat posed by QAnon, stating, 'These conspiracy theories very likely encourage the targeting of specific people, places, and organizations, thereby increasing the likelihood of violence against these targets.'[3]

In addition to influencing individuals' actions, the trafficking conspiracies shared in support of Q can shape the perceptions of various audiences, including students in classrooms, participants in workshops, and viewers of outreach content. The effects of misinformation on anti-trafficking efforts are not abstract. Speaking anonymously because of Q threats she has received, a senior staffer at a national anti-trafficking organisation stated, 'It definitely impedes our work when we're getting harassed and trolled over misinformation campaigns… It's exhausting

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[1]    A Gallagher, J Davey, and M Hart, 'The Genesis of a Conspiracy Theory: Key trends in QAnon activity since 2017', Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2020, retrieved 3 January 2021, https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/The-Genesis-of-a-Conspiracy-Theory.pdf.

[2]    T C Lehmann and S A Tyson, 'Sowing the Seeds: Radicalization as a political tool', *American Journal of Political Science*, 2021, https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12602.

[3]    FBI Phoenix Field Office, 'Anti-Government, Identity Based, and Fringe Political Conspiracy Theories Very Likely Motivate Some Domestic Extremists to Commit Criminal, Sometimes Violent Activity', Federal Bureau of Investigation Intelligence Bulletin, 30 May 2019, https://info.publicintelligence.net/FBI-ConspiracyTheoryD omesticExtremism.pdf.

work. It's traumatic work. It's something that all of us do because there's such an extreme need in our communities and around the country. And this just makes it all so much harder.'[4] As the QAnon conspiracy threatens to disrupt anti-trafficking education, this paper will examine the QAnon conspiracy and the historical trafficking myths that preceded it. From there, we will investigate how the focus of anti-trafficking education may leave educators unprepared to respond to conspiracies such as QAnon. And, by contextualising QAnon and considering how it could hinder anti-trafficking education, we propose essential approaches to inoculate anti-trafficking messaging from those looking to obscure and co-opt it.

## The Rise of QAnon

One of the major challenges anti-trafficking educators face is overcoming the myths, misperceptions, and misinformation about human trafficking.[5] For example, the starting point for many QAnon believers is the idea that there is a hidden cabal of elites covering up trafficking and child sexual abuse. Although QAnon welcomes supporters to 'think for themselves' and come up with findings they will share through various outlets, such as 8chan/8kun, Facebook, and Twitter, the movement relies on this 'new' information to support existing QAnon conspiracies.[6] These conspiracies are quite varied. An analysis of 4,952 Q 'drops' (i.e., posts attributed to the 'real' Q) showed that Q comments on a variety of topics, and that is reflected in the unstructured nature of QAnon belief.[7] People who have drawn QAnon's interest include Hillary Clinton, George Soros, Barack Obama, Nancy Pelosi, and Donald Trump. Topics range from Robert Mueller and the Russian collusion investigation to fake news, the Red Cross, Jeffrey Epstein (and his connection to 'child sex trafficking'), COVID-19, and electoral fraud.

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[4]   J Cook, '"It's Out of Control": How QAnon undermines legitimate anti-trafficking trafficking efforts', *Huffington Post*, 14 September 2020, retrieved 25 September 2020, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/how-qanon-impedes-legitimate-anti-trafficking-groups_n_5f4eacb9c5b69eb5c03592d1.

[5]   R Andrijasevic and N Mai, 'Trafficking (in) Representations: Understanding the recurring appeal of victimhood and slavery in neoliberal times', *Anti-Trafficking Review*, issue 7, 2016, pp. 1–10, https://doi.org/10.14197/atr.20121771; J Doezema, 'Loose Women or Lost Women? The re-emergence of the myth of white slavery in contemporary discourses of trafficking in women', *Gender Issues*, vol. 18, 1999, pp. 23–50, https://doi.org/10.1007/s12147-999-0021-9.

[6]   A J Ivakhiv, '"Do Your Own Research": Conspiracy practice as media virus', Immanence: Ecoculture, Geophilosophy, Mediapolitics, University of Vermont Blogs, 5 January 2021, https://blog.uvm.edu/aivakhiv/2021/01/05/do-your-own-research-conspiracy-practice-as-media-virus.

[7]   E Tian, 'The QAnon Timeline: Four years, 5,000 drops and countless failed prophecies', *Bell¿ngcat*, 29 January 2021, https://www.bellingcat.com/news/americas/2021/01/29/the-qanon-timeline.

This list is not exhaustive, but it does indicate that individuals who may feel a connection to one of these people or topics can be pulled down a proverbial rabbit hole of conspiracy theories. The entry point for QAnon participation, however, is the foundational belief that trafficking and child exploitation are linked to elite power.[8]

Conspiracy theories have long been noted as fundamental to extremism.[9] Extremist beliefs require a clear enemy and absolute opposition as the only available remedy to injustices perpetrated by that enemy. This frame of mind discourages the navigation of differing perspectives required in a pluralistic society, and the dehumanising effects of conspiracy are important for supporting radicalisation. An extensive study by Bartlett and Miller examined the literature, ideology, and propaganda of more than fifty extremist groups from across the political spectrum, including religious, far-right and -left, eco, anarchic, and cult-based, over the past 30 years. They found that every group studied used conspiracy to demonise 'forces beyond our control, articulating an enemy to hate, sharply dividing the group from the non-group… the frequency of conspiracy theories within all these groups suggests that they play an important social and functional role within extremism itself.'[10] Conspiracy, by definition, can be viewed as *instrumental* to radicalisation rather than merely as a *product* of radicalisation. Particularly relevant to anti-trafficking educators is that the zealotry of 'True Believers' can inhibit any nuanced attempt to explore the issue seen as deviant from their entrenched perspective.

The rhetorical power of conspiracy allowed QAnon to develop from a troubling movement to an embedded cultural force representing a threat to anti-trafficking efforts. The Simon Wiesenthal Center reports that QAnon has gained immense traction, 'with more than 4.5 million aggregate (social media) followers… one Twitter account monitored… has gained close to 400,000 followers in the past

8    A W Goldenberg *et al.*, *The QAnon Conspiracy: Destroying families, dividing communities, undermining democracy*, Network Contagion Research Institute, 15 December 2021, https://networkcontagion.us/wp-content/uploads/NCRI-%E2%80%93-The-QAnon-Conspiracy-FINAL.pdf.

9    M Barkun, 'Religion, Militias and Oklahoma City: The mind of conspiratorialists', *Terrorism and Political Violence*, vol. 8, issue 1, 1996, pp. 50–64, https://doi.org/10.1080/09546559608427332; N James, 'Militias, the Patriot Movement, and the Internet: The ideology of conspiracism', *The Sociological Review*, vol. 48, issue 2_suppl, 2000, pp. 63–92, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954X.2000.tb03521.x.

10   J Bartlett and C Miller, *The Power of Unreason Conspiracy Theories, Extremism and Counter-Terrorism*, Demos, London, 27 August 2010, https://demosuk.wpengine.com/files/Conspiracy_theories_paper.pdf.

18 months; it currently has over half a million followers.'[11] From 27 October 2017 to 17 June 2020, a study conducted by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) 'recorded 69,475,451 million tweets, 487,310 Facebook posts and 281,554 Instagram posts mentioning QAnon-related hashtags and phrases' inside the United States and across other countries.[12] In the US, as many as 77 Congressional candidates seeking election in November 2020 espoused support for QAnon.[13] This phenomenon is not unique to the U.S., however, as evidenced by the fact that 'the most popular German-language QAnon YouTube channel, QlobalChange, boasts more than 105,000 subscribers; a similar French-language channel has more than 66,000 and has tripled in less than a month. While Germany and France have the largest movements, there are a significant number of QAnon followers in Italy and the United Kingdom as well.[14] The COVID-19 pandemic, which spurred conspiracies and fear in many places, also appears to have increased interest in QAnon when coupled with online interactions about the 2020 US presidential election. Between March and November 2020, the total Wikipedia pageviews for 'QAnon', an indicator of online curiosity about a topic, increased to nearly half a million daily views on peak dates.[15]

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[11]  Simon Wiesenthal Center, *QAnon: From fringe conspiracy to mainstream politics*, Simon Wiesenthal Center, 22 September 2020, http://www.wiesenthal.com/assets/qanon-from-fringe-conspiracy.pdf.

[12]  Gallagher, Davey, and Hart.

[13]  'Red, White, and Q: QAnon candidates move forward in U.S. elections', *The Soufan Center*, 26 August 2020, https://thesoufancenter.org/intelbrief-red-white-and-q-qanon-candidates-move-forward-in-u-s-elections.

[14]  J Keating, 'How QAnon Went Global', *Slate Magazine*, 8 September 2020, https://slate.com/technology/2020/09/qanon-europe-germany-lockdown-protests.html.

[15]  'Wikipedia Trends.' n.d., retrieved 20 September 2020, https://www.wikishark.com.
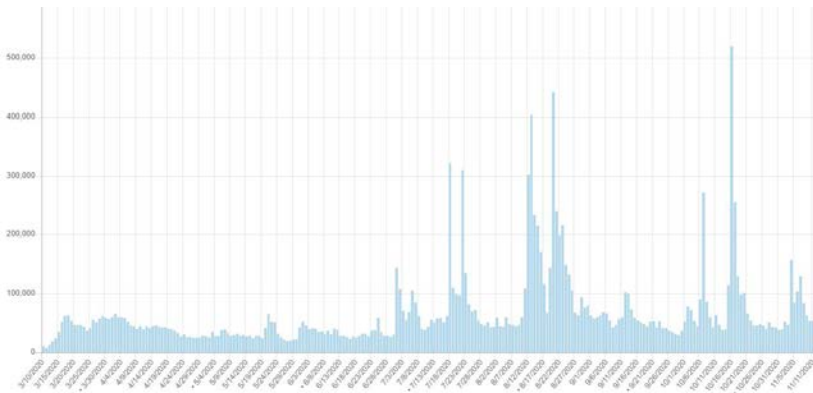
Image 1: QAnon Wikipedia Views, March to November 2020.

Such findings provide evidence that a once marginal conspiracy theory about (child) trafficking has been gaining wide traction on different social media platforms across the globe.

## Disinformation Over Time: Trafficking myths as QAnon's foundation

QAnon is composed of a disparate range of conspiracy theories, though trafficking myths remain crucial for believers. While QAnon is a recent movement, anti-trafficking education has long been hindered by disinformation and misinformation that often serves institutional power and allows for co-optation of the concept of trafficking. Within such a context, QAnon uses myths to reify the notion of victimhood and a heroic response from traditional institutional structures. For example, Doezema's analysis reveals many of the historical myths that would form QAnon.[16] The 'white slave' panic in Europe and the United States at the turn of the twentieth century broadly mirrors QAnon as 'those who fomented the white slavery scare of the time sought to expose precisely the mobile yet highly organized net of the underworld lurking below the surface of society.'[17] The narrative employed by these panics is remarkably similar to the narrative of Q with 'the procurement, by force, deceit, or drugs, of a white woman or girl against her will, for prostitution'[18] constructed as a

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[16]  Doezema.

[17]  E Olund, 'Traffic in Souls: The 'new woman,' whiteness and mobile self-possession', *cultural geographies*, vol. 16, issue 4, 2009, pp. 485–504, https://doi.org/10.1177/1474474009340088.

[18]  *Ibid.*, p. 25.

massive social problem, despite the number of such cases being very limited. The power of this narrative had sufficient resonance in Europe and the US to produce organisations devoted to its eradication and substantial coverage in the media, along with numerous novels, plays, and films. This panic was extensive enough to have policy implications, with a number of international conferences and legal agreements drafted to stop white slavery.[19]

Implicit within such panics is a notion of lost innocence and virtue that trafficking myths utilise for purposes of removing agency from populations viewed as vulnerable. Such populations are transformed from *actors* into objects that are *acted upon*, turning individuals into either victims or potential victims of the constructed narrative of ubiquitous trafficking. The historical context for such views has continued in current trafficking misinformation. Martin and Hill, for example, found that the historical myths of trafficking continue in media coverage and that there is widespread acceptance of such myths.[20] Their work examined the fabricated link between large sporting events and forced sexual exploitation. In looking at media stories linking trafficking and the Super Bowl between 2010 and 2016, they 'found that 76 per cent of US print media stories reported a causal or correlative link between the Super Bowl and trafficking for sexual exploitation.'[21] The notions of predatory masculinity and the systematic victimisation of exploited and vulnerable women were transformed from myth to fact through the dissemination of the 'Super Bowl sex trafficking' narrative. Similarly, this myth casts spectators in the role of 'saviours' with an imperative to help save 'victims'. Like the trafficking myths of the past and the current conspiracies of QAnon, media coverage supported this panic:

> In 2016, two years before the Minneapolis Super Bowl, an Anti-Sex Trafficking Committee was convened to prepare the region for an anticipated increase in trafficking for sexual exploitation, based on media reporting about previous Super Bowls. The Committee sought support and coordinated efforts with law enforcement, social services (e.g., emergency shelters and street outreach), and volunteer training… with more than 100 representatives from these sectors as well as leaders in business and government, and it raised and spent above one million dollars…[22]

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[19]  J Allain, 'White Slave Traffic in International Law', *Journal of Trafficking and Human Exploitation*, vol. 1, issue 1, 2017, pp. 1–40, https://doi.org/10.7590/24522775111.

[20]  L Martin and A Hill, 'Debunking the Myth of "Super Bowl Sex Trafficking": Media hype or evidenced-based coverage', *Anti-Trafficking Review*, issue 13, 2019, pp. 13–29, https://doi.org/10.14197/atr.201219132.

[21]  *Ibid.*, p. 14.

[22]  *Ibid.*, p. 16.

The use of trafficking myths to generate public interest and shape discourse on the subject has long been established in both historical and contemporary contexts. In considering the implications on anti-trafficking education, it is important to establish some of the foundational dynamics enabling such narratives to have pull on public sentiment. These dynamics include the creation of stories that validate traditional power relationships, the construction of trafficking as a cudgel against the Other, and the co-optation of discourse by institutional power.

The role of trafficking narratives as instruments of social cohesion are incredibly consistent. At their foundation is the construction of a pure victim, an evil enemy, and the opportunity for the community to serve as heroic rescuer. The recurring plot casts the spectator in the role of a hero whose awareness and action can stop the omnipresent menace of trafficking. Victimisation is clear and perpetrated by specific bad actors, rather than the product of a broadly unequal system. As Andrijasevic and Mai argue, 'the mythological function of the trafficking narrative and the victim figure are most visible in the fact that the trafficking plot never varies: it starts with deception, which is followed by coercion into prostitution, moves on to the tragedy of (sexual) slavery and finally finds resolution through the rescue of the victim.'[23]

Supportive media validate the idea of a hero emerging against villains in the trafficking narrative as well. In 'When the Abyss Looks Back: Treatments of Human Trafficking in Superhero Comic Books', we examined instances where superhero comic books from 1991 to 2012 made human trafficking an overt plot point. In more than 85 per cent of these stories, the response of superhero characters was violence directed against traffickers who were universally framed as the primary cause of victimisation.[24] Consistent with other media representations, trafficking storylines in comic books present the issue as having a clear causation, simple identification, and swift remedy. As Andrijasevic and Mai note, the outcome of such constructions inevitably benefits neoliberal institutions by preventing structural consideration of inequality while also providing the comfort of a reassuring morality play.

Trafficking narratives, however, frequently have more insidious purposes than just institutional preservation. Historically, human trafficking myths were utilised against marginalised groups, such as migrants, women, working class people, sex workers, and those with stigmatised sexual, racial, or gender identities. Such communities were constructed as a threat to white patriarchal understandings of

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23   Andrijasevic and Mai, p. 3.

24   B Benton and D Peterka-Benton, 'When the Abyss Looks Back: Treatments of human trafficking in superhero comic books', *Popular Culture Studies Journal*, vol. 1, issue 1-2, 2013, pp. 18–35, https://mpcaaca.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/PCSJ-V1-N12-Benton-Benton-When-the-Abyss-Looks-Bac1.pdf.

decency and sexual piety. Whether the threat is built on racialised myths of 'exotic' temptations or the Indecent Other exploiting innocents, these constructions 'reinforce racism and dualistic simplifications of a complex issue.'[25] The invited response is a reifying narrative of rescue where dominant white patriarchal social values can repair the ruptured moral order. Again, this context proves informative in examining the rise of QAnon and how racialised moral panics about trafficking have found traction in both mainstream and social media.

Novel use of media has and continues to support such trafficking panics. The 1913 film *Traffic in Souls* was a fictionalised depiction of white women trafficked into sexual economies in New York City.[26] At the turn of the twentieth century, the lurid subject matter offered prurient appeal to audiences of the time with innovative cinematic techniques that made the film an artistic landmark. Viewed as a technical masterpiece, *Traffic in Souls* reflected what was seen as a national moral imperative to protect innocent white women from the dangers of racialised urban spaces. As the Travellers' Aid Society noted, 'Every year, thousands of young women come to the great cities looking for a chance of honourable livelihood. Rich in hope and ambition but lacking in experience and resource, they fall easy prey to the evil that is always lying in wait for the unprotected woman at the Terminals and Docks.'[27] A similar media furore accompanied the release of D.W. Griffith's racist film *Birth of a Nation* in 1915. Writing about the implications of the film (which had a similar level of technical achievement as *Traffic in Souls*, Obasogie calls it an 'epic celebrating the Ku Klux Klan's rise during Reconstruction to defend Southern whites' dignity and honour against what were then seen as recently liberated Black insurgents.'[28] What is important to note in relation to QAnon is both the exigence the film constructs and its corresponding response. Specifically, the turning point in *Birth of a Nation* occurs when formerly enslaved people are constructed as a menace organising the abduction and sexual assault of a white woman. The Ku Klux Klan is presented as heroically stopping this menace and the film was so powerful that it is credited with creating a second rise of the KKK in that era. Similar to *Traffic in Souls* and *Birth of a Nation*, QAnon conspiracies utilise novel media techniques to generate a public response to imagined threats. In the case of QAnon, that includes exploitation of new media such as social channels and video sharing sites. While less explicit than these historical films, the construction of a threat to the traditional moral order remains, although it is

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[25]  M Desyllas, 'A Critique of the Global Trafficking Discourse and U.S. Policy', *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*, vol. 34, issue 4, 2007, pp. 57–80, https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/jssw/vol34/iss4/4.

[26]  Olund.

[27]  'Facts Everyone Should Know', Travelers' Aid Society, ca. 1913, p. 3.

[28]  O K Obasogie, 'The Rebirth of a Nation? Glorifying eugenics in a cult classic for our times', *Colorlines*, 3 October 2007, retrieved 26 July 2021, https://www.colorlines.com/articles/rebirth-nation.

more coded and not tied to only one racialised threat. Paranoia about LGBTQ+ rights, perceptions of politically radical enemies, and fears about losing a privileged white status permeate the ideology of many Q believers.[29]

However, one overt target of conspiracy theory, now and in the past, are Jewish people. The QAnon movement promotes a belief in a Jewish-controlled cabal of global trafficking operations.[30] The linkage between trafficking myths and dissonance about pluralism has been present historically in antisemitic representations of trafficking panics. Antisemitic trafficking tropes date back to the Middle Ages and have persisted in the centuries since then. Early conspiracies 'alleged that Jews were responsible for kidnapping Christian children and drinking their blood for religious rituals. Those claims, called blood-libel conspiracy theories, persisted throughout the 1800s and into the 20th century.'[31] The persistence of such myths can be found in QAnon messaging, with prominent Jewish politicians, entertainers, and business people frequently singled out as ringleaders in the abduction and exploitation of children. While Q followers may not be aware of the genealogies of these conspiracies, both the hatred they inspire and the target of that hatred remain in place. The motivations that inspired violent attacks against Jewish immigrant communities in centuries past are forebears to the frequent death threats levied against individuals like George Soros (a major Q target) and broader ongoing violence against Jews.[32]

This tendency to co-opt and manipulate issues of concern to support racist and reactionary social positions has been noted as both a contemporary and historical tactic. In previous studies, we used the concept of 'hatejacking'[33] to describe when an extremist group claims the discursive space around a topic.

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[29]  S Wiener, 'What I Learned When QAnon Came for Me', *The New York Times*, 19 October 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/19/opinion/scott-wiener-qanon. html.

[30]  G Stanton, 'QAnon Is a Nazi Cult, Rebranded', *Just Security*, 9 September 2020, https:// www.justsecurity.org/72339/qanon-is-a-nazi-cult-rebranded.

[31]  R E Greenspan, 'QAnon Builds on Centuries of Anti-Semitic Conspiracy Theories', *Insider*, 24 October 2020, retrieved 31 December 2020, https://www.insider.com/ qanon-conspiracy-theory-anti-semitism-jewish-racist-believe-save-children-2020-10.

[32]  S Burley, 'Soros, "Cultural Marxism" and QAnon: How the GOP is energizing and entrenching antisemitism in America', *Haaretz*, 24 February 2021, https://www.haaretz. com/us-news/.premium-how-the-gop-is-energizing-and-entrenching-antisemitism- in-america-1.9560897; I Fattal, 'A Brief History of Anti-Semitic Violence in America', *The Atlantic*, 28 October 2018, https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2018/10/ brief-history-anti-semitic-violence-america/574228.

[33]  B Benton and D Peterka-Benton, 'Hating in Plain Sight: The hatejacking of brands by extremist groups', *Public Relations Inquiry*, vol. 9, issue 1, 2020, pp. 7–26, https:// doi.org/10.1177/2046147X19863838.

In such instances, extremist groups have tended to latch onto issues of concern to gain legitimacy and recruit support from people who would otherwise be unlikely to adopt such extremist views. This sort of co-optation is described by Ganesh and Zoller as 'a tactic of power'[34] that frequently allows dominant groups to solidify institutional support through the repackaging of reactionary messaging. In the case of QAnon, people who would not necessarily be drawn to conspiratorial worldviews are brought in by the benevolent sounding messages of 'saving the children' or 'stopping the traffickers'. Particularly challenging for anti-trafficking educators is the fact that such 'hatejacks' frequently make rebuttal and response to these positions difficult, as responding to these conspiracies can have the effect of giving the conspiracy the illusion of legitimacy. Cumulatively, the context, dissemination, and presentation of trafficking myths have allowed QAnon to flourish in trafficking discourse, making anti-trafficking education all the more difficult.

## QAnon and the Reifying of Gendered Helplessness Myths

While QAnon includes a broad range of conspiracy theories,[35] its essential element focuses on the abduction and trafficking of children. As noted, the construction of trafficking in QAnon discourse mirrors many of the most common myths anti-trafficking education seeks to remedy. These include the common misunderstanding that human trafficking is limited to the sex industry, disregarding the many different forms of exploitation, including labour trafficking, organ trafficking, the use of child soldiers, or the practice of child marriage.[36] This emphasis is not unexpected when QAnon is contextualised, at core, as a movement that seeks to reinforce racialised and gendered roles of feminine helplessness and protection by traditional (i.e., masculine) institutions. Mahdavi and Sargent view such a construction as a conflation of 'womenandchildren' as a singular, vulnerable group without agency. This paradigm excludes 'men and women who violate gender boundaries of passivity (from) accessing the trafficking discourse in order to include their narratives as legitimate experiences within the current

[34]   S Ganesh and H M Zoller, 'Dialogue, Activism, and Democratic Social Change', *Communication Theory*, vol. 22, issue 1, 2012, pp. 66-91, p. 74, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2885.2011.01396.x.

[35]   M Spring and M Wendling, 'How COVID-19 Myths Are Merging with the QAnon Conspiracy Theory', *BBC News*, 2 September 2020, https://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-trending-53997203.

[36]   Blue Campaign, 'Myths and Misconceptions', U.S. Department of Homeland Security, retrieved 23 October 2020, https://www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign/myths-and-misconceptions.

framework.'[37] The exigence for rescue is further established with iconography suggesting that 'womenandchildren' are imprisoned and in peril. Fukushima writes extensively on the 'cage imagery' used in anti-trafficking discourses that reinforces a narrative of universal victimhood and the annihilation of 'victim' autonomy.[38] Cage imagery has been used as a trafficking metaphor in education and awareness-raising materials, through government initiatives, by NGOs, and even by ostensibly feminist organisations. While QAnon's construction of a vast network of imprisoned and helpless victims appears far-fetched, it is an extension of myths perpetuated in anti-trafficking discourses.

The 'womenandchildren' conflation is exclusionary and contains inaccuracies that anti-trafficking education should seek to remedy. Boys and men, for example, are equally likely to be trafficked, albeit commonly for different forms of exploitation.[39] Additionally, most human trafficking victims are not kidnapped, contrary to many of the trafficking scares spun by QAnon supporters: the vast majority of trafficking victims are exploited by means of deception, fraud, and force, and some through familial or romantic relationships.[40] QAnon similarly precludes the possibility of the autonomy of at-risk populations with the 'victim' label assumed even in cases where participation in labour such as sex work may be consensual.[41] It is important to note, though, that the historical 'white slavery' myths are not simply reproduced in the present. As Hua and Nigorizawa note, the legal and cultural distinction between victim and criminal in the construction of human trafficking has increasingly been focused on the market position of the individual. They state that 'the dichotomizing of sex trafficking victim against sex worker assumes that consent can be easily identified and assumes the categories are mutually exclusive—the logic follows "once a prostitute, always a prostitute". Hence, anti-trafficking laws work within "a system that celebrates the mobility of capital and *some* bodies [victims], while the bodies of others [undocumented

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[37]  P Mahdavi and C Sargent, 'Questioning the Discursive Construction of Trafficking and Forced Labour in the United Arab Emirates', *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, vol. 7, issue 3, 2011, pp. 6–35, https://doi.org/10.2979/jmiddeastwomstud.7.3.6.

[38]  A I Fukushima, 'Anti-Violence Iconographies of the Cage: Diasporan crossings and the (un)tethering of subjectivities', *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies,* vol. 36, issue 3, 2015, pp. 160–192, https://doi.org/10.5250/fronjwomenstud.36.3.0160.

[39]  'Child Trafficking: Myth vs. Fact', Save the Children, retrieved 23 October 2020, https://www.savethechildren.org/us/charity-stories/child-trafficking-myths-vs-facts.

[40]  M Brown, 'Do Traffickers Kidnap Their Victims? The myths and realities of human trafficking', *The Fuller Project*, 25 February 2019, https://fullerproject.org/story/do-traffickers-kidnap-their-victims-the-myths-and-realities-of-human-trafficking.

[41]  Doezema.

immigrants and sex workers] face ever-growing restrictions and criminalization".[42] A paradoxical bind, therefore, now exists, whereby loss of capital makes one a victim and the acquisition of capital makes another an offender. In this narrative space, there is no room for nuance or agency; only pure victims, evil villains, and heroic protectors.

Aside from the connection to known myths, QAnon's structure (or non-structure) appears to invite even more unique and bizarre mythologising from its followers. Among these is the unsubstantiated claim that the furniture store Wayfair is running a child trafficking ring and names furniture pieces with the names of real child trafficking victims for sale. Another shared rumour cautions people to be suspicious of white passenger or commercial vans with external locks as a sign of possible trafficking activity.[43] Almost by design, the absurdity of these claims makes reasoned responses seem fruitless. Sincere and informed anti-trafficking education can engage with audiences on challenging, critical questions about the causes, experiences, and effects of trafficking. It is not now equipped, however, to respond to outlandish memes that are wholly divorced from reality. Despite being divorced from it, QAnon conspiracies are, nevertheless, affecting reality.

An analysis of Google search results for 'QAnon crime' found sixteen cases between December 2016 and October 2020, in which the perpetrators committed actual criminal acts, motivated by QAnon conspiracies. Among the crimes committed were kidnappings related to custody issues, weapons offenses, assault, murder, arson, and terrorism. In one case, the perpetrator(s) threatened Democratic State Senator Scott Wiener with decapitation for his controversial support of California Senate Bill No. 145, which eliminated automatic sex offender registration for young adults who have anal or oral sex with a minor.[44] So far, no arrests have been made in this case. Such examples are by no means to be considered representative or comprehensive, but they do show how some people transform conspiracy theory into practice.

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[42]   J Hua and H Nigorizawa, 'US Sex Trafficking, Women's Human Rights and the Politics of Representation', *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, vol. 12, issue 3-4, 2010, pp. 401–423, p. 407, https://doi.org/10.1080/14616742.2010.513109.

[43]   'Human Trafficking Rumors', Polaris Project, retrieved 23 October 2020, https://polarisproject.org/human-trafficking-rumors.

[44]   R Myrow, 'QAnon Followers Attack SF's Scott Wiener Over Sex Offender Law', *KQED*, 15 September 2020, https://www.kqed.org/news/11837862/qanon-followers-attack-sfs-scott-wiener-over-sex-offender-law.

## Interrogating Anti-Trafficking Education in the Age of Q

Taken together, historical trafficking myths provide a substantial foundation for understanding the prevalence and flexibility of QAnon. With that in mind, it is imperative to consider the ways that anti-trafficking education efforts are prepared (or unprepared) to counter conspiracy theory. An important first step in that preparation is to acknowledge the degree to which people participating in anti-trafficking courses, outreach events, and other educational activities arrive with preconceptions that may be informed by current and ongoing trafficking myths. The residual effects of historical myths and their current iterations could well serve as a lens for participation or even be what draws people to participate in the anti-trafficking event in the first place. Some participants in educational events primed with misinformation require a developed and informed exploration of the issue of trafficking, lest the easy answers and evil villains provided by narratives such as QAnon dominate their overall thinking about anti-trafficking.

Additionally, the well-intentioned efforts of participants in anti-trafficking educational forums and courses may be entrenching these perspectives. The process of stigmatising immigrant labour and circumstances under the guise of creating communities in need of rescue can further the paternalistic construction of trafficking. Sharma argues that 'such campaigns within the global North, often led by feminists, constitute the moral reform arm of contemporary anti-immigrant politics that targets negatively racialized migrants.'[45] The complicity of ostensibly anti-trafficking advocacy in furthering this perspective is salient and concerning. As noted in the previous discussion of QAnon, these narratives do not exist merely in the heads of believers. They constitute a threat of action. Shih's ethnographic work on the San Francisco-based anti-trafficking non-profit Not for Sale's campaign of 'backyard abolitionism' is particularly chilling. She describes the group's renegade effort to end 'modern-day slavery' with actions taken against sites the group perceived as 'trafficking hubs', frequently based on rumour, misinformation, and dubious 'tips' received. More broadly, Shih argues this effort is part of a movement 'away from a model of mere "partnerships" between state and nonstate actors' and that 'the rise of civilian vigilantism over the past decade may be attributed to the framing of social concerns as exceptional and seemingly outside of law enforcement's control.'[46] An increased militancy by some members of the anti-trafficking movement is frequently informed by

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[45]  N Sharma, 'Anti-Trafficking Rhetoric and the Making of a Global Apartheid', *National Women's Studies Association Journal*, vol. 17, issue 3, 2005, pp. 88–111, https://www.muse.jhu.edu/article/189422.

[46]  E Shih, 'Not in My "Backyard Abolitionism": Vigilante rescue against American sex trafficking', *Sociological Perspectives*, vol. 59, issue 1, 2016, pp. 66–90, p. 71, https://doi.org/10.1177/0731121416628551.

'awareness raising' messaging. Polaris' 'Heatmap' of trafficking cases, for example, creates the impression of an omnipresent trafficking threat as well as certain hotspots that should be targeted.
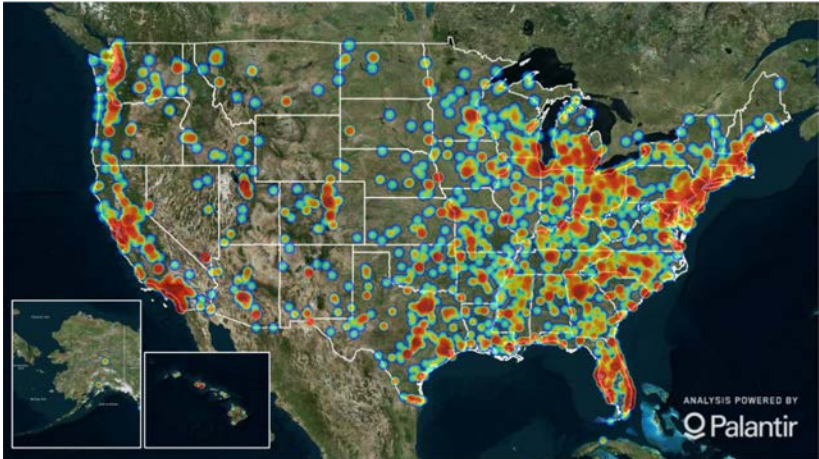


Image 2: Polaris Project 2018 National Human Trafficking Hotline Heatmap

## Implications for Anti-Trafficking Education: Foci for university courses

It is imperative that educators in the field of anti-trafficking directly engage and counter the narratives perpetuated by the QAnon movement and critically reflect on how these conspiracies exclude and preclude consideration of the real issues that require understanding in relation to human trafficking. As Gerasimov notes, '[QAnon conspiracies] can lead to not only a misunderstanding of the issue, but also a wrong response… If you portray human trafficking as something that a secret cabal is doing, the solution becomes guns and surveillance. This is totally not the solution to trafficking. … The solutions that anti-trafficking groups advocate for … are about improving social programs so kids don't fall through the cracks and end up in situations that leave them vulnerable to exploitation.'[47] By understanding the cleavage between the human trafficking information being shared and the accuracy of that information, the challenges of navigating anti-trafficking in the age of Q can be more clearly defined and addressed.

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[47]   K Rogers, 'Trump Said QAnon "Fights" Pedophilia. But the group has made it harder to protect kids', *FiveThirtyEight*, 15 October 2020, https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/qanons-obsession-with-savethechildren-is-making-it-harder-to-save-kids-from-traffickers.

To that end, we explored an important space of anti-trafficking education: university courses on the subject. Specifically, we reviewed course syllabi that were publicly available online. We looked for syllabi of courses with a focus on deconstructing trafficking myths and that invite reflection on how the presentation of trafficking is frequently at odds with its reality. Such an approach, from the perspective of this research, would uniquely position the course to interrogate the historical and ongoing misinformation that is a foundation of QAnon belief. The acquisition of these syllabi was made through a Google search for 'trafficking course syllabus' and 'university'. We reviewed a total of sixteen syllabi from 2017 to 2021 (roughly the time period of the emergence of QAnon) from courses at universities throughout the world. This is not a comprehensive analysis of these documents or university anti-trafficking education more broadly, but this search did provide some compelling examples and conceptual work. For example, one syllabus noted:

> …the white slavery hysteria was not only about prostitution. It also provided activists with a way to express anxieties about other cultural shifts, including, but not limited to: women's increased employment, urbanization, immigration, internal migration, new forms of recreation, shifting gender norms, and changing sexual mores… the contemporary campaigns against sex trafficking bring together strange alliances as feminist organizations coordinate with Christian evangelicals to raise awareness of the issue. Sex workers' rights activists also contribute their voices to the current conversation about sex trafficking, drawing attention to the ways that 'victims' of sex trafficking are frequently rendered mute by the anti-trafficking activists who claim to be fighting on their behalf.

Another syllabus used a case specific approach to evaluate myths related to trafficking:

> Before the World Cup held in Brazil in Summer 2014, many fans saw billboard posters and social media ads featuring the silhouette of a naked woman standing on a playing field, her feet clad in red high heels with chains shackled to her ankles. The ad was promoted by an anti-trafficking organization claiming sporting events like the World Cup become periodic 'hot spots' for sex trafficking and exploitation, as millions of fans, athletes, and affiliated sponsors flock to major cities. However, the ad was met with protest from a number of organizations, especially sex workers' rights organizations, that such publicity merely increased policing and police brutality around the event, and no increase in trafficking was actually reported.

Myth deconstruction also benefits from a nuanced exploration of trafficking. An examined syllabus noted:

> Our case examples will include issues that receive high media publicity—forced sex work, child labour in construction and clothing, and the illicit trade in organs—but also pay attention to 'less sexy' forms of trafficking and exploitation. These include exploitation and sexual violence in strawberry fields and American beef farms, debt bondage in Thai shrimp processing plants, abuses of Bangladeshi construction workers and Filipina domestic workers in the Gulf region, smuggling and exploitation after major natural disasters and post-war conflicts, and the exploitation of Dominican baseball players and Siberian fashion models alike.

Particularly outstanding in this sample text is the fact that it makes clear that *sexual exploitation needs to be contextualised as part of broader exploitation*. Similarly, in other syllabi, sample text included statements such as the following:

> Individuals are trafficked for numerous reasons and purposes, including for prostitution, domestic or agricultural labour, or exploitation in any number of commercial activities. The common thread is the reduction of the trafficked human being to a mere commodity, generating profits for his/her trafficker.

These sorts of statements and perspectives can help learners to understand and contextualise human trafficking, rather than being pulled in the direction of misinformation and myths. Moving the topics and themes of anti-trafficking education away from myths is crucial; however, media literacy must now be prominently placed in any anti-trafficking education as well. Media theorist Adrian Ivakhiv notes that QAnon calls upon people to do 'do their own research.'[48] This would be consistent with the orthodoxy of media literacy as checking sources and evaluating evidence facilitates critical consumption of information, which is an overt goal of media literacy education. In the case of QAnon, however, 'research' takes on a different character where people are encouraged to evaluate selected data through a conspiratorial lens. Ivakhiv argues that 'with QAnon, it turns out, research is the connect-the-dots activity that keeps followers engaged in the movement.' What appears to be critical information evaluation actually serves as a process of conspiracy confirmation where biases are groomed and subsequent information is contextualised as support of the bias. Anti-trafficking education should also assist learners in *evaluating* the trafficking-related sources and information they come across. Doing so can help to identify the sorts of clicks, views, and shares that can pull users down the proverbial rabbit hole.

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[48]    Ivakhiv.

## Discussion and Conclusion

As noted, the QAnon conspiracy theory is pervasive, with extensive traction online. The misinformation is so extensive that tech companies have had to adjust their policies and algorithms in an attempt to slow the extent of QAnon content being shared.[49] For anti-trafficking educators, this presents the very real possibility of Q-inclined students and audience members co-opting discussions of trafficking with conspiracies and propaganda. There is also a chance that well-intentioned educational content will be recontextualised and manipulated by audiences primed to believe the misinformation of Q and the historic trafficking myths QAnon is aligned with. While daunting, this research suggests that there are approaches to mitigate against myths and conspiracies and to ensure that educational outreach remains focused on accuracy and authenticity.

Broadly, anti-trafficking educators need to have an action plan prepared for engaging with learners trying to pivot sessions toward Q-related conspiracies. As suggested by existing scholarship, a starting point could be to ensure that a discussion of 'myth versus reality' is undertaken early on in any communication about human trafficking. By presenting popular and conspiratorial misperceptions of trafficking, educators can defuse potentially disruptive content from overwhelming the discussion. As noted, most QAnon conspiracy theories are localised to generate maximum fear and spread, such as the examples of shadowy 'trafficking vehicles' menacing neighbourhoods. Trafficking is a global phenomenon and by emphasising its broader dimensions, the sensationalised (and often fictional) local incidents can be placed in a more realistic context. Finally, by providing information from reputable outlets (such as credible NGOs), the discussion can be grounded in evidence rather than speculative and constructed mythical narratives. This research suggests teaching a systemic view of exploitation as opposed to one based on the individualised heroes and villains that populate trafficking myths.

At base, anti-trafficking education seeking to counter misinformation and disinformation *must acknowledge the existence of misinformation and disinformation.* There is precedent for such an approach being successful. When Martin and Hill worked to educate local media about the 'Super Bowl sex trafficking' myth, their data-informed approach directly countered this narrative and produced results. In analysing subsequent media coverage, they found a 46 per cent decrease in media reporting on a link between trafficking and sporting events along with

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[49] J Guynn, 'Facebook Cracks down on QAnon for Hijacking Save the Children Movement', *USA Today*, 30 September 2020, https://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/2020/09/30/facebook-cracks-down-qanon-save-children-trump/5875372002.

'less sensationalist language and fewer inflated numbers compared to previous coverage.'[50]

The phenomenon of QAnon is emergent, but the myths it promotes are not new. Anti-trafficking education must engage with these myths and conspiracies or risk co-optation and contributing to them. While the current prevalence of QAnon presents a challenge for anti-trafficking advocacy and education, pedagogical approaches that critically assess the racialised and gendered myths long prevalent in public discourses about trafficking are well suited to actively combat conspiracy theory.

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50   Martin and Hill, p. 26.

# Forum

# Self-education and Collective Learning: Forming a critical 'modern slavery' study group

*Maayan Niezna and Pankhuri Agarwal*

Anti-trafficking research and activism inherently involve contested ideas, hard choices, and unknown figures. Moreover, the situation on the ground for anti-traffickers often exposes contradictions in theory and practice, leading to challenges of existing theories—mainstream or critical. Therefore, for scholars and students critical of trafficking and 'modern slavery', it is essential to question the established underpinnings of theories and wrangle with the ways of framing research questions to better reflect real-world complexities in our work. With this critical stance in mind, in March 2020, we (the two authors) formed an informal online study group to bring together scholars and practitioners in the field of trafficking and 'modern slavery' across a range of geographical locations and academic disciplines. To form the group, we did not rely on existing connections but instead invited members through an open invitation on social networks. Most members are academics in different stages of their careers (research students, early career researchers, and professors), and two are practitioners. Members represent different locations in their work (Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe) and disciplines (Anthropology, Gender Studies, Geography, Law, Political Science, and Sociology). At the time of writing this piece in June 2021, we were meeting regularly for more than a year. Without the pandemic, we would not have thought of forming an online group. Prior to the pandemic, physical presence was common for gatherings, making in-person connections and demands on our time difficult. Therefore, the opportunity to convene online opened up a different kind of connection for our members.

In this paper, we elaborate on the guiding principles that were central to our discussions, all of which emanated from grappling with complex and even uncomfortable questions. Our guiding principles included: 1) creating an online

space that was safe and inspiring; and 2) starting with the big questions that incite debates and dilemmas, arising from the discomfort of engaging with contrasting convictions. Each session had a facilitator who shared several questions related to the session topic in advance, one background reading (which could be an academic text, a non-academic text, or a combination of both) and, in some cases, optional further reading. The facilitator chose readings based on their knowledge of the topic and the papers they had access to, and always shared the materials by email to ensure they were accessible to all members. The two of us, as group coordinators, led the first few sessions, and other group members took over as facilitators afterwards. In this way, the group belonged to its participants, not just the coordinators.

## Online Organisation of a Critical Study Group

We had three types of sessions. The first raised issues with existing theories, ideas, and debates. We asked, for example, why people who were identified as 'trafficked persons' returned to exploitative working conditions. We also explored the role of objectivity and subjectivity in responding to research participants' narratives, and dissected concepts such as agency, personhood, exploitation, citizenship, resistance, rehabilitation, and work.[1] As many of us conduct empirical work in different places, how varying localities and transnational contexts understand, deploy, and translate such terms was a recurring aspect of our discussions. For example, Sharmila Parmanand noted that there was no equivalent to the term 'sex work' in the Filipino language. Judith Onwubiko identified the language of 'the body as property'[2] as building on Western concepts that are not particularly

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[1]    A few selected texts used to begin the discussion on these topics included: S Henriksen, 'Consuming Life after Anti-Trafficking', *Anti-Trafficking Review*, issue 10, 2018, pp. 14-33, https://doi.org/10.14197/atr.201218102; C Mills, 'The Political Economy of Personhood', *On the Human: A Project of the National Humanities Centre*, 2011; KM Millar, 'Toward a Critical Politics of Precarity', *Sociology Compass*, vol. 11, issue 6, 2017, p. e12483; GM Zulfiqar, 'Dirt, Foreignness, and Surveillance: The shifting relations of domestic work in Pakistan', *Organization*, vol. 26, 2019, pp. 321–336, https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508418812579; K Cruz, 'The Work of Sex Work: Prostitution, unfreedom and criminality at work', in A Bogg *et al.* (eds.), *Criminality at Work*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2020, pp. 192–209, https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198836995.003.0010; M Stern, 'Racism, Sexism, Classism and Much More: Reading security-identity in marginalized sites', in BA Ackerly, M Stern and J True (eds.), *Feminist Methodologies for International Relations*, Cambridge University Press, 2006, 174–194; b hooks, *Teaching to Transgress*, Routledge, London, 2014; ET Achiume, 'Migration as Decolonization', *Stanford Law Review*, vol. 71, 2019, pp. 1509-1574.

[2]    Following a discussion of A Phillips, 'It's My Body and I'll Do What I Like with It: Bodies as objects and property', *Political Theory*, vol. 39, issue 6, 2011, pp. 724–748, https://doi.org/10.1177/0090591711419322.

relevant for South-Eastern Nigeria. The terms 'trafficking' and 'slavery' were themselves often flagged as not relevant for the language used by our research participants.

The second type of session was dedicated to reading group members' drafts and works-in-progress (e.g., theses, book chapters, and papers) and providing meaningful feedback. These sessions took a different form of feedback-driven conversations that contrasted with other forms of academic feedback, such as that from examiners, reviewers, or conference audiences. The peer feedback on writing-in-progress during our sessions allowed members of the reading group to think together, identify common challenges, listen to ideas, and offer reading recommendations from people interested in similar questions across different contexts and disciplines. This feedback helped members garner a sense of the relevance and importance of their work as well as the workability of their arguments. The feedback sessions facilitated an opportunity for the group to discuss questions beyond the respective papers and were often following or followed by discussions of texts on related themes.

The third type of session focused on current events, such as reports of the offices of the UN Special Rapporteurs on Trafficking in Persons, and on Contemporary Forms of Slavery. These helped us take a step back from our research and consider the role of academics and the potential of critical scholarship in practice and international policy advocacy. Our critical perspective on 'modern slavery' means that we consider slavery and trafficking not as isolated and unique phenomena, but as the extreme end of broader social problems, reflecting social, political, and legal structures.[3] This critical understanding means that issues such as racism, exclusion, precarity, and law enforcement should be part of how we discuss and understand slavery and trafficking.

Discussions or developments of ideas concerning such issues were part of our discussions of current events. Thus, our working group discussed the impact of COVID-19 on our research participants, the protests for racial justice and police reforms in the United States following the murder of George Floyd, and the QAnon conspiracy theory and the relationship between misinformation and trafficking. As a group focused on critical study and discussion, we addressed these broader themes as part of our collective learning. However, we believe that attention to broader themes and political and legal structures is necessary for

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[3]  See, among others: K Skrivankova, *Between Decent Work and Forced Labour: Examining the continuum of exploitation*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York, 2010; J O'Connell Davidson, *Modern Slavery: The margins of freedom*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2015; P Kotiswaran, 'Trafficking: A development approach', *Current Legal Problems*, vol. 72, issue 1, 2019, pp. 375–416, https://doi.org/10.1093/clp/cuz012; N Howard, J Quirk and C Thibos (eds.), *Palermo Protocol 20th Anniversary Special: What is exploitation?*, Beyond Trafficking and Slavery/openDemocracy, 2021.

other situations of educating about trafficking, educating ourselves, and educating others: learning about trafficking cannot be limited to situations explicitly labelled 'trafficking', to the definitions of trafficking, or the experiences of trafficked persons, because trafficking cannot be understood in isolation from broader social and political contexts. For instance, to better understand the role of law enforcement in responding to trafficking, we need to better understand law enforcement in general by analysing its political drivers and differential impacts. To understand extreme forms of labour exploitation, we need to understand work in general by analysing power relations, economic precarity, and the significance people attach to their labour or work, or to work in general.

Reflexivity and intellectual rigor were central to our collective process. We often asked ourselves, what are the key concepts used in literature and policies discussing trafficking; what phenomena or ideas these concepts aim to capture; and how theories and frameworks used by anti-traffickers and researchers shape the ways in which these concepts are understood and applied. Here, we offer a specific example of how our collective learning process led to the discussion of labour exploitation, which plays a central part in our work and the trafficking framework in general. We discussed the following questions: What do we talk about when we talk about 'work'? What makes work a vital category, what activities are considered to be work, and why are these categories used in specific ways legally, politically, and socially? What are the types of work and regulations of work impacting trafficked people? This theme formed the basis of three sessions titled, respectively, 'What Is Work?'; 'Exploitation, Work, and Anti-trafficking Interventions'; and 'Informal, Gendered, Contested: Surrogacy and sex work'. We chose the broad conceptual question about work to help us set a common ground for future discussions. The texts we read addressed different aspects of work, highlighting reproductive labour and drawing broader parallels with work in general.[4] We began by asking how we defined 'work' and whether it represented a helpful category. We considered binary divisions such as formal/informal, regular/irregular, paid/unpaid, and productive/reproductive work, as well as the separation between 'trafficking for sexual exploitation' and 'trafficking for

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[4]  Our background readings for this theme included: SY Rahman 'Choosing Begging Over Paid Labour', *The India Forum*, 30 November 2019, retrieved 28 December 2020, https://www.theindiaforum.in/article/choosing-begging-over-paid-labour; Phillips; SP Shah, *Street Corner Secrets: Sex, work, and migration in the City of Mumbai*, Duke University Press, Durham, 2014; M Eichler and A Matthews, 'What Is Work? Looking at all work through the lens of unpaid housework', University of Toronto, 25 April 2004, http://wall.oise.utoronto.ca/events/WhatisWork.pdf. Eichler and Matthews used the example of housework to consider what constitutes work in general—our discussions, drawing from examples of domestic work, sex work, and surrogacy, enabled us to follow a similar approach, though we considered examples beyond reproductive work. We thank Sharmila Parmanand and Sylvie Armstrong for identifying some of the reading and questions for these sessions.

labour exploitation'. We also discussed who can access which forms of work and the relationship between work and identity; whether different frameworks (e.g., 'livelihood', 'property', or 'compensation') are helpful in understanding work, and the links between the (local or global) terminology chosen and potential interventions, such as collective action and mobilisation.

These thematic discussions demonstrate why our sessions were necessary. First, the sessions drew attention to how people's perspectives may differ from categories recognised in law and literature. For example, several group members noted that 'livelihood strategies' may better capture some people's experiences, particularly those relying on sex work and other forms of labour. Listening to different accounts and paying attention to the language and framework people use to describe their own experience, or listening to researchers sharing these accounts, is a crucial praxis in critical research and teaching. Second, the sessions demonstrated the trade-offs when adopting more or less inclusive definitions for analysis and practice. Last, the sessions reiterated that studying 'trafficking' cannot be limited to cases labelled as 'trafficking'. Labour exploitation is a key element of trafficking, but it is not a feature confined only to trafficking. A discussion of whether 'trafficking for labour exploitation' and 'trafficking for sexual exploitation' should even be considered separate categories is advanced by thinking of labour, sex work, and exploitation *outside* the trafficking framework.

## Reflections on Theories and Positionality

One recurring concern in the group was about adopting a 'critical orthodoxy' that no longer questions the accuracy or usefulness of specific positions, as long as they are critical of the mainstream. The discussions of recurring themes in our meetings, such as exploitation, agency, and choice, reflected that while we can often formulate which approaches and interpretations we think are harmful, identifying an approach we support is much more complicated. For instance, in the session on objectivity and subjectivity in research methods and practice, the group discussed balancing the particular nature of conclusions drawn from a specific context with the demand from academics to make generalisable conclusions applicable to other contexts or different circumstances. We recognised the tension between what we, as researchers, know or believe, and what our research participants know or tell us about their experiences, and the need to continually consider our positionality, scrutinise what led us to certain ideas or conclusions, and actively look for alternative framing. Although abandoning our pre-existing ideological or theoretical preferences might be difficult, the group recognised the need not only to question our pre-existing notions as researchers, but also the narratives of the participants in our research. An example is the tension mentioned above, between using the framework of 'work' or 'labour' that some of us may adopt as labour lawyers concerned with people's labour rights and protections, and using the framework of 'livelihood strategies' that may better reflect how some

participants describe their choices and experiences. The need to practise 'conscious partiality' towards groups that have been historically silenced raised new questions about the meanings of being critical in critical 'modern slavery' scholarship itself.

While our weekly discussions occurred amidst childcare responsibilities, online teaching, distance from loved ones, and personal loss, members of the online study group welcomed each other every week with enthusiasm. The group itself was the point in a week that helped us to slow down[5] and take the time to ask questions without worries about appearing productive or experts in our fields, which helped us to build relationships across disciplines, regions, and career levels. To date, we have completed a year of studying together, and we are currently planning sessions around the themes of workers' experiences and how they frame their claims, the link between wage theft and the trafficking framework, the body as a site of intervention, and the concept of citizenship.

Various educational anti-trafficking initiatives are framed as 'raising awareness' or preventing exploitation. Some of these initiatives are part of social movements embedded in addressing labour exploitation. They are important and worthy if done correctly. For us, as critical scholars, it is also worth being mindful that we too have much to learn, and many of the definitions, theories, and frameworks are ongoing contested terrains for anti-trafficking activists and scholars. It is therefore important to slow down and build space for critical thinking where the work, positions, and underlying assumptions of anti-trafficking work can be challenged in a reflexive and constructive way. Self-reflection and self-learning are based on recognising that our work—as researchers, practitioners, or activists—is ongoing and that we should challenge ourselves to ask, discuss, and consider ideas and arguments outside our comfort zone. A critical study group, online or in person, is not the only way, but it is a good place to start.

## Acknowledgements

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[5]   A Mountz *et al.*, 'For Slow Scholarship: A feminist politics of resistance through collective action in the neoliberal university', *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies*, vol. 14, issue 4, 2015, pp. 1235-1259.

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# A Train-the-Trainer Programme to Deliver High Quality Education for Healthcare Providers

*Jessica L Peck*

As a paediatric nurse practitioner, professor of nursing, and national officer of the oldest and first advanced practice nursing organisation in the world, I consider myself to be engaged and informed on matters of child health. In 2016, a friend who runs an anti-trafficking organisation asked me to help create a continuing education programme for nurses to raise awareness about human trafficking. Their organisation provided aftercare services and was alarmed at the first-hand reports of victims' healthcare encounters without any assessment for risk of victimisation. At the time, I declined, not considering myself to be an expert in the subject of trafficking. I planned to refer my friend to a nurse expert but was astonished when I could not identify anyone.

As I learnt about the significant connection between healthcare and human trafficking, I also became aware of the overwhelming silence of nursing responses in academic institutions, healthcare organisations, and professional societies. In the following months, I encountered two teenagers and one school-aged child in my clinical practice who were victims of trafficking. I came face-to-face with a survivor who was arrested in the hotel of our national professional nursing organisation's annual conference. As I encountered more children who had been exploited and victimised, I recognised the need to engage the nursing profession as a critical link in creating an evidence-informed health framework to respond to at-risk persons.

As awareness of human trafficking in the United States increases, well-meaning but misguided training courses for healthcare providers also proliferate.[1] This trend concerns me because most healthcare training courses I attended were presented by law enforcement, and a criminal justice paradigm is not linked to the healthcare environment. Many healthcare organisations I initially encountered refused education programmes on trafficking because of a perceived lack of applicability and the vicarious trauma reported by participants following a training.

In 2017, after recognising the need for a national-level nursing engagement in response to children victimised by trafficking, I helped lead the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP) to establish Partners for Vulnerable Youth (a non-profit nursing organisation to serve selected populations of at-risk youth) and its first initiative: the Alliance for Children in Trafficking (ACT). I served as the founding chair, creating ground-level organisational support and infrastructure to sustain a national programme with the goals to improve nursing awareness of trafficking, equip nurses with evidence-based tools and resources, collaborate with multidisciplinary service providers, and engage as policy advocates to promote legislative and regulatory frameworks conducive to preventive healthcare efforts and victim-centred services.

With more than twenty-two partner organisations, ACT serves as a national leader coordinating and uniting efforts to equip nurses and other healthcare providers in effective anti-trafficking responses.[2] A research survey of the NAPNAP membership (*n*=8,647*)* revealed 99 per cent of respondents felt child trafficking was a critical paediatric health issue. Although 87 per cent believed it was possible that they might encounter a potential victim in their clinical practice, only 24 per cent reported confidence in their ability to identify an at-risk child. Additionally, while 91 per cent of respondents believed children were exploited sexually, only 78 per cent recognised labour trafficking as a form of abuse and exploitation. Less than one third felt comfortable discussing the long-term health needs of potential victims. Many nurses anecdotally reported that the lack of awareness, education, and organisational preparedness led to figuring out processes when a patient was actively in the care environment. Some nurses reported reticence to speak up for fear of the relationship of victimisation and behaviours designated

[1]   JD Houston-Kolnik, C Soibatian, and MM Shattell, 'Advocates' Experiences with Media and the Impact of Media on Human Trafficking Advocacy', *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, vol. 35, issue 5-6, 2017, pp. 1108–1132, https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260517692337; S Litam and E Lam, 'Sex Trafficking Beliefs in Counselors: Establishing the need for human trafficking training in counselor education programs', *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, vol. 43, 2020, pp. 1–18, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10447-020-09408-8.

[2]   National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners Partners for Vulnerable Youth, 'Alliance for Children in Trafficking'*,* retrieved 18 November 2020, https://www.napnappartners.org/alliance-for-care-coordination.

as criminal, with disturbing reports of patient arrest or deportation following such reports. This situation caused retraumatisation for the victims and vicarious trauma to the nurses.

In response, ACT developed a three-part continuing education series together with the American Academy of Pediatrics for dual continuing medical and nursing education. This training series, created in compliance with guidelines published by Health, Education, Advocacy, and Linkage (HEAL) Trafficking, has been disseminated to more than 1,000 providers.[3]

I began engaging as the sole nursing representative with the National Human Trafficking Training and Technical Assistance Center (NHTTAC), a division of the Office of Trafficking in Persons at the United States Department of Health and Human Services, to help a multidisciplinary team create a technical report outlining core competencies for medical, nursing, social work, and behavioural health professionals. These competencies are a critical first step in standardising responses to trafficking across disciplines, while specifically addressing core competencies of individual clinicians, healthcare organisations, and academic institutions. The report's co-authors, including myself, are engaged in multiple media and healthcare professional outlets to raise awareness of this tool, which will help establish nomenclature and data-reporting standards by which to measure outcomes.[4]

## Train-the-Trainer Programme

In 2018, we saw the need for a train-the-trainer programme (ACT Advocates) and solicited volunteers. Our first training programme drew more than 100 nursing attendees at a national conference. ACT Advocates training requires participants to take designated prerequisite courses including NAPNAP Partners' three-part (3-PARRT, Provider Assessing Risk and Responding to Trafficking) training course; a HEAL Trafficking course entitled *Rethinking Representation: Framing Human Trafficking for Health Professionals*; and NHTTAC's *SOAR to Health and Wellness Training*. After these courses are complete, trainees take a two-hour instructional course covering the policies and procedures governing participation in the ACT Advocates programme.

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[3]   *Ibid.*

[4]   Office on Trafficking in Persons, An Office of the Administration for Children & Families, 'Core Competencies for Anti-Trafficking Response in Healthcare Systems Release,' 24 February 2021, retrieved 5 April 2021, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/otip/ news/core-competencies-anti-trafficking-response-healthcare-systems.

Careful consideration was given to an innovative pedagogical approach and curriculum design. The core training tenets are evidence-based, culturally-responsive, patient-centred, trauma-informed, and survivor-advised. Trainees learn about trafficking through three primary lenses: 1) global overview of trafficking through an evidence-based framework, 2) trafficked persons in healthcare settings, and 3) responding to the needs of trafficked persons with multidisciplinary service providers, advocates, and law enforcement. Trafficked persons present to many kinds of care environments, including emergency care, primary care, specialty care, aesthetic or cosmetic care, and others. Presentation to care environments is preceded by an acute health complaint, which often precludes the victim from being able to perform forced acts of labour or sex. Nurses are highly skilled providers of care who can use clinical pathways and protocols to work within their scope of practice to identify risk and provide connections to appropriate services. Nurses recognise the health impacts of psychological and emotional trauma, and the intersection with physical health. I have seen nurses take training on human trafficking and leave devastated because they recognise potential victimisation of a past patient and feel moral distress at not having recognised it or responded appropriately. Given the complex intersection of criminality and healthcare presentations of trafficked persons, nurses can feel moral distress about knowing what to report, how to report, and to whom to report without fear of personal criminal backlash or unintentional harm to patients in the absence of trauma-informed care.

To respond to this professional situation, ACT Advocate trainees are required to take a course on trauma-informed care and its integration into healthcare settings for persons who are trafficked or at risk of trafficking. Trainees are instructed to give culturally-responsive and ethical representation of victims and survivors. As noted in the Core Competencies, a culturally-responsive approach supports interactions with patients based on culturally-informed practices and adopts a posture of learning. Culture spans beliefs, practices, and social formations of groups based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, sexuality, religion, ability, language, and any other social identity deemed significant to the patient. Ethical representation centres around avoiding voyeurism or the exploitation of victims and survivors, as well as condemning sensationalistic and biased imagery.

Trainees are provided with a NAPNAP Partners weblink to a curated collection of evidence-based resources, reviewed and collated by a diverse professional work group, and used as a guide for the development of organisational policies and protocols in healthcare settings. Currently, there are very few protocols and policies, leaving nurses and other clinicians to piece together clinical orders on their own in the absence of any organisational guidelines. Therefore, ACT provides nurses with protocol and policy resources and exemplars to respond to child trafficking in clinical settings. Online updates are posted with research articles, governmental resources, and other organisational tools and clinical supports, including exemplar protocols and organisational policies. Coalition building and

interprofessional collaboration are key in protocol design. Emphasis is also placed on effectively combating common myths and misrepresentations that prevent adequate identification of risk. The training concludes with an expert speaker delivering a presentation with a slide deck they can use in future presentations, followed by a careful review of the policies and procedures to ensure scientific rigor and adherence to standardisation of presentations and advisement given.

After training, ACT Advocates are placed into a speaker's bureau and can be contacted by healthcare organisations or groups that want to learn more about human trafficking. ACT Advocates also serve as partner resources for clinical professionals and organisations striving to enact policies, procedures, and protocols. On the state level, ACT provided support for the successful passage of House Bill 2059, which requires direct care providers in Texas to take one hour of mandated continuing education on human trafficking.[5] The curriculum went through peer review with survivor input and underwent anonymous evaluation by a third-party expert entity (HEAL Trafficking), which developed an evidence-based education checklist for auditing such programmes. Currently, surveys are being undertaken to measure the experience of the ACT Advocates, and the impact on skills, expertise, and self-efficacy. In a period of two years, ACT Advocates in more than 23 US states had reached audiences of nearly 20,000 nurses with nearly 1,000 more taking the advanced online training.[6]

There are now more than 100 ACT Advocates across the US. Post-programmatic surveys demonstrate respondents' increased feeling of self-efficacy in their ability to serve as a community experts and child trafficking advocates. Interest in ACT has grown over a two-year period, with nursing doctoral students using the programme as training and a certificate of endorsement, offering a platform for credibility in initiating scholarship, including theses and other evidence-based clinical initiatives. ACT Advocates maintain an online communication forum and have online meetings for sharing experiences and continuing to increase audiences and reach.

Commitments from ACT Advocates include the following: conduct at least two training sessions per year (no audience minimum); encourage organisations in their professional networks to develop policies, procedures, or protocols for healthcare encounters; complete post-evaluations; provide ongoing support to institutions and organisations; volunteer for organisational, academic, local, community, and state task forces; and assist in fundraising to continue this work. Presentation forums include nursing units, open conversation forums and learning arenas for

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[5]  Texas Health and Human Services, 'Health Care Practitioner Human Trafficking Training', retrieved 18 November 2020, https://hhs.texas.gov/services/safety/texas-human-trafficking-resource-center/health-care-practitioner-human-trafficking-training.

healthcare providers and organisational trainings, healthcare organisation chapter meetings, professional conferences, and others. ACT Advocate trainings have resulted in 40 ACT Advocates in 35 states training more than 10,000 professionals nationally and internationally. This train-the-trainer approach has widened our ability to effectively reach clinicians with evidence-based training.

Required handouts for ACT Advocate presentations include ICD-10-CM coding for human trafficking from the American Hospital Association; the Joint Commission Advisory on Identifying Human Trafficking Victims in Healthcare; the trauma-informed approach to victim assistance in healthcare settings (PEARR tool) from Dignity Health; and the NAPNAP Partners resource page. The guidelines stipulate 50 minutes for presentations and 10 minutes for questions and answers. Participants agree not to modify the PowerPoint presentation except to insert local resources and statistics on one designated slide. ACT Advocates are also encouraged to partner with trafficking survivors to co-present.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, ACT Advocates adapted to a virtual educational environment, after in excess of 50 in-person presentations were cancelled. Healthcare attention is largely on COVID-19, which challenges our efforts to raise awareness of human trafficking. Virtual presentations have some advantages, including cost-effectiveness (no travel or meeting room fee), ease of attendance, improved connection to rural areas, compliance with physical distancing, and ease of marketing.

## Impacts of COVID-19 and the Need for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Recently, clarion calls across the nursing profession are prompting small but significant steps toward increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion. US nursing is quite a racially homogenous profession (80.8% White; 6.2% African American; 7.5% Asian; 5.3% Hispanic; 0.4% American Indian/Alaskan Native; 0.5% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander; 1.7% two or more races; and 2.9% 'other'), which does not reflect the demographics of the American public. In response, the American Nurses Association, the National Black Nurses Association, the National Coalition of Ethnic Minority Nurse Association, and the National Association of Hispanic Nurses launched the National Commission to Address Racism in Nursing, tasked with the purpose of examining the issue of racism within the nursing profession and describing its impact on nurses, patients, communities, and healthcare systems. In addition, the National Academy of Medicine released a report entitled *The Future of Nursing 2020-2030: Charting a Path to Achieve Health Equity*. Within this report are specific recommendations to address social determinants of health and the provision of effective, efficient, equitable, and accessible care for all, and identifying and responding to system facilitators and barriers to promote a diverse nursing workforce. These actions emphasise the importance of accountability

within the nursing profession to consider ways of teaching about trafficking and the associated risk factors without reinforcing power and privileges embedded in society. The ACT Advocate programme recognises the urgent need to support more racial diversity in the nursing workforce pipeline and NAPNAP has taken deliberate steps to do so. A Standing Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion launched in summer 2021 to take action to ensure that the organisational efforts and programmes are inclusive of diverse people and perspectives with equitable opportunities to participate and lead.

As with any new effort, the challenges have been significant. According to the Health Belief Model, persons considering actions to respond to health threats must have a perception of both susceptibility and severity along with realistic expectation of perceived benefits. Raising awareness of the susceptibility and severity of health systems encountering victims of child trafficking has been a sustained effort with slow momentum.

With the outbreak of COVID-19, the healthcare world has been focused on the pandemic response, slowing previous gains for anti-trafficking efforts. Rising tensions over racism and reports of police brutality create tremendous barriers for effective interprofessional paradigms between healthcare and law enforcement. There are widely varying city, county, and state laws governing US legal responses to trafficked persons, leaving nurses unprepared and worried about their professional licenses when working in different locations. Nurses are unsure about their legal responsibility to provide information or cooperate with law enforcement, or how to fulfil mandatory reporter obligations in the absence of organisational training, support, and policy norms. In some contexts, law enforcement is legally permitted to provide untrue information to victims as a means to elicit information in an investigation. Nurses are trained with emphasis on honesty and transparency with patients, preserving autonomy in decision-making whenever possible. Thus, these professions can be in opposition while both voicing a goal of the best possible victim outcomes. Nurses may be afraid to report trafficking, fearing unintentional criminal retribution or deportation of their patients. Often, law enforcement will be present with the patient in a care environment, creating opposing priorities between law enforcement emphasising a criminal investigation and healthcare providers emphasising physical and psychosocial health needs. A collaborative victim-centred approach is optimal, but it requires coalition building. I have been to anti-trafficking convenings where healthcare is excluded as a multidisciplinary partner and viewed as obstructive to efforts of law enforcement.

As health professions participate in anti-trafficking education initiatives, nursing is emerging as a leader for cross-sector collaboration and a public health preventive approach. By contrast, law enforcement uses a downstream approach, focused on addressing problems that already exist without directed efforts at mitigating causative factors. The public health, or upstream approach, embraced by nursing

focuses on prevention, addressing social, economic, political, environmental, and health factors with emphasis on early intervention. These efforts would be most effective in collaborative concert, simultaneously implementing both approaches.

## Conclusion

As a profession employing more than 3.8 million registered nurses in the US and 20.7 million out of 43.5 million total health workers worldwide, nursing is by far the largest healthcare workforce in the world. Skilled in therapeutic communication, and having longer encounters with patients, nurses are ideally situated to provide a skilled response when trafficking risks are identified.

Nurses already employ effective prevention programmes for many issues, including environmental health, climate change, the opioid crisis response, and responding to social determinants of health. They can also employ trafficking prevention and early identification strategies. In particular, advanced practice nurses are positioned to lead the profession in providing a trusted voice of education to the public. Equipping nurses with evidence-based knowledge and skills can amplify anti-trafficking advocacy, especially when nursing is already engaging in initiatives for diversity, equity, and inclusion, while raising awareness of implicit racial bias. NAPNAP Partners' train-the-trainer programme has succeeded in reaching healthcare providers and community leaders with evidence-based, patient-centred, trauma-informed, and culturally-responsive training to equip and engage individuals and institutions to respond to trafficking situations effectively.

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# Responsibly Including Survivors' Voices in the Planning and Implementing of Educational Programmes for Healthcare Providers

*Preeti Panda, Annette Mango, and Anjali Garg*

*That feeling was amazing... a room full of educated doctors were looking to me for my input and advice. I felt so proud of the progress I have made and where I have come.* —Annette Mango's reflections about our educational intervention

## Introduction

Over the last several years, the call for incorporating survivor voices into human trafficking education for healthcare providers has grown, with assessment tools to provide guidance on seeking survivor input as a key component.[1] A recent systematic review of the literature found that only two published educational interventions had partnered with survivors during the development of trainings.[2]

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[1]  CL Miller, G Duke, and S Northam, 'Child Sex-Trafficking Recognition, Intervention, and Referral: An educational framework for the development of health-care-provider education programs', *Journal of Human Trafficking*, vol. 2, issue 3, 2016, pp. 177–200, https://doi.org/10.1080/23322705.2015.1133990; S Lockyer, 'Beyond Inclusion: Survivor-leader voice in anti-human trafficking organizations', *Journal of Human Trafficking*, 2020, pp. 1–22, https://doi.org/10.1080/23322705.2020.1756122; C Miller *et al.*, 'Health Care Provider Human Trafficking Education: Assessment tool', Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking and HEAL Trafficking, 2018.

[2]  H Fraley, T Aronowitz and H Stoklosa, 'Systematic Review of Human Trafficking Educational Interventions for Health Care Providers', *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, vol. 42, no. 2, 2020, pp. 131–142, https://doi.org/10.1177/0193945919837366.

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While many professionals in the field are aware of the importance of survivor partnerships, translating this awareness into action is not always straightforward. Organisations that hope to create a survivor-informed educational intervention face difficulties in responsibly partnering with survivors as human trafficking consultants, and meaningfully incorporating their input into trainings.[3]

In this paper, we describe the processes and best practices of establishing partnerships between healthcare providers and trafficking survivors in the development of an educational curriculum on human trafficking for paediatric healthcare providers.

## Survivor-informed Educational Curriculum and Intervention

We implemented an educational intervention to increase knowledge and awareness of human trafficking amongst paediatric physicians in training at a children's hospital in an urban location in the United States. The leadership team of this intervention included two resident physicians, an attending physician, a paediatric sexual assault nurse examiner, and a motivational speaker who was also a local survivor of human trafficking and human trafficking consultant. Since we were the few professionals at our hospital who were openly interested in anti-trafficking work, this team came together organically in order to coordinate our efforts to serve trafficked children. The two resident physicians had initially created a framework for the content of the educational curriculum. The human trafficking consultant's contribution included review of the content for accuracy, input on their personal experiences with the healthcare system during and after being trafficked, and tangible ways to improve sensitivity of care when interacting with patients who may be victims of trafficking. We implemented the intervention as four hour-long educational sessions, and the survivor was compensated for their time as an expert consultant.[4]

## Establishing Survivor Partnerships

*Utilisation of Community Resources*

There are several avenues that can be pursued when seeking to establish a responsible survivor partnership to inform an educational programme. One

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[3]   Note, there are existing survivor-led organisations already engaged in anti-trafficking work.

[4]   L Powers and N Paul, 'The Need for Survivor-informed Research to Fight Human Trafficking', *Delta 8.7,* 1 November 2018, retrieved 27 May 2021, https://delta87. org/2018/11/need-survivor-informed-research-fight-human-trafficking.

avenue is utilising community resources from the local area. Organisations working with survivors of trafficking may be in contact with survivor leaders who may be willing to partner as consultants.[5] Community organisations may also have peer mentorship or leadership development groups for survivors that can serve as a resource. In our partnership we approached a survivor through a community organisation that facilitated a leadership development programme for survivors. The human trafficking consultant had previous experience speaking to local healthcare professionals and was continuing in group and mental health therapy to support their own well-being. Involving a local survivor on the leadership team served as an opportunity to provide more context through their experiences with the community's health services. Resources at the state or national level may be utilised to form survivor partnerships as well. In the United States, these resources include state-wide human trafficking coalitions and country-wide networks such as the National Survivor Network.[6]

*Establishment of Equal Partnership*

After including the human trafficking consultant, who was also a survivor, into the intervention, the team needed to establish the roles and expectations of each team member and ensure that the survivor is seen as an equal partner. Our equitable partnership was modelled after the 'patient advisory councils' implemented in primary healthcare settings that offer a 'best practice guidance' for creating survivor-informed programming, where survivor consultants are invited to join organisational leadership such as trafficking clinic advisory boards.[7] At the outset, the human trafficking consultant and physician team members discussed a clear vision of the intervention and the survivor's desired level of involvement. These expectations were created collaboratively, and emphasis was placed on autonomy, empowerment, and reduction of re-traumatisation through trauma-informed approaches.[8] Through these discussions, the human trafficking consultant

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[5]   See footnote 3.

[6]   National Survivor Network, retrieved 10 November 2020, https://nationalsurvivornetwork.org.

[7]   A Sharma *et al.*, 'How Can We Talk about Patient-centered Care without Patients at the Table? Lessons learned from patient advisory councils', *The Journal of the American Board of Family Medicine*, vol. 29, no. 6, 2016, pp. 775–784, https://doi.org/10.3122/jabfm.2016.06.150380; R Chambers, J Cox, and H Austin Gibbs, Mercy Family Health Center, *Human Trafficking Medical Safe Haven Program and Shared Learnings Manual*, Dignity Health, 2019; National Human Trafficking Training and Technical Assistance Center, 'Toolkit: Survivor-informed practice self-guided assessment', 2017, https://nhttac.acf.hhs.gov/resources/toolkit-survivor-informed-practice-self-guided-assessment.

[8]   U.S. Department of State Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, 'Engaging Survivors of Human Trafficking: Fact sheet', 27 June 2017, https://www.state.gov/engaging-survivors-of-human-trafficking.

disclosed their comfort and desire to help not only with the curriculum planning but also with delivering the presentation. In addition to compensating the survivor for serving as a human trafficking consultant, we continually sought their input, debriefed them to prevent or assess any re-traumatisation, avoided sensationalising experiences, and protected their confidentiality when necessary. The emphasis throughout this professional relationship was that of an equitable partnership, and the survivor's suggestions and concerns were given equal consideration to those of the other leadership members. Due to limited resources to include additional human trafficking consultants, our team reconciled and incorporated into our programme the perspective that survivors of human trafficking have a myriad of complex experiences within the healthcare system.

Central to establishing an equal partnership is ensuring that the survivor is not just invited to share their story, but also given a voice throughout the development and implementation of the intervention. In our intervention, the physicians and human trafficking consultant met to discuss each educational content area during the phase of curriculum development. Each presentation slide was reviewed with the survivor, and modifications or additional points of emphasis were adjusted based on their input. Additionally, the human trafficking consultant was given autonomy to decide which portions of the presentation they would speak about, and whether or not they wanted to share personal experiences.

In taking these collaborative steps to create an equitable partnership, the intervention resulted in improved knowledge and understanding for the physician leaders of a survivor's experience within the healthcare system, and improved understanding for the human trafficking consultant as to how healthcare providers view patient care. The consultant's input led to tangible changes in how the educational content was delivered. For example, following discussions regarding their experiences with the healthcare system, sections on communicating with potentially trafficked children were modified to emphasise empathy and kindness. The importance of provider discretion and severe consequences for breaches in confidentiality, as well as realising the impact of routine medical practices on those who have experienced complex trauma were, amongst others, important changes to the standard educational content that resulted from this equitable partnership.

## Reflections on Equitable Partnership

Below are reflections from the team regarding the most important takeaways, challenges, and successes resulting from working towards the creation of an equitable partnership to create this healthcare educational intervention.

Annette: 'Working as a human trafficking consultant allowed me to feel empowered about a period in my life when power had been stripped from me. While I was not previously trained to be a consultant, my training and experience in motivational

speaking allowed me to give voice to the traumas that I experienced, and to put in perspective all that I had gone through, specifically about how the healthcare system played a role in continuing my cycle of exploitation. However, being a consultant to this educational intervention was difficult and challenging as well. I am thankful for the counselling I was engaged in prior to and throughout the period of consultancy. I am thankful to the support group that I was a part of for giving me strength and space to process the traumas that I had been through. This whole experience was challenging, but I wanted to and had to challenge myself so that I could continue to heal. I encourage other survivors to be consultants, but also to recognise that they need to be in a supportive space to be able to process their trauma. This experience left me feeling strong and empowered. I was able to stand up in front of a group of professionals, tell them about my story, and educate them on how to be better providers for other survivors. That felt good. My advice to any professionals that are putting on this educational intervention: be protective of your survivor, continue to engage with them on how much they want to be involved in, and be kind. Be kind. Be kind. Be kind.'

Anjali: 'Initially, I was worried about re-traumatising Annette. Given that this topic personally affected them and was in part a discussion of their trauma, we wanted to give them freedom to be involved as deeply or as superficially as they wanted. I am thankful for how inspiring and engaged Annette was, and that they continued therapy and group sessions throughout our endeavour. Ensuring the human trafficking consultant is continuing their own healing process is very important. After each session, we debriefed with Annette to ensure that no part of the process had been triggering, re-traumatising, or emotionally draining. These conversations were invaluable, and taught us the power of Annette's resilience.'

Preeti: 'A challenge in creating an equal partnership was navigating power dynamics. How could we co-lead and co-facilitate this programme and ensure that the physicians in the team did not explicitly or implicitly overshadow Annette's voice? How could we ensure that Annette felt comfortable sharing opinions not just with us, but with other doctors we would be educating? We sought to overcome this challenge through openly discussing these concerns with Annette to set the expectation that we were all leaders in the intervention. We then scheduled regular in-person meetings so that all of us were at the table when important decisions were being made. We also re-visited this issue during debriefing sessions to understand Annette's feelings on co-leading the intervention and speaking to the group.'

## Moving Towards Equitable Collaboration

Involvement of survivors as human trafficking consultants can enhance educational interventions for healthcare providers. However, engagement with survivors requires practitioners to be responsible and accountable for the effects of this involvement. Teams hoping to create a more equitable collaboration can take several actions, starting with ensuring that the survivor is treated as an expert and compensated as such. Survivors should be allowed ample space and autonomy over the nature of their involvement and given equal opportunities to contribute to the formulation and implementation of the educational curriculum. Furthermore, an open dialogue among team members to prevent re-traumatisation and overcome power dynamics can be facilitated through regular meetings with all team members, debriefing after implementation, and continually seeking input and feedback from one another. Only through the provision of an equal and collaborative platform can we aim to mitigate the cycle of exploitation.

**Preeti Panda** is a paediatric emergency medicine fellow physician at Stanford University, and completed her residency training at Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital in Cleveland, Ohio. Her experiences working directly with trafficked high school students sparked a passion for addressing the health needs of this population. This led her to pursue anti-trafficking programming and research during her medical training, eventually establishing a medical clinic to treat child trafficking survivors along with Anjali. She continues to work with survivors on creating trauma-informed healthcare programmes to better serve trafficked children. Email: preetipanda2017@gmail.com

**Annette Mango** is a motivational speaker and survivor leader. She completed a Survivor-Educator Certification Course through the Renee Jones Empowerment Center in 2017, and participates in survivor groups, peer mentorship, and speaking engagements. She is interested in educating professionals on human trafficking and how to engage survivors in a trauma-informed manner.

**Anjali Garg** is a paediatric critical care fellow physician at Johns Hopkins Children's Center. She completed her paediatric residency training at Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital in Cleveland, Ohio, during which time she researched the role of the healthcare provider in the identification and intervention of trafficked children. Anjali and Preeti subsequently opened a medical home for child trafficking survivors. Her passion to care for those who have been afflicted by the complex trauma seen in human trafficking led Anjali to pursue a career in critical care. She continues to work towards providing healthcare in a trauma sensitive manner and works to empower survivors in her medical practice. Email: anjaliga07@gmail.com

# The Next Step: The California Cybersecurity Institute's Anti-Trafficking Virtual Reality Immersion Training

*Danielle Borrelli and Benjamin Thomas Greer*

Twenty years after the passage of the United States *Trafficking Victims Protection Act* of 2000, constructing intermediate and advanced training platforms is an uncommon endeavour by most anti-trafficking trainers and advocates. Existing 'advanced' anti-trafficking training programmes generally focus on trafficking's nexus to a particular sector of the economy, while remaining at a basic awareness level of criminal typology and crime scene complexity. With intentionality and expert planning, Virtual Reality (VR) immersion training can go further than this construction by advancing and testing the skillset of frontline and first responders (e.g., law enforcement, service providers, and prosecutors). VR provides a technological mechanism to replicate an environment through a simulation using software and specialised hardware.[1] VR-based platforms have the capability to advance a multitude of learning goals and objectives by presenting users with real-life scenarios, as well as differing outcomes based on their actions. They can incorporate situated cognitive modelling scenario actions based on the pedagogy of scaffold learning. This decision-based operational learning model allows designers to create different simulations and outcomes of the same situation, thereby providing users with the opportunity to demonstrate acquired knowledge-based decision-making analyses.

A crucial feature of field or practical training is the capability of repetition without knowledge degradation. An experiential-based learning platform needs to include outcome variations based on learners' decision-making and their

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[1]    S Ayush, *et al.*, 'Virtual Reality: Blessings and risk assessment', arXiv preprint, 31 August 2017, retrieved 16 July 2021, https://arxiv.org/ftp/arxiv/papers/1708/1708.09540.pdf.

correlated consequences[2] such as scenarios and experiences, which are likely to occur in practice. Training scenarios implementing VR-created three-dimensional immersive storytelling conditions do not manifest in real-world consequences, and provide the ability to repeat the exercise until the participant develops the necessary competence. If built with intention and knowledge, VR-based training platforms could provide the participant learners with a rich economical alternative to costly in-person training.[3] Additionally, VR experiences are meant to enhance the classroom environment and not replace foundational learning.

## Current Anti-Trafficking VR Training

'Serious games' are tools of an institution but require an educator or instructor to place the game into an educational context.[4] If properly designed, VR serious games facilitate creative decision-making challenges. A game-like experience can help people process scenarios or topics in more detail and highlight participants' decision-making ramifications. Emerging technologies used to communicate and elucidate suffering and raise awareness can be best termed 'humanitarian communication'. These learning modalities 'distanc[e] the spectator from the spectacle of the sufferers through [a framing device] while enabling proximity between the two through narrative and visual resources that invite our empathetic judgment towards the spectacle.'[5] Such distancing helps to prevent potential harm from observers, trainees, or advocates, and instead enables the development of emotions, understanding, and respect towards an individual traumatised by trafficking. This is an important feat as stereotypes and ineffective measures are often perpetuated through misinformed trainings, awareness-raising, and educational campaigns.

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[2]    S Gabriel, 'Teaching Human Rights With Video Games?', in M Pivec and J Gründler (eds.), *Proceedings of the 11th European Conference on Game-Based Learning*, Academic Conferences and Publishing International Limited, Reading, 2017, pp. 191–196.

[3]    G Carlson and N Caporusso, 'A Physically Immersive Platform for Training Emergency Responders and Law Enforcement Officers', in S Nazir, AM Teperi, and A Polak-Sopińska (eds.), *Advances in Human Factors in Training, Education, and Learning Sciences: Proceedings of the AHFE 2018 International Conference on Human Factors in Training, Education, and Learning Sciences,* Springer, Cham, 2018, pp. 108–116, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-93882-0_11.

[4]    Gabriel.

[5]    E O'Brien and H Berents, 'Virtual Saviours: Digital games and anti-trafficking awareness-raising', *Anti-Trafficking Review,* issue 13, 2019, pp. 82-89, p. 84, https://doi.org/10.14197/atr.201219136.

There are three main serious games currently used to train and raise awareness of trafficking: *BAN Human Trafficking*; *(Un)Trafficked*; and *Missing: Game for a Cause*.[6] The programmes were launched in 2014, 2017, and 2016, respectively. Developers utilised a 'choose-your-own-adventure style of storytelling'[7] with limited outcomes and limited re-playability.[8] Limited re-playability refers to a game's continued play value after the first initial completion; specifically, do or can the scenarios change or differ from the last iteration? The stated intention behind all three games was to raise awareness, effectively positioning these programmes as passive educative tools with narrow reach and impact. Except for *(Un)Trafficked* having been played more than 100,000 times, mostly by individuals in India, there is currently no publicly accessible data reporting on the players of the games and no evaluation of their impacts on the participants' awareness and understanding of human trafficking pre- and post-experience.[9]

The California Cybersecurity Institute (CCI) at California Polytechnic State University specialises in the application of the pedagogy 'Learn by Doing', taking real-world problems and developing solutions within a controlled, lab-like environment. According to Edgar Dale's Cone of Experience,[10] learners remember 10 per cent of read material, 20 per cent of heard information, and a staggering 90 per cent of information gained through experience. The CCI's Anti-Trafficking Virtual Reality Immersion Training (ATVRIT) seeks to deliver on this metric because immersive storytelling can result in enhanced learning and outcomes. Additionally, serious games are increasingly viewed as avenues to introduce humanitarian communication into the public conversation.

## Immersive Storytelling Is Crucial

Story framing is a critical component of scenario-based VR learning, as it sets the background and learning borders through an in-game situation. If designed holistically, participants can be exposed to various characters beyond the suspected 'trafficker' and suspected 'victim'. There are numerous ancillary roles designers can build into the experience that mimic a real-world setting. As in other anti-

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6   *Ibid.*, p. 83.

7   *Ibid.*

8   Please note, the terminology used, such as 'games', 'choose your own adventure', or 're-playability,' is part of the VR industry vernacular and not meant as a pejorative.

9   O'Brien and Berents.

10  E Dale, *Audio-Visual Methods in Teaching,* 3rd Edition, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, New York, 1969.

trafficking VR training models, such as Radical Empathy[11] or Apex Officer,[12] a focus on empathy, de-escalation, and the mitigation of racial bias are at the forefront. Both platforms, individually created by other organisations, engage the senses for a deeper level of understanding and skill acquisition.

The CCI first built ATVRIT in 2019 to help law enforcement and advocacy organisations better understand the situations and experiences of trafficked individuals. Experiencing limitations with software to enhance the storytelling experience, the CCI quickly transitioned to Unity. Unity is a premier VR game creation platform, noted for providing developers with enhanced assets, customisation, and programming. In the ongoing development of ATVRIT, the programme also seeks to address perspectives that negatively impact trafficked persons and other marginalised groups. ATVRIT will always focus on addressing personal and culturally-embedded heuristics, specifically those geared towards gender, race, sexuality, nationality, and ethnicity. The provided experience will seek to engage learners in deconstructing biases based on these characteristics in order to create a more holistic representation. Another learning objective of ATVRIT is the incorporation of harm reduction methodologies related to evidence collection, including digital evidence collection.

As of now, ATVRIT participants experience the dynamic elements involved with a situation of human trafficking within an illicit massage business. The participant, also known as user or trainee, has three scenarios to choose from: an investigator, a service provider, and a bystander. Because the investigator scenario involves more complex onscreen interactions, in this paper we focus on this specific role. To start, the investigator opens the programme to a street scene, where their attention is drawn to an active investigation of a potential human trafficking situation. They immediately see a massage parlour embedded into a city landscape with neon lights, covered windows, and a list of massage prices. Upon entering the establishment, the user arrives in a small waiting room with blue walls and framed pictures of massage scenes; the room is sterile and equipped with security cameras and two small chairs. Further entry into the room reveals another door that provides access to an office. The office is minimally furnished, with a desk, security monitors showing a live feed to massage rooms, and a white board with names, monetary figures, and a hand-drawn schedule. Going back out of the room, the trainee sees a flight of stairs leading to two massage rooms. Another flight of stairs up is a kitchen, bathroom, and single bedroom with six individual beds. The next two floors have bare, blue walls with little decor; each room is clean and neatly organised. A total of six characters are in the scenario,

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[11] 'Human Trafficking Awareness Training for Everyone', Radical Empathy, retrieved 14 June 2021, https://www.reefcares.org.

[12] 'About Us', Apex Officer, retrieved 14 June 2021, https://www.apexofficer.com/about.

each with different genders and purposes for being in the massage business. Once the user performs an initial walk-through, they are tasked with articulating what is occurring in the establishment. One of the first interactions is with a middle-aged East Asian person at the front desk, whose country of origin is yet to be discerned. Immediately, the user is challenged with how to interact with the person in front of them. They must seek and ask the right questions that will reveal why this person is in this setting. Additionally, optional questions to gather more informational context around the situation appear on screen and produce pre-programmed responses. Depending on the question asked, back-end analytics record potential biases from the user. The bias score is later revealed upon the end of the programme. On the topic of bias, the intention of this programme is not to reinforce problematic stereotypes, such as 'every massage business is involved in trafficking', but rather to explore what trafficking looks like when it does occur in such establishments. Questions proposed in ATVRIT that refocus the user on how to properly respond to a trafficking situation include, 'Is there anything I can do for you right now?'

As the participant moves through the scene, several items, characters, and evidence pieces can additionally be engaged. Users can ask questions of each character to gain a better understanding of the situation, and the conversations between the characters and the user's avatar are audible, with subtitles optional. The user interacts with evidence pieces, learning what to identify during an investigation as well as the proper collection methodologies. The user interface is equipped with tools for improving interview technique as well as evidence collection. Each evidence piece has an option for how it should be stored; items like USB flash drives, hard drives, cameras, laptops, and SD cards have additional content that illuminates or reframes the situation.

The investigator role is created as predominately static, meaning the focus is on analysing their surroundings. The limited interactions, such as asking questions and collecting evidence, are programmed with the goal of testing users' knowledge and understanding of the trafficking experience. Interactions with evidence and characters will challenge heuristics, as each character relays information and experiences framed through quantitative and qualitative understandings of the known complexities of trafficking situations. At the end of the simulation, users are presented with a score that assesses interactions with characters as well as collected or overlooked items.

## Challenges: Myths, bias, and stereotypes

To be successful, serious games require an informed educator to place the game into an educational context.[13] A game-like experience can help people process scenarios or topics in more detail and highlight decision-making ramifications.[14] An artificial environment provides a well-informed creator the opportunity to subconsciously address institutional or social issues like bias (e.g., framing bias, narrative fallacy, anchoring bias, or confirmation bias), narrative myths, or stereotypes. To effectively build in bias checks and the deconstruction of myths and stereotypes, the creator must first be first aware of these biases, and secondly, seek input from subject matter experts. As the next version of the ATVRIT platform is constructed, tested, and updated, the CCI has engaged trafficking experts from law enforcement, victim service providers, and professional training entities for such professional input. Specifically, the CCI will continue its relationship with the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) California Specialized Training Institute (CSTI) throughout ATVRIT's development. Through the CSTI's network of trafficking experts in the fields of law, law enforcement, service provision, trauma-informed care, as well as homeland security and threat analysis, ATVRIT seeks to specifically deconstruct racial bias of victim and perpetrator ethnicity, country of origin, and gender. One option ATVRIT is considering is building virtual scenarios to not include a victim avatar or keep the victim's gender ambiguous. After participants complete the training, instructors will ask them for their opinion as to the ethnicity and gender of the victim; this educative reflection on the simulation will allow instructors to engage participants in an analytical exercise to examine how and why they made the assumptions they did. By allowing bias to be 'organically' illustrated, the impact on participants is more profound and lasting.

## Conclusion

Digital gaming and virtual learning platforms will expand the boundaries of experiential-based anti-trafficking trainings. The success of virtual-based immersive trainings is directly dependent on a series of factors, including storytelling, re-playability, and supplemental in-person trainings. The California Cybersecurity Institute has accepted the challenge of designing an anti-trafficking immersion training programme that advances beyond awareness education and aims to test law enforcement and first responders' specific skillsets. This multi-layered programme looks to incorporate all the concepts of 'serious gaming'

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[13]    Gabriel.

[14]    *Ibid.*

within a law enforcement and humanitarian communication format. Trafficking is a dynamic and fluid criminal activity. As law enforcement, academia, and victims' services organisations learn more about the tactics and typologies of trafficking, ATVRIT will revise accordingly. Moving forward, ATVRIT will continue to advance the simulation environment to better reflect the nature of trafficking situations as gleaned from subject matter experts seeking to address implicit biases and stereotypes in programming. ATVRIT programmers acknowledge the growing demand for not only effective, accurate trainings, but also for the inclusion of reflexive, harm-reducing techniques.

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# ANTI-TRAFFICKING REVIEW

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We welcome submissions from a diverse range of actors, including academics, practitioners, trafficked persons and advocates. The *Anti-Trafficking Review* particularly welcomes contributions from those with direct experiences and insights to share.

The *Anti-Trafficking Review* is aimed at a wide readership. It therefore encourages submissions that are in clear, jargon-free English with appropriate but not excessive citation.

Articles should be previously unpublished and should not be under consideration for publication elsewhere. All articles go through a rigorous double-blind peer review process.

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*The Anti-Trafficking Review* promotes a human rights-based approach to anti-trafficking. It explores trafficking in its broader context including gender analyses and intersections with labour and migrant rights. It offers an outlet and space for dialogue between academics, practitioners, trafficked persons and advocates seeking to communicate new ideas and findings to those working for and with trafficked persons.

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