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SALVE REGINA UNIVERSITY

Modern-Day Slavery and Human Trafficking: An Overlooked Issue

A Thesis Submitted to  
The Faculty of the International Studies Major  
In Partial Fulfillment for the Degree of  
BA in International Studies

by  
Michelle Kuhl

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### Abstract

Slavery and human trafficking have become a widespread problem across the globe today. Practices including debt bondage, forced labor, sexual slavery, and more are occurring in every country, including here in the United States. It has been widely overlooked, and although there are several laws and declarations outlawing the practice of slavery, it still occurs. Neoliberalism and globalization are considered in this thesis as contributors to modern-day slavery and trafficking in persons. Additionally, specific case studies of a few different nations are provided to clarify the topic and help the reader create a personal connection to the issue. A lot can be done to stop these practices, including efforts by governments, business, and the general public. It is time to uphold the claim that slavery is a thing of the past.

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## Introduction

This thesis asks the question, why slavery is so prevalent in the world today? Although there are non-governmental organizations, government legislation, and individual efforts in place which attempt to fight the trends of slavery and trafficking, the practices are more common today than at any other point in human history. The economic movement of Neoliberalism and the process of globalization will be considered as contributors to modern-day slavery and human trafficking. Also, case studies will be provided in order to offer detailed insight into this phenomenon.

Although there are more slaves today than ever before, the practice is not novel. In the past, slavery was accepted as a fact of life. Traditionally, people were used mainly as domestic servants or agricultural laborers. Today, jobs can range from making bricks to forced prostitution. Kate Blewett makes the distinction between slaves today and those in the past, “The difference between now and colonial times is that in the old days slaves were worth a great deal of money and so were taken better care of. But these people are utterly disposable. They are cheap to buy and cheap to throw away” (Mason).

What does a slave look like today? In Haiti, some slaves may be as young as three or four years old. There, the average fifteen year old slave is 1.5 inches shorter, and forty pounds lighter than the average fifteen year old. Often burns and scars maim the skin of a slave (Skinner, *A Crime So Monstrous*). In cities such as Paris, New York, London, Los Angeles, or Zurich, a slave may look like the twenty-two year old, Seba, who was taken from her family in Mali and forced to care for a Parisian family’s children while they beat and neglected her (Bales, *Disposable People*). Or, a slave could come in the form of a beautiful, innocent teenage girl trafficked into sex slavery by strangers or even by members of her own family. There are several

definitions and forms of slavery, and they are all important to understand. As E. Benjamin Skinner states, “it is not the number of slaves that matters, it’s the quality of their lives” (*A Crime So Monstrous* xvi).

In the American South in the 1850s, “a healthy slave was a valuable piece of property, worth up to \$40,000 in today’s dollars” (Masci 290). Today, a human being can be bought for as little as ten dollars. The distinction between the past and present worth of a slave is imperative to having an understanding of modern practices of slavery. Now, slaves are purely a commodity with little value to slaveholders, and their freedom or rights are never considered. During the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century, philosophers “established new definitions of human freedom and dignity...large numbers of people started questioning the morality of keeping another person in bondage” (Masci 282). The formerly normal practice of slavery became questionable and open to debate.

During the nineteenth century, after thriving for hundreds of years, slavery began to be abolished in the United States. President Abraham Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation was issued in 1863, and the addition of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolished slavery in 1865. Following this period, a number of international treaties were implemented in the 1900s to “halt slavery” (Masci 283). Examples include the foundation of the United Nations in 1945, the U.N.’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 which outlaws slavery, the foundation of the Human Rights Watch in 1978, and more (Masci 283). Additionally, events in the 1990s until the present day have continued modern discourse on the issues of human trafficking and slavery. These include the foundation of the American Anti-Slavery Group (AASG) in 1994, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act which was enacted in 2000, and the beginning of the United States’ annual Trafficking in Persons (TIP) reports in 2002 (Masci 283).

While these declarations and acts have been groundbreaking, there has been some inconsistency between implementation and execution of such documents. Richard C. Holbrooke was the U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan. He has also been the Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Asia at different points in time. He once stated, “Widespread calls for abolition, of course, began in the nineteenth century. In those years, slavery was legal and open, and defended or participated in by men like Thomas Jefferson and the powerful English parliamentarian Banastre Tarleton.” However, “Today, no one can openly condone any form of slavery. But it still exists, usually ignored by most people and the media...How can we stop it?” (Holbrooke xi). Countless authors and activists have continued to explore this question of how the ageless practice of slavery can be halted in the modern day. The dialogue on these imperative issues continues as the practices of trafficking and slavery grow and spread throughout the globe.

## Slavery and Trafficking Today

In the world today there are at least twenty-seven million slaves (Skinner, *A Crime So Monstrous* xv). It is most likely the general assumption that in the modern world, slavery is dead. However, the reality of the situation is far from such a postulation. Unfortunately, slaves are incredibly desirable today due to characteristics which define them as cheap and disposable. Several different types of slavery exist, such as forced labor, sex slavery, and the practice of debt bondage. Hand and hand with the phenomenon of modern-day slavery goes the horrifying operation of human trafficking. This practice constitutes the movement of a foreign national into another country with the involvement of coercion and fraud (Zhang). The different forms of slavery and human trafficking are separate ideas, but deeply intertwined in their function. Both practices involve the movement of individuals, force, and coercion. In order to further understand these concepts, it is necessary to begin with some definitions and key terms which will be utilized throughout this thesis.

### Definitions

Most simply, a slave may be defined as a person held in bondage to another, or someone who is the property of another (Meltzer 3). Yet there are many different types of slaves within this broad definition. One form is forced labor, also known as chattel slavery, which consists of a slave who is considered as property of his or her master, and whom can be exchanged for commodities such as cars or money. These slaves are often expected to perform labor and/or sexual favors (Meltzer). This type of slavery is most widely practiced in Africa (“Eradication of Forced Labour”). Child labor could be considered a subsection of forced labor or slavery in general, as it can include any form of slavery including a minor.



Additionally, a trend called “debt bondage” has emerged throughout the practice of various forms of slavery. This is a form of bonded labor in which a slave is promised to be freed once an original debt is paid off. The International Labour Organization (ILO) explains that the practice of debt bondage is

Still widespread in some countries and affect a significant number of people. The victims of debt bondage are the poorest people, often illiterate and relatively easy to deceive and be kept in ignorance of their rights; if they try to leave their employment, they are usually caught and returned by force. According to the reports, bonded labour is widespread in agriculture, but has been also detected in mines, brick kilns, leather, fish processing and carpet factories. (“Eradication of Forced Labour” 37)

There are interest rates which are fabricated when a person is placed into bondage. These fees trap the slaves in their servitude and they cannot be free until they are paid off. In some cases, even if the rates are paid off a slave still remains in bondage. This occurs all around the world, but mainly in Southeast Asia. There are an estimated fifteen to twenty million victims (“Types of Slavery”).

In the attempt to define human trafficking, it is important to make its distinction from smuggling. Human smuggling can be defined as the act of facilitating the unauthorized entry of a foreign national into another country. Smuggling of humans is distinct from trafficking because these people are willing to migrate, and often pay a fee to do so in attempts to improve their lives. Human trafficking, also known as trafficking in persons, involves the element of coercion (Zhang). These individuals are forced against their will into a new location or country, and often into slave-like conditions. According to the International Labour Organization, over 2.4 million people are engaged in forced labor due to human trafficking (“Eradication of Forced

Labour” 1). Approximately 800,000 people are trafficked across international and state borders each year (The World Factbook). While this is certainly a large number, it is nothing compared to the millions who are trafficked within their own country each year (The World Factbook).

Another important term to introduce is the “T visa,” also referred to as T Nonimmigrant Status. This term will appear later in the thesis. In the United States, the T visa is for victims of human trafficking who are willing to help law enforcement investigate or prosecute acts of trafficking. There are no costs associated with this visa, and immediate family members of victims are also eligible. On the downside, such a visa is only valid for three years, and the United States Congress is only able to authorize 5,000 each year (U.S. “Questions and Answers”).

Kevin Bales provides an interesting table which allows us to explore which variety of practices may be considered slavery. There are several different forms, and through the following chart we can see what characterizes the different types of slavery in the world today.

**Table 1: Practices Defined as Forms of Slavery in International Conventions**

Key: √ = present in the practice; × = not a necessary condition of the practice; √/× = sometimes present, sometimes not

Practice	Loss of Free Will	Appropriation of Labor Power	Violence or the Threat of Violence
White slavery	√	√	√
Forced labor	√	√	√
Debt bondage	√	√	√
Child prostitution	√	√	√
Forced prostitution	√	√	√
Sexual slavery	√	√	√

Abusive treatment of migrant workers	√/x	√/x	√/x
Prostitution	√/x	√/x	√/x
Forced marriage	√/x	√/x	√
Apartheid	√/x	x	√
Incest	√/x	x	√
Organ Harvesting	√/x	x	√/x
Caste	x	x	√
Prison labor	x	√/x	√

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From this, we can conclude that most forms of slavery involve the loss of free will. Also, violence usually plays a role in the life of a slave, or at least the threat of violence which is often involved to ensure the compliance of a slave in his or her forced labor. The practices of forced labor, debt bondage, and sexual slavery incorporate the loss of free will, the appropriation of labor power, and the presence or threat of violence. These practices will constitute the focus of this paper.

### Popular Misconceptions

There are several misconceptions when it comes to modern-day slavery and human trafficking. These contribute to the general public's ignorance of this global issue, and are part of the reason why it is so widely overlooked. One misconception is the idea that such atrocities do not occur here in the United States. In fact, in 2005 the estimated number of slaves in the U.S. ranged from 100,000 to 150,000 (Skinner, *A Crime So Monstrous* 186). This may seem like a low number when compared to India's estimate of eighteen to twenty-two million slaves, but it is wrong to assume that slavery is only an issue in other countries and not right here in our own. In September, a human trafficking scheme was discovered in Hawaii where 400 Thai

workers were “laboring on farms under substandard conditions, had their passports confiscated, and were threatened with deportation” (Mears). These people were forced to work in Hawaii as well as some locations in California, Colorado, Florida, Kentucky, Massachusetts, New York, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Utah (Mears). The idea that the United States is innocent or independent from modern-day slavery and human trafficking patterns must be dismissed

Another false impression is that sex slavery is the most prevalent type of captivity. This is probably the common outlook because of its high level of shock value. Sexual slavery includes the practices of forced or coerced prostitution, sex trafficking, and child prostitution. E. Benjamin Skinner explains that “For every one woman or child enslaved in commercial sex, there are at least fifteen men, women, and children enslaved in other fields, such as domestic work or agricultural labor” (Skinner, “A World Enslaved” 65). This thesis will dissect practices of forced labor, child labor, sex slavery, debt bondage, and human trafficking. It will attempt to clarify these misinterpretations of slavery and human trafficking.

#### Financial Feasibility

It is likely that one may wonder how possible it is to stop slavery. With twenty-seven million victims, it may seem like an unreachable goal. Kevin Bales also provides insight into the financial possibility of this feat. An organization in northern India works towards freeing families at the price of \$35 per family. If we use this as a model, the price of freeing every slave in the world would be somewhere around \$945 million (Bales, *Understanding Global Slavery* 17). This is definitely a lot of money; however, it can be put into perspective when compared to other figures. Bales gives the example of the “Big Dig” road reconstruction project in Boston which cost \$10.8 billion (*Understanding Global Slavery* 17). He also makes this price seem

feasible by dividing the cost to free every slave between American citizens. Once the cost is split, the price becomes only \$3.37 per American. This is certainly reasonable. When we realize how financially possible eradication slavery is, it seems as if there should be no excuse in not doing so.

## Neoliberalism & Globalization's Contribution to Modern-day Slavery & Trafficking

In the past thirty years, the economic framework among several nations has shifted towards a financial system centered on Neoliberalism. Neoliberalism represents a complex movement in the socio-economic framework of the globe. It can be defined as something which will “curb the power of labour, deregulate industry, agriculture, and resource extraction, and liberate the powers of finance both internally and on the world stage” (Harvey 1). This has been an important turning point in history because of its key features which have resulted in redistributive effects and an increase in social and economic inequality (Harvey 16).

One profound effect of Neoliberalism is the privatization of institutions such as schools and hospitals. In several second and third world nations, this creates a serious problem because people can no longer afford necessary things such as education. Therefore, the economic conditions oftentimes forces those less fortunate into migration to search for means of work and acquiring capital. Yet it is important to note that another fundamental piece of Neoliberalism lies in the reconstitution of a “primitive form of individualism: an individualism which is ‘competitive,’ ‘possessive,’ and construed often in terms of the doctrine of consumer sovereignty” (Peters).

Here we can identify two different types of freedom of the individual which result from Neoliberalism. David Harvey describes them as “one good and the other bad” (36). There are definite positive as well as negative effects which have emerged through the adoption of Neoliberalism. A “good” example is that the market economy has “produced freedoms we prize highly...freedom of speech, freedom of meeting, freedom of association” (Polanyi). However, Neoliberalism produces more of the “bad” freedom, as it takes advantage of some

people in the community in exchange for private gain. Since the 1980s, Neoliberalism has “Either restored class power to ruling elites (as in the US and to some extent in Britain) or created conditions for capitalist class formation (as in China, India, Russia, and elsewhere)” (Harvey 156). Karl Polanyi describes the free enterprise created through the process of Neoliberalism as “The fullness of freedom for those whose income, leisure and security need no enhancing, and a mere pittance of liberty for the people, who may in vain attempt to make use of their democratic rights to gain shelter from the power of the owners of property” (Harvey 183). In other words, one with an already substantial income experiences a boost in income, while the masses struggle to prosper with liberty as their only tool.

Neoliberalism may seem like a good economic system to adopt, since it promotes the political ideas of human dignity and individual freedom (Harvey 5). However, such freedom becomes twisted into merely restoring the power of the upper class, while perpetuating an economic crash for the rest of the world’s population. A widening income gap has been a result of Neoliberalism since 1978. In fact, in 1996 the income of the 358 richest people was equal to the income of the poorest 45% of the world’s population, which consists of 2.3 billion people (Harvey 34). The recent trends in Neoliberalism have transformed the global economic market, and have created economic conditions which lead to globalization and the financial desperation among underdeveloped nations.

The unbalanced power present in Neoliberalism has resulted in an unequal distortion of freedom. Aihwa Ong clarifies, “Neoliberalism is conceptualized as the latest stage of capitalist global structural and hegemonic domination” (11). Such domination is represented by the freedom of “the few” to exploit others and make economic gains without serving or returning anything to the community for the greater good. Therefore, Neoliberalism

masquerades under the impression of human dignity, while in reality it facilitates a great split between the world's upper and lower classes.

This theory is connected to forced labor and trafficking because of the exploitative effects which it has on foreign workers. Aihwa Ong states, "While the state retains formal sovereignty, corporations and multilateral agencies frequently exert de facto control over the conditions of living, laboring, and migration of populations in special zones" (19). Again, the privatization and "financialization" (Harvey 33) of everything results in certain populations to be forced into migrating for a place to work, to make some money, or in some cases to become a slave. Ong continues her explanation of the effects of Neoliberalism as; "...generating successive degrees of insecurity for low-skilled citizens and migrants who will have to look beyond the state for the safeguarding of their rights" (19). Oftentimes, men, women and children cross national borders looking for positive opportunities, and instead are found in situations where they become a part of the exploited work force which, in turn, supports Neoliberalism.

### Globalization

Globalization has contributed to the growth of the practices of modern-day slavery and human trafficking. One definition of globalization provided by Martin Albrow is "the active dissemination of practices, values, technology and other human products throughout the globe" (Bales, *Understanding Global Slavery* 32). The practice of slavery has translated human beings into commodities. People have become products which can be traded, bought, sold, and exploited. Globalization is making the world smaller in a sense, making commodities more readily available to people and companies around the globe. If human beings can be considered as commodities or goods, then globalization can be seen as a



contributing factor to the spread of slavery and trafficking. The recent impact of globalization allows for human trafficking to permeate almost any society. The International Labour Organization states in its Convention on the Eradication of Forced Labour that, “Over the past few years, there has been a greater realization that forced labour in its different forms can pervade all societies, whether in developing or industrialized countries, and is by no means limited to a few pockets around the globe” (“Eradication of Forced Labour” 2).

It may be helpful to consider how modern-day slavery has changed from the slavery of the past. In *Understanding Global Slavery*, Kevin Bales discusses three ways in which the practice has evolved. First of all, slaves are cheaper today than ever before. In some cases, human beings can be bought for as little as ten dollars, therefore creating a characterization of disposability in modern slaves. Another change is the length of time a person remains in servitude. Today, slaves are being held for shorter periods of time than in the past, sometimes for only a few months or years. Finally, Bales states that “slavery today is globalized” (*Understanding Global Slavery* 9). By this, he means that the forms of slavery practiced around the world are becoming alike. The ongoing trend of globalization can be viewed as an outlet for slavery and trafficking to increase and spread. Globalization is not always a bad movement, but it can result in the spread of horrible things like slavery, just as easily as more positive things such as a consumer having a wider range of products from which to choose.

Another way in which globalization has contributed to the growth of human trafficking is the modern improvements which have affected international transportation. It has become easier for individuals to travel domestically and internationally. For example, it is possible to purchase a plane ticket on the internet to fly somewhere later in the same day, as long as you have a credit card. However, it is possible that this has “simplified international travel as well

as human trafficking activities” (Zhang 111). The more common it becomes to cross national borders, the easier it becomes for human trafficking to blend in with leisurely travel.

### Poverty and Exploitation

While globalization has positive effects, there are also negative consequences. One of the negative aspects is the widening gap between the rich and the poor. This creates problems in the sphere of trafficking and forced labor. In one instance, extreme poverty leads to the voluntary participation in slavery. It is not voluntary in the sense that an individual wants to participate in such a life, but voluntary in that the individual has no other choice. Extreme poverty erases any opportunity for legitimate means of making money and leading a normal life. In most cases, such poor quality of life leads to human trafficking, sex trafficking, and forced labor. This can be an endless cycle which is impossible to break.

In his book, *Understanding Global Slavery*, Kevin Bales describes two cycles which have evolved through modern patterns of slavery. One cycle is constructive, and the other represents a destructive trend. The first includes freedom, education, productivity, and economic growth. The negative cycle, which unfortunately is more predominant, consists of the coercion, force, corruption, slavery, debt, and violence (Bales, *Understanding Global Slavery*). The author explains that “This is why freedom is such a good investment for governments” (Bales, *Understanding Global Slavery* 18). Not only is slavery an ugly practice which robs human beings of their labor and dignity, but it harms the global economy. If the millions of slaves in the world were freed, they could contribute to, rather than being forced to detract from, a nation’s economy.

In Haiti, in a town called Brésillienne, many families share the sentiment that “we are not capable of helping our children” (Skinner, *A Crime So Monstrous* 31). This can

unfortunately lead to parents giving away their children at various young ages to move away and work. In addition to this desperate need for work and money, families are often lied to in order to coerce them into letting their children go. They may be under the impression that their child is leaving to head towards a good education, or good work opportunities, and the child almost always ends up in forced labor (Skinner, *A Crime So Monstrous*). Most families never see their children again.

In addition to the phenomenon of parents voluntarily giving up their children, there are also circumstances where one might voluntarily return to their situations of forced labor. It would seem as if freedom is the number one priority of a slave. However, this is not always the case. This is demonstrated through the personal experience of a man named Baldev in India. He worked as a plowman and was the third generation of his family to be in debt bondage to his master. In 1999 Baldev paid off his debt and essentially bought himself his freedom. Instead of being able to continue on positively in his life, Baldev stated that he “was worried all the time. What if one of the children got sick? What if our crop failed? What if the government wanted some money?” (Bales, *Understanding Global Slavery* 3) He had no money and no opportunity to support his family. Therefore, Baldev shares, “Finally, I went to the landlord and asked him to take me back...now I don’t worry so much, I know what to do” (Bales, *Understanding Global Slavery* 3). Essentially, he was forced back into labor due to poverty and a lack of legitimate work. He was freed from his debt, but not from his bondage.

The goal is not just to free the 27 million slaves who live in the world today. The case of Baldev teaches us that sometimes slaves are not prepared for freedom. It is not enough to buy their freedom and immediately return them to the real world and expect them to be able to handle it, or to have the proper instruments to live like any other citizen. This merely results

in the perpetuation of forced labor and trafficking. The practice must cease to exist through an increase in education, increase in the strict enforcement of legislation, and the eradication of poverty.

## Case Studies

Specific case studies on the practices of child labor, sex trafficking, and forced labor will be provided in hopes to bring light to how realistic and brutal slavery and trafficking can be today. These studies will be described through events occurring in India, South Korea, the United States, and Mauritania. Particular examples such as these can be helpful because “A close reading of a single event can yield pertinent social and cultural analysis” (Cheng 39). It is possible to draw certain conclusions and hopefully discover what types of efforts would be most fruitful to pursue to end these practices.

### Child Labor: India

Child slavery is a prevalent form of forced labor in several developed as well as undeveloped nations. As previously mentioned, child labor involves practices of forced labor with children ranging from three years old to eighteen. The silk, rug, cigarette, and silver industries in India employ a great number of the world’s child laborers. Natasa Kovasevic notes that “India bears the world’s largest number of bonded child laborers” (36). The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that there are approximately 217.7 million children from ages five to seventeen involved in labor throughout the globe (Kovasevic 36). The ILO has held several conventions on the subject, including the ILO Convention #182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour in 1999 and the ILO Convention #138 on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and Work. India has yet to ratify these two conventions. It is recognized that in some societies and instances, children are put to work by their families in order to help support them or to bring in an income. The ILO provides framework for the appropriate minimum ages which should be allowed to work in various arenas of labor.

**Table 2: Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and Work**

	The minimum age at which children can start work	Possible exceptions for developing countries
<b>Hazardous work</b> Any work which is likely to jeopardize children's physical, mental or moral health, safety or morals should not be done by anyone under the age of 18.	18 (16 under strict conditions)	18 (16 under strict conditions)
<b>Basic Minimum Age</b> The minimum age for work should not be below the age for finishing compulsory schooling, which is generally 15.	15	14
<b>Light work</b> Children between the ages of 13 and 15 years old may do light work, as long as it does not threaten their health and safety, or hinder their education or vocational orientation and training.	13-15	12-14

However, despite these regulations there are still millions of child slaves, including those that are sold, coerced, or forced into factories and fields on a daily basis. In order to closely examine this practice, the carpet slaves working in India will be discussed.

Poverty is a large contributor to what Natasa Kovasevic calls "India's Self-Perpetuating Dilemma" (36). The International Labour Organization describes child labor as "both a catalyst and a consequence of poverty" (Kovasevic 39). A boost in population produces a large young generation. Poverty and a lack of education often force these children into bonded labor since they have no other means of supporting themselves, nor do their parents. Poverty also acts as a mechanism to facilitate child labor because once children are in this line of work, it is almost impossible for them to escape. They also may not want to leave the

factories because they have no alternative resources to turn to. David Masci explains that “Child labor perpetuates poverty, because when children don’t have an education and a real chance to develop to their fullest potential, they are mortgaging their future” (282).

Natasa Kovasevic provides the case of eleven-year-old Yemma who before dawn, “quietly wakes amidst the heavy machinery of the silk factory” (36). It is already possible to draw the conclusions that Yemma is years younger than she should be in this line of work, is inappropriately working in a hazardous environment, and is most likely forced to sleep in the factory in which she works. Kovasevic continues to describe events which are part of Yemma’s everyday life, “Bent over her machine, Yemma works with the utmost precision afforded by her small but agile hands; a mistake, as minor as a cut in the thread, will result in a beating” (36). The description of Yemma’s hands also provides insight into the practice of child slavery.

Oftentimes because of the small size of children, or of their “agile” hands, they are thought to be an extreme advantage for certain tasks. It is often used as an excuse to claim that using children is “necessary” for these jobs. This is exemplified by the fishing industry in Lake Volta in Ghana, Africa. Here, children “some as young as three, work long hours mending, setting, and pulling nets...” (Bales, *Understanding Global Slavery* 11). The children’s small bodies are preferred for diving into the lake’s depths to rescue nets which sometimes get stuck on rocks. Complete inhumane treatment occurs in this instance, as “fishermen tie weights to the children to help them descend more quickly. Much of the work goes on during the night, and in the dark depths the children get tangled and trapped and then drown” (Bales, *Understanding Global Slavery* 11). It is a regular occurrence for small children’s bodies to wash up on the lake’s shores in the morning. In addition, “If not drowned

outright, the children suffer from shock when forced down into water that is too cold for diving” (*Understanding Global Slavery* 11). The fishermen, factory owners, and “masters” alike hold the advantages of children’s stature as more valuable than their health, or lives, in many cases.

In India, some areas of bonded labor include cigarette rolling, carpet making, and salt-harvesting (Masci). Large numbers of children enter the market as a result of kidnapping, coercion, or are sold by their parents. In fact, “Parents have sold an estimated 15 million children into bonded labor in return for meager loans from moneylenders” (Masci 277). In the carpet industry in particular, children are treated incredibly inhumanely. David Masci states, “In India, children are literally tied to weaving looms so that they cannot run away” (281). Children also produce a great number of fireworks and matches in India. More specifically, “Some 45,000 children work in these factories, making this perhaps the largest concentration of child laborers in the world” (Bales, *Disposable People* 200). Part of the reason such labor can thrive is because these children are widely unaware of their rights as laborers (Tucker 579).

In the silk industry, bonded child labor is a part of each stage of producing the silk. This includes “reeling the silk fibers from the cocoons, twisting the fibers into thread, dyeing the silk, preparing the looms for weaving, weaving itself, and assisting the master weavers with the most complex work” (Tucker 599). When the children have to check the cocoons which produce silk in boiling water, they are forced to use their hands instead of using spoons or other tools. Their hands are usually covered with blisters, burns, cracks and splits from their work. One nine year-old bonded laborer in India’s silk industry shared, “At work the supervisor used to beat me with a belt. He tied me up and beat me with a belt on my back. He



did this two or three times...He tied a chain that was attached to the wall to my leg”

(Kovasevic 36). It is not uncommon for children to be chained or locked inside the factories where they work. Children also regularly face beatings, scoldings, refusal of medical attention, refusal of bathroom breaks, and must walk miles to work each day, where they often work for 14 to 16 hours without being able to sit down.

This cycle continues as the child laborers grow up, and are discarded to be replaced by younger children. This usually occurs around the age of eighteen. This occurs because, “as adults, they would be entitled to higher wages. Rather than pay the workers these wages, the employers dismiss them and bring in a new batch of younger children to take their places” (Tucker 601). This produces adult workers who are uneducated and poor. According to David Masci, countries like India which engage in this process “are stunting their economic growth” (282). The result of child labor is a mass of uneducated, tired workers who do not possess any skills, therefore negatively affecting production abilities and rates.

### Sex Trafficking

The realm of sex trafficking includes the practices of coercion, forced prostitution, sexual slavery, and trafficking for any sexual purposes. Sheldon Zhang defines sex trafficking as “migrants are transported with the intent to perform sexual services...and in which the smuggling process is enabled through the use of force, fraud, or coercion” (106). The amount of violence, cruelty and exploitation varies depending on the practice and location. In some cases, “the whole apparatus of violence used to persuade women to work as regular prostitutes” can involve “threats, beating, burning, blows on the back and ice-cold showers in the middle of the night...” (Monzini 98). While sex trafficking is not the most prevalent form of trafficking or slavery today, it is especially disturbing. E. Benjamin Skinner shares, “Many

feel that sex slavery is particularly revolting—and it is. I saw it firsthand. In a Bucharest brothel, for instance, I was offered a mentally handicapped, suicidal girl in exchange for a used car” (“A World Enslaved” 65). Skinner’s disturbing anecdote is an example of the shock factor which often attributes a great deal of attention to the sex trade, and can make it seem as if it is more globally prevalent than forced labor. Although this is not the case, it still affects a large number of people and is an important topic to be conscious of.

Certain regions in the world have become hotspots for sex trafficking, tourism, and slavery. These areas include Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine, Nepal, and Thailand. Haiti has also become a magnet for sex tourists in recent years (Skinner, *A Crime So Monstrous* 4). Contrary to what many may believe, the United States is not removed from the trade in human beings for sex. In fact, “Up to 750,000 sex-trafficking victims were transported into the United States in the past decade. Mexico is a transshipment hub for female victims sent both to the United States and Japan” (Masci 276). This is a global issue much like modern-day slavery that almost every country is guilty of taking part in.

To aid in the understanding of where sexual exploitation occurs, it is helpful to consider the socioeconomic factors contributing to the practice. In many societies, women are seen as an economic burden, and families are often eager to sell their own daughters, and accept prostitution and brothels as an “employment outlet” for the girls (Zhang 111). This occurs in Thailand, as children are often sold into prostitution by their parents (Masci 277). The high demands for sex in the worldwide trade are met in part due to this “cultural subordination of women in many societies” (Zhang 111). This discrimination affects not only the victims themselves, but also others in the society. In Albania, “Up to 90 percent of the girls in rural areas don’t go to school for fear of being abducted and sold into sexual servitude”

(Masci 277). While these young girls may not be the individuals directly targeted for prostitution, their future is gravely impacted by the absence of education. Another reason why sex trafficking thrives is due to the fact that “traffickers often lure victims to countries without support services or law enforcement to prevent sexual exploitation” (Zhang 111). It may be possible to use these very trends to aid in producing tactics to banish the sex trade, also referred to as the flesh trade, from continuing to thrive.

### South Korea

The practices in South Korea will be considered in the context of the G.I. clubs which exist in the U.S. military camp towns in South Korea. In Korean, these military towns are referred to as *gijichon*. The clubs in these towns emerged due to the global network of military bases established through the United States’ policy to “contain communism and preserve U.S. geopolitical interests” (Cheng 15). Traditionally, Korean women worked in the clubs and also as prostitutes on the bases to make a living. However, as South Korea acquired more economic power, there was less desirability for these women to pursue the American G.I.s as their clients (Cheng 17). The Korean women began to pursue other opportunities, thus leaving a void which women from foreign locations began to fill, primarily women from the Philippines. This has been taking place since the 1990s (Cheng 17). This movement of women is where the practice of sex trafficking comes into play.

A man named Mr. Shin is credited with the idea of bringing foreign women into the country on E-6, or an Arts/Entertainment Visa (Cheng 17). This allowed for great volumes of women to enter the country to participate in practices including street-level prostitution, sex work in clubs and bars, contract-marriages, and more (Cheng 17). The influx of Filipino women into South Korea for sex trafficking starting in the 1990s was not the first instance of

the movement of Filipinos into Korea. In 1986, Filipino workers entered South Korea to work in factories following the signing of the Republic of the Philippines-Korea Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement and the Korean Scientific and Technological Cooperation Agreement (Cheng 19). Despite the fact that approximately 15,000 individuals are trafficked into South Korea each year, the United States ranks the nation as a Tier 1 country, which is the best ranking to receive (Masci 289). The “Tier” ranking system began in 2001 when the United States began issuing the annual Trafficking in Persons Reports. If a nation is labeled as Tier 2 or 3, they must make efforts to fight trafficking, and may face sanctions if they do not comply. This is just one example of the non-implementation of legislation. Additionally, in 2004, there were 47,150 Filipino citizens residing in South Korea, 9,015 of whom were labeled as “irregular migrants” (Cheng 19).

While some consider sex work to be a legitimate source of income in some situations, many scholars as well as non-governmental organizations consider the migrant “entertainers” in this study as “victims of sex trafficking” (Cheng 21). Also with the continuing discourse on trafficking in the modern-day Cheng clarifies the labels for the Filipino women in this case study; “A changing terminology reflects the emphasis on women’s powerlessness and victimhood—women in prostitution are ‘prostituted women,’ prostitute recruitment is ‘sex trafficking,’ and ‘sex trafficking’ is ‘modern day slavery’ ” (23). The importance lies not in the labeling of women purely as victims, but in the recognition that these practices must be recognized as components of trafficking and slavery. For Cheng, the women are studied as both laborers as well as erotic subjects (27).

The women can also be considered as suffering under the system of debt bondage. Before the Filipinas leave their country, their South Korean employers make them pay

minimum to no fees, to make it possible for them to travel (Cheng 29). However, once the women begin working, they are charged expenses somewhere around \$800 (Cheng 29). The women leave their country to work immediately, and pay their dues later. This is a similar fate to those who are born or sold into slavery and kept in servitude due to the fees that they owe. Those working in the *gijichon* are “structurally and culturally marginalized and susceptible to social and institutional violence with little protection of their basic rights as workers in a foreign country...” (Cheng 30). The coercion, violence, and absence of rights places the Filipinas into the realm of trafficking.

South Korea is an interesting example because its ranking as a developed nation may seem like reason to exclude it from being a part of harmful practices like sex trafficking. The nation’s GDP or purchasing power parity is estimated at \$1.364 trillion (The World Factbook). This places South Korea as having the thirteenth highest GDP out of 229 nations (The World Factbook). Additionally, the CIA breaks down the labor force by occupation as 7.2% working in agriculture, 25.1% in industry, and 67.7% in “services” (The World Factbook). In comparison to South Korea, the United States ranks as having the second highest GDP, at \$14.14 trillion (The World Factbook). Each country is advanced and affluent, yet are both still involved in trafficking and slavery.

#### The United States

The number of women and children trafficked into the United States for purposes of sexual exploitation is the second highest in the world, second only to Germany (Schauer and Wheaton). As a consequence of such volumes of trafficking, “It is estimated that between 100,000 and 150,000 persons...are kept under slavery in the United States” (Schauer and Wheaton 146). While this figure includes adults and children alike, Alison Brysk puts

forward the estimate that approximately “11,500 foreign-born children are sexually exploited each year in the United States...” (160). After being trafficked into the United States, the women and children are coerced or forced into practices including prostitution, sexual slavery, and child pornography. Once engaged in prostitution, young women are often controlled by a pimp or a “john” and are not allowed to keep any of the money they make. Therefore it is virtually impossible to escape their imprisonment due to a complete lack of funds, freedom, and rights.

If a female attempts to use her personal agency to resist prostitution for example, she is often mentally and/or physically broken until she gives in to her captors. This is sometimes labeled as the “seasoning” or “softening” process, which “Often include[s] repeated gang rapes...” (Schauer and Wheaton 154). In addition to brutal force, another tactic used in the United States to keep trafficked women working as prostitutes from escaping their entrapment is the constant movement of these women. They are moved from location to location every few weeks in order to disallow the victims from creating an attachment to anyone in the area. This way she cannot reach out to a potential friend, client, or the police. This creates a massive dilemma, because though governments, police, and markets respond to trafficking, the traffickers themselves “Through their diversification and plasticity have commonly been able not only to cope but also to continually increase the scope and size of their enterprise” (Schauer and Wheaton 155).

Much like the practice of parents selling their children into trafficking in places such as Thailand, Edward Schauer and Elizabeth Wheaton also identify “the increasing universal marginalization of women” as directly related to slavery, more specifically, to sex trafficking (Schauer and Wheaton 146). In accordance with this social and economic oppression which

brings women to migrate or be lured into trafficking are two other major factors. One is the employment opportunities offered by the West, as well as the appeal of the Western world as having better marriage partners (Schauer and Wheaton 156). Second, a great deal of desire for working in the United States is held in the hands of the traffickers. They “Offer false hope—through fraudulent contracts, by facilitating illegal border crossings, and by providing fraudulent papers” (Schauer and Wheaton 156). Once lured into the trafficking game, fees are often pressed upon men and women, and when they cannot afford such costs, debt bondage ensues.

A specific example of such bondage in the United States is represented by the case of Yumi, a girl from northeastern China. Yumi graduated from college, worked as an accountant, and had a strong urge to travel abroad. A “female jobs agent” introduced her to an opportunity to work in New York using her accounting skills, to supposedly make \$5,000 each month. Before she was able to leave, “Yumi’s relatives had to sign documents pledging their homes as collateral if she did not pay back the \$50,000 smugglers’ fee from her earnings” (Kristof WK8). The collateral is an indicator of the bondage which was to follow. Once she was smuggled into the United States, she was forced to work in a brothel and spent three years terrorized by pimps...in Midtown Manhattan” (Kristof WK8). Yumi’s experience was brutal; including gang-rapes, death threats, humiliating videos which were taken of her, beatings, and threats that her family would lose their homes if she did not comply with her captors’ orders.

Yumi worked as a forced prostitute on 36<sup>th</sup> street for three years before breaking free (Kristof WK8). While some of the prostitutes working from the same location worked voluntarily, Yumi among others were “Forced and received no share in the money” (Kristof WK8). She was reminded that she was in debt and conscious of the fact that she would most

likely never be able to pay off the large sum. Even on the occasion where she was arrested for prostitution, Yumi was still not saved from her confinement. She may have had the opportunity to seek refuge, as the police officer asked if she was a trafficking victim (Kristof WK8). However, her fear of the pimps' threats prevented her from being honest. Thankfully, after years of suffering and being engaged in sex work against her will, Yumi got help from a nonprofit called Restore NYC, and she and a friend from the brothel finally escaped their bondage.

In most cases, however, debt bondage affects victims for their whole lives. If they are not able to pay off their debt or escape, they (and any children they may have) remain in slavery forever. As for the issue of trafficked women and children in forced prostitution, Kristof explains that "The critical step is for the police and prosecutors to focus more on customers (to reduce demand) and, above all, on pimps" (Kristof WK8). It is imperative that authorities concentrate on targeting the traffickers themselves, and not the victims. Steps taken to combat sex trafficking in the United States include the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA), the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Prevention Act of 2000 (VTVPA), and the annual Trafficking in Persons reports, which will be discussed in the following chapter.

#### Forced Labor: Mauritania

Mauritania is in Northern Africa, bordering the North Atlantic Ocean, with a population of approximately 3,205,060 (The World Factbook). Half of its population is dependent on agriculture and livestock for their livelihood, and 40% of the population is below the poverty line (The World Factbook). Slavery commenced in Mauritania during the slave raids which took place in the thirteenth century (Masci 277). Today, the country is both



a source and destination country for people trafficked for purposes of forced labor and sexual exploitation (The World Factbook).

There are several contemporary slavery-related practices in the nation which are rooted in the “ancestral master-slave relationships” (The World Factbook). Boys in Mauritania called “talibe” are trafficked within the country by religious teachers who force the boys to beg for money (The World Factbook). It is also suspected that “Light-skinned Arab Berbers...exploit hundreds of thousands of black African slaves” (Masci 277). Children are internally trafficked by gangs and forced to steal, beg, and sell drugs, and girls are internally trafficked for sexual purposes and domestic servitude. Additionally, women and children are trafficked from neighboring countries for domestic labor, sexual exploitation, as well as begging (World Factbook).

Mauritania is currently ranked by the United States as a Tier 3 country. As of 2004, it was not ranked in the third tier, causing controversy. Tommy Calvert of the American Anti-Slavery Group states, “This is a country with literally hundreds of thousands of people in chattel slavery and everyone knows it, and yet it gets a pass” (Masci 281). The rating was inappropriate due to the amount of trafficking and slavery which occurs in the country, and it has since been raised to Tier 3. This means that the nation is not in compliance with the standards of the elimination of trafficking, that the government shows no evidence of punishing traffickers, preventing trafficking, or protecting victims of trafficking (World Factbook).

The nation has outlawed slavery several times, most recently in 1980 (Bales, *Disposable People* 81). However, the slaves who were freed remained in a state of ignorance to their freedom because no one ever told them, so they remained in servitude (Bales,

*Disposable People* 81). There are many forms of modern-day slavery practices occurring in Mauritania, such as the previously mentioned forced begging and sexual servitude. Others include slaves who “Are sweeping and cleaning, they are cooking and caring for children, they are building houses and tending sheep, and they are hauling water and bricks—they are doing every job that is hard, onerous, and dirty” (Bales, *Disposable People* 81). Another way to classify the labor of these people is as primitive or tribal (Bales, *Disposable People* 83). The slavery there today resembles the “Bondage of the Atlantic slave trade of 1650 to 1850 and the slavery of the American South” (Bales, *Disposable People* 83). Another way in which the practices vary lies in the treatment of the slaves. Some masters, “Are kind, treating their inherited slaves almost as their own children; others are brutal” (Bales, *Disposable People* 84).

Mauritania represents a profound example of the relationship between poverty and slavery. The people of Mauritania are one of the poorest populations in the world, and the nation’s economic circumstances are only continuing to decline (Bales, *Disposable People* 95). While the country has natural resources such as fish and iron ore, they are exported to markets with decreasing demand for said goods (Bales, *Disposable People* 95). The extreme poverty faced by slaves as well as the general population makes it virtually impossible for one to escape his or her servitude. Conditions “For the poor, and or slaves, the diet is little more than rice or couscous, mixed with the bones and scraps from their master’s meal. Slaves are easily identified on the streets by their filthy, ragged clothes, the masters by their flowing and spotless robes...” (Bales, *Disposable People* 96). This differs from slavery say, in the United States, where a young girl could be forced into prostitution and her appearance would reveal nothing of her status. In Mauritania, however, it is visually apparent as to who the (hundreds of thousands of) slaves are. The cycle between poverty and slavery continues as slave

children are prohibited from pursuing education, locking them into their bondage at a young age. Kevin Bales declares, “It is this level of enforced ignorance that works to keep people enslaved, even in the less strictly supervised atmosphere of the capital” (*Disposable People* 97).

An additional factor contributing to the downward spiral of slavery in Mauritania is the scarcity of water. Running water is not something that the majority of the population has access to. For the most part, slaves fetch water using donkeys, carts, and barrels. In fact, “Around 300,000 people rely on human hands and backs for all their water” (Bales, *Disposable People* 101). This means that over half of the population of Nouakchott, Mauritania’s capital city, relies on the work of slaves to obtain their water. If there was an improved method of acquiring clean water, the driving force behind retrieving water would not have to depend on the efforts of slaves. Slaves are also taken for granted as they build houses in Nouakchott without receiving pay. If anything, the slaves involved in construction collect a tiny bit of food in return for their hard labor.

Like most governments, “The Mauritanian constitution guarantees most human rights” (Bales, *Disposable People* 112). However, they are clearly not enforced, as debt bondage, forced labor, and other modern slavery practices continue to thrive today. A corrupt system is apparent in the nation as the White Moors (indigenous Arabs and Berbers) who make up the majority of the slaveholders in Mauritania also control its government (Bales, *Disposable People* 112). If an increase in the ease of access to natural resources like water was fought for, slaves would benefit from a reduced demand for their labor in this arena. Additionally, slaves are kept ignorant to their rights, as well as not being allowed to learn how to read. Rights to education would also make a drastic difference in the fate of slaves in Mauritania.

Depleting modern-day slavery and trafficking in Mauritania would produce economic benefits for the majority of the nation, most importantly the slaves themselves. Bales states, “If food aid and development projects were refocused in order to set freed slaves on the path of self-sufficiency, only the largest of slaveholders would fail to benefit from the general economic growth” (*Disposable People* 120).

## Laws & Efforts to Eradicate Slavery Today

### Current Efforts

One organization working to end slavery is The American Anti-Slavery Group, or The AASG. This association strives toward this goal through providing support to survivors, promoting awareness, and more. Unfortunately, many nations have anti-slavery laws, but simply do not enforce them. Here lies the problem which results in millions of people being denied their most basic rights and being forced to work against their will. The child labor in India exemplifies this lack of law enforcement. In 1976, the “Bonded Labour System Act abolished all forms of bonded labor” in India (Kovasevic 37). The laws are in place, yet millions remain in bonded labor; Kovasevic continues to explain that a “centralized approach to the enforcement of regulatory laws” is absent (37).

A number of laws and protocols are in place to prevent the existence and spread of slavery and human trafficking. As for the United States, the government claims to have “more than one hundred antitrafficking laws”, however this legislation has “resulted in no measurable decline in the number of slaves worldwide” (Skinner, “A World Enslaved” 64). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, signed by all member countries of the United Nations, was adopted in 1948. Article 4 of this document states that “No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.” The modern phenomenon of slavery and trafficking clearly violates this article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as some other articles.

Some nations are making unique efforts to fight child labor and trafficking. In the United Kingdom there is, “a new system that keeps tabs on children entering the country...by keeping

track of children that come in from abroad, we can better protect them” (Masci 288). This represents a step which can be taken to stop the practice of child bonded labor worldwide. Laws like this with a combination of an increase in education would affect the amount of young children becoming involved in slavery and trafficking.

### Legislation in Place

Legislation on the matter spans from as early as 1926 to acts which are being implemented today. The International Labor Organization has held several conventions throughout the twentieth century concerning forced labor. Some examples are the ILO Forced Labor Convention of 1930, the ILO Abolition of Forced Labour Convention of 1957, and the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention of 1999. There have also been meetings within Europe of the Stability Pact Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings. The goal of such meetings is to continue to develop anti-trafficking efforts in Europe.

The International Labour Organization’s Forced Labour Convention of 1930 and the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention of 1957 “Aim at guaranteeing to all human beings freedom from forced labour, irrespective of the nature of the work or the sector of activity in which it may be performed” (“Eradication of Forced Labour” xi). The ILO also recognizes that

There still remain widespread practices of entrapment of people through various forms of debt bondage, and through trafficking in human beings for the purposes of sexual and labour exploitation, which may involve not only adults, but also children, and which became the subject of renewed international concern towards the end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first centuries. (“Eradication of Forced Labour” xi)

Despite the acknowledgment and efforts made by the International Labour Organization of forced labor and human trafficking, the organization also recognizes that these issues continue to flourish. The committees working on the conventions propose that they oblige the eradication of complex issues such as forced labor. According to the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, “Eradicating forced labour is difficult but possible” (“Eradication of Forced Labour” 1).

### TIP Reports

The United States began issuing a “Trafficking in Persons Report” annually in 2001. This report is extensive and extremely detailed, and is the government’s main tool to encourage foreign countries to fight all forms of slavery and trafficking. The purpose of these reports is to serve “As as the primary diplomatic tool through which the U.S. Government encourages other countries to help fight all forms of modern slavery, including forced labor, sex trafficking, bonded labor, debt bondage, involuntary domestic servitude, forced child labor, child soldiers, and child sex trafficking” (U.S. Trafficking in Persons Report). Each nation is attributed a ranking as either Tier 1, 2, or 3. The different rankings are meant to indicate the level of action a certain country is taking to combat trafficking and slavery. If a state is not making the appropriate efforts to do so, it is labeled as either a Tier 2 or Tier 3 country.

It is believed that such rankings will create a positive effect on diminishing trafficking and slavery as consequences ensue if a nation falls under the Tier 3 ranking for a certain period of time. A country “classified as Tier 3 for three years in a row are subject to a cut-off of non-humanitarian U.S. aid” (Masci 280). The question remains whether or not such repercussions are harsh enough to create change. Additionally, while the T nonimmigrant visas are available to trafficking victims in the United States, they are not easy to obtain. As

of 2003, the Department of Homeland Security had received 721 applications for the T visa, with the following results; “301 were granted, 30 were denied and 390 are pending” (Masci 284). This means that fifty-four percent of the applicants are still waiting to discover their fate.

There have been discrepancies between the numbers of observed and estimated victims of human trafficking. In 1998, the T.I.P. Report estimated that 45,000 to 50,000 people were trafficked into the U.S. each year (Zhang 109). In 2003, these numbers were adjusted to 18,000-20,000 victims annually trafficked into the U.S., while the global trafficking statistics jumped from 700,000 to 800,000-900,000 per year. Two years later, the numbers in trafficked humans in the U.S. fell to the 14,500-17,500 range. Although the Trafficking in Persons Report is hundreds of pages long, little information is disclosed explaining how these estimates are made, or how the drop in the United States numbers is calculated (Zhang 109).

#### Non-Implementation

A problem inhibiting the success of a decrease in trafficking is the legal measures which are (or are not) taken to prosecute those guilty of such crimes. Using Mauritania as an example, it is possible to see how even escaped slaves continue to face violence and force, instead of the slaveholders themselves, due to a lack of appropriate legal enforcement. Kevin Bales states, “Bilal and the others know what can happen to escaped slaves. They have heard the stories of slaves hunted down and killed by their masters, and they know that the courts rarely take any action against the killers” (*Disposable People* 103). In the realm of sex trafficking, it is often much easier to catch the prostitute than the pimp who is behind the operation. Therefore, “Many police officers remain unaware of the TVPA and are more likely to arrest the victims than the perpetrators” (Masci 284). The focus must shift from the victims



to the slaveholders and traffickers themselves all over the world to enforce the legislation which is meant to impede them.

An additional piece of legislation to consider is the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (U.S. “Victims of Trafficking...”). This document expresses the United States’ opinion that, “The international community has repeatedly condemned slavery and involuntary servitude, violence against women, and other elements of trafficking, through declarations, treaties, and United Nations resolutions and reports” (U.S. “Victims of Trafficking...”). This act is important because it clearly defines what is to be done should individuals in a nation be found guilty of human rights violations including human trafficking and practices of slavery. Section 108 of the act states, “The government of the country should prohibit severe forms of trafficking in persons and punish acts of such trafficking” and that “The government of the country should make serious and sustained efforts to eliminate severe forms of trafficking in persons” (U.S. “Victims of Trafficking...”). It is proposed that such “efforts” consist mainly of cutting foreign aid to governments which are in compliance with eliminating trafficking. However, this poses a major threat to the success of eliminating trafficking because cutting aid is a passive strategy rather than a more effective, active one.

There are numerous criticisms of the VTVPA and other forms of legislation such as the TIP Reports. One attacks the effectiveness of individual state enforcement of the act. Since, States, however, as they begin to pass legislation to combat the problem of human trafficking in their own jurisdictions, are not adopting the comprehensive approach to combating human trafficking taken by the VTVPA. State legislation has mainly focused on a mere criminalization approach, and this raises serious

concerns about necessary victim protections and effective prosecutions of these cases. (Richard 447)

This trend is apparent in the persecution of forced prostitutes, as mentioned in the case study provided of the United States. A more effective tactic would be for states to work closely together to carry out the clauses of the VTVPA. One suggestion is that “States must develop trafficking laws consistent with the federal TVPA and consistent with each other for sex trafficking to receive the full effects of the criminal justice system. Furthermore, legal and law enforcement coordination are needed between countries” (Schauer and Wheaton 166).

Another implementation issue lies in the severity of the TIP rankings. For example, South Korea is a nation with a great deal of trafficking occurring, as described in chapter 4. However, the country has received a Tier 1 ranking from the United States, the highest tier possible. It is possible that such ranking situations are to “Keep strategic allies from being hit with sanctions”, and there are cases where nations with a good ranking “Have not really progressed in the fight against human bondage” (Masci 289). All in all, the problem is virtually never in a lack of legislation, but in a lack of enforcement. Tommy Calvert of the American Anti-Slavery Group suggests a hard-hitting approach to diminishing bondage. In his opinion, “Governments and international organizations could virtually shut down the trade in human beings if they want to” (Masci 290). He states, “The international community is in a state of denial and lacks the commitment to fight this...Look at Britain: They had whole fleets of ships devoted to stopping the slave trade on the high seas, and it worked. They had weapons inspectors didn’t they? Well that’s what we need to fight this. We need that kind of action” (Masci 290). The extent to which the global community is willing to go to has yet to become evident.

## Conclusion

Perhaps the largest roadblock for the advancement of universal human rights and the eradication of global modern-day slavery and human trafficking is a lack of awareness. “Despite the fact that thousands of people are trafficked into the United States each year, the majority of U.S. citizens are not aware of the nature and extent of this problem” (Richard 477). Part of this problem is due to the growth of a quiet acceptance of these practices which ought to be flagged up and fought for. In different pieces of legislation all over the world; “the outlawing of slavery has become what is called *jus cogens*, which means that it’s completely accepted and doesn’t need to be written into new treaties and conventions,’ says Bales of Free the Slaves” (Masci 287). Clearly this is an issue since the acts that already do exist have not been enough to halt the practices. This does not mean that we should simply stop including trafficking in persons or modern-day slavery in new legislation.

Unfortunately, some are content with the current efforts being made to combat these practices. While acts like the TVPA are on the right track, their stipulations are not harsh enough. Is cutting aid for a particular nation enough to stop trafficking from occurring within or into that country? Representative Christopher H. Smith of New Jersey thinks so. He states,

The message from the United States is loud and clear: If you are committed to the fight against human slavery, we welcome you as an ally. But if you continue to look askance when it comes to this horrible crime and pretend you don’t have a trafficking problem, we’re going to aggressively push you to make reforms, and we’ll use economic sanctions as a means to that end. (Masci 289)

While it is a step in the right direction, merely labeling a country as Tier 1, 2, or 3 in hopes that reforms will be made, is not an “aggressive” enough push.

The discourse on human rights comes into play as efforts are made to fight human trafficking and modern-day slavery. The United States’ ambassador to the United Nation’s Human Rights Commission expressed apprehension about the adoption of international laws which “would lead in the direction of the creation of legal, enforceable entitlements to economic, social, and cultural rights,” because this would allow citizens to “sue their governments for enforcement of rights” (Shafir 20). If we continue to think and act in accordance with this viewpoint, no progress will be made concerning human rights as they apply to eliminating slavery and trafficking. The U.N.’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights clearly states the rights which every person should be entitled to. Human bondage and trafficking violates several articles of the UDHR. While this is obvious, it does not make much of a difference. This is because the document does not assure the protection of these rights, it can only “strive...to promote and secure them” (Shafir 21). To make a change in securing global human rights, a new standpoint must be taken. If somehow these rights can be guaranteed, trafficking in persons and modern-day slavery would diminish greatly.

Additionally, if tactics like the annual Trafficking in Persons Reports are to truly make a difference, they must be carried out more thoroughly. While the documents are usually hundreds of pages long, they are not always effective. In 2002 Ambassador Nancy Ely-Raphel of the human trafficking office,

...requested national trafficking data from 186 American embassies and consulates. Few Foreign Service officers had any notion what constituted ‘human trafficking,’ and only a handful of their host countries had policies to combat it.

The information Ely-Raphel gathered was unsurprisingly shallow: she had hard numbers for only seven out of eighty-nine reviewed countries.” (Skinner, *A Crime So Monstrous* 59)

Yet a program’s effectiveness depends on its investigative powers (Shafir). Some progress has been made since this point in 2002, which is evident when considering the comprehensible definitions of human trafficking and different types of slavery which have emerged and are discussed in chapter 2.

An increase in education would have an overwhelming impact on eradicating slavery and trafficking. Many individuals remain ignorant to their rights due to a lack in education. In Haiti, the constitution guaranteed free schooling to all children in 1987. If this were the case, the rate of parents sending their own children into slavery would drop from 95 to 60 percent (Skinner, *A Crime So Monstrous* 33). Another issue inhibiting the growth of education lies in the arms trade. The United States government regularly sells weapons to countries in the Southern Hemisphere, and nations in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East annually spend “\$22 billion in the international arms market” (Bales, *Understanding Global Slavery* 15). Less than half of this amount is the estimated cost that it would take to provide “primary education to every child on the planet who currently lacks it” (Bales, *Understanding Global Slavery* 15). If the funds, time, and energy were redirected towards an increase in education, it is likely that less people, particularly children, would become involved in the practices of slavery and trafficking.

Several countries where trafficking and bondage occurs, including Haiti and the United States, focus much more on prosecuting drug traffickers than slave traders (Skinner, *A Crime So Monstrous* 25). In addition, many nations also focus on sex trafficking than other types

due to its shock factor. This is also a problem because it widely overlooks the victims of forced labor and debt bondage which are cumulatively more prevalent. The driving force behind the flourishing practices of modern-day slavery and human trafficking lies in the cycle of poverty, uneducated individuals, violence, and coercion.

An increase in globalization and Neoliberalism has led to a widening gap between the rich and the poor. Nations like the United States, Russia, and China, provide impoverished countries with 90% of their weapons. The first world nations involved in this process make money from their sales, while the weapons are introduced to the third world countries and can be used as tools of force in trafficking and slavery. This leads to powerful countries becoming wealthier, while victims in poor nations continue to toil in violence and oppression. Linda Beher of the United Methodist Committee on Relief states, “Impoverished, poorly governed countries will always be breeding grounds for trafficking...until the causes disappear, all we in the international aid community can do is fight the symptoms” (Masci 290).

Due to globalization, citizenship rights have become thicker, but are only available to the members of a certain state. In turn, human rights have become universal, but thinner (Shafir 24). Every human should have rights that are not dependent on citizenship. Every country in the world has made it “illegal to own another human being and exercise total control over that person” (Bales, *Understanding Global Slavery* 3-4). It is time to uphold this claim. To truly make a difference in eradicating all forms of modern-day slavery and human trafficking, legislation throughout the world must be strictly enforced, and efforts made by organizations such as the AASG and Free the Slaves should be continued and heightened.

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