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The purpose of this study is to help survivors of human trafficking, who so desire, break the silence and give voice to their stories of trafficking and surviving in order to educate the public about trafficking, help service providers improve current advocacy/assistance programs available to and help protect others who are at risk of being trafficked. There is a need for the creation of protected spaces for victims and survivors of trafficking where those who choose to *break* the silence feel safe and for those who choose to *keep* silent to be nurtured. It is through these stories that we can identify some of the conditions that lead to trafficking, thereby, helping us to disrupt the pattern of slavery and combat the problem. In addition, hearing from survivors helps improve aftercare services based on their specific needs reducing the possibility of re-victimization and victim blaming which marginalize the victim/survivor making recovery even more difficult.

The research paradigm used in this study is the qualitative approach utilizing a narrative study and an advocacy/participatory worldview by conducting a holistic interview process with research participants. Data was collected over six months and included individual interviews and field notes from anti-human trafficking campaign conferences.

TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN: WHEN SURVIVORS FIND THEIR VOICE

by

Michelle Lyn McCrory

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Approved by

---

Committee Chair

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For

Adam, Ryan and Megan

If I've contributed nothing else to this world, I know I've created three of the most beautiful souls walking on this earth. I love you more than you could ever possibly know.

APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation written by MICHELLE LYN MCCRORY has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of the Graduate School at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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“Make the most of yourself, for that is all there is of you.”

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

## PREFACE

William Wilberforce once said, “You may choose to look the other way but you can never again say that you didn’t know.” October 2005, two months after Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, is when I first became aware of human trafficking and knew I couldn’t look the other way. I saw it and I began researching what it was and where and how it was happening. I had been working as a paralegal for 15+ years at the time and was adept at researching and finding what others couldn’t. My research uncovered more than I could have ever imagined. Who would have thought that some of the construction workers rebuilding New Orleans were slave laborers or the women dancing on Bourbon Street weren’t there because they wanted to be but because they were forced or that the massage therapists at the Asian Tea Rooms were international trafficking victims being held against their will? My continued research led me to participate in training programs and conferences about human trafficking and human rights violations on both domestic and international levels.

I began my MBA in August 2007 and by the time I graduated in December 2008 the terms “human capital” and “commodities” had become oppressive words in my vocabulary. During this time I learned exactly how deep supply chains ran and how corrupt they can be with human labor trafficking. My social justice and advocacy belief system/opinion strongly kicked in at this point. I began researching the larger social structures such as globalization, neoliberalism, patriarchy, religion and war that created the systems that oppress and dehumanize people, particularly women.

There was not a lot of research on the matter of human trafficking at the time and it was receiving even less attention in main stream or social media. Not only was no one talking about the issue but there were very few people who had even heard of human trafficking and the research that was out there dealt with international trafficking mainly within the Eastern European, old Soviet Bloc. Through my own research grew an even greater personal awareness of how societal and cultural structures impact oppression, dehumanization and violence as they specifically relate to human trafficking. As I researched, wrote and published I was invited to and attended conferences at Moscow State University in 2012 and 2013 to present the findings of my research.

I would never have imagined that what began as a personal research project to learn more about trafficking would turn into a dissertation project for a Ph.D. This has become a very personal and passionate mission for me. I have spent many hours researching the subject and speaking with survivors of human trafficking and I am incredibly grateful that I was able to incorporate this research project with my degree specialization of Educational Leadership and Cultural Foundations. The educational opportunities and travels to Russia have been immeasurable. It is my hope that the findings in this study will inspire others to conduct further research and implement opportunities for education on human trafficking into curriculum.

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*Silence*

Too many women in too many countries  
Speak the same language of silence.  
My grandmother was always silent, always aggrieved  
Only her husband had the cosmic right (or so it was said)  
to speak and be heard.  
They say it is different now.  
(After all, I am always vocal and my grandmother  
thinks I talk too much)  
But sometimes I wonder.  
When a woman shares her thoughts, as some women do,  
Graciously, it is allowed.  
When a woman fights for power, as all women would like to,  
Quietly or loudly, it is questioned.  
And yet, there must be freedom – if we are to speak  
And yes, there must be power – if we are to be heard.  
And when we have both (freedom and power) let us now be understood.  
We seek only to give words to those who cannot speak  
(too many women in too many countries)  
I seek to forget the sorrows of my grandmother's silence.

—Anasuya Sengupta

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

You may choose to look the other way but you can never again say that you didn't know.

—William Wilberforce

What happens when victims of human trafficking find their voice and use that voice to educate others? Do they transition from subsisting as victims to becoming survivors and what is the transformation process that encourages one to move from victim to survivor? We see ubiquitous scientific research outlining what human trafficking is and an estimate of how many individuals each year are trafficked, both domestically and internationally. However, what is lacking is effective research and legislation protecting and supporting the survivors of trafficking, particularly those trafficked for sexual exploitation. Traditionally, those who have been exploited sexually by traffickers have been criminalized as prostitutes and afforded no rights as victims. While the passage of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act in 2000 (and its subsequent reauthorizations) in the US has implemented significant legislation for identifying trafficking victims and prosecuting traffickers it leaves a rather wide gap in victim/survivor care. Ambassador-at-Large, Luis CdeBaca, of the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons under the Obama Administration states that, "Victims of trafficking are vulnerable because they don't have a voice in society." How can these

women, who are willing to invest themselves in the education and prevention of human trafficking, use their voice of experience to offer other victims the hope desperately needed in the after-care, recovery process? There is a need for the creation of protected spaces for victims and survivors of trafficking where those who choose to *break* the silence feel safe and for those who choose to *keep* silent will be nurtured. It is through the stories of the survivors that we can identify some of the conditions that lead to trafficking, thereby, helping us to disrupt the pattern of slavery, creating a paradigm shift that can assist in combating the problem. In addition, hearing from survivors helps improve aftercare services based on their specific needs reducing the possibility of re-victimization and victim blaming which marginalize the victim/survivor making recovery even more difficult.

March 10, 1998, Senator Paul Wellstone (D – Wisconsin), while introducing a resolution to fight trafficking, reported accounts such as luring unsuspecting women and girls into lives of prostitution with promises of lucrative jobs. Wellstone stated, “Upon arrival in countries far from their homes, these women are often stripped of their passports, held against their will in slave-like conditions, and sexually abused.” He went on to say, “Rape, intimidation, and violence are commonly employed by traffickers to control their victims and to prevent them from seeking help.” It has been 15 years since Senator Wellstone introduced his resolution on the Senate floor condemning human trafficking and while laws have been implemented and strengthened over the years, one thing remains the same: the invisible voices of the survivors.

The purpose of this study is to help survivors of human trafficking, who so desire, break the silence and give voice to their stories of trafficking in order to educate the public about trafficking, help service providers improve current advocacy/assistance programs available to and help protect others who are at risk of being trafficked. This chapter introduces the problem and the purpose of this study and provides evidence of the need for this type of research by discussing the key terms and definitions of human trafficking, the background and history of human trafficking and slavery, the economics of slavery, the voices of the victims, aftercare and legislation. This chapter will also lay out the research problem, the focus of the study, research questions and will end with a chapter presentation.

### **Definitions**

The fight against human trafficking is still relatively new and maturing, as such, a universal acceptance of concepts, definitions and terminology still do not exist. Definitions of trafficking vary among areas involved with policy making, service providers, criminal justice system, and researchers. The most commonly accepted definition of human trafficking was established in Article 3, paragraph (a) of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime defines human trafficking as:

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

to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, n.d.)

In addition, in order for a situation to be considered human trafficking under the current laws, it must have at least one of the elements within each of the three criteria of Process, Means, and Goal presented in Table 1.

Table 1

United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime 2014 Elements of Human Trafficking

Process	+	Way/Means	+	Goal
Recruitment	<b>A</b>	Threat	<b>A</b>	Prostitution
or		or		or
Transportation	<b>N</b>	Coercion	<b>N</b>	Pornography
or		or		or
Transferring	<b>D</b>	Abduction	<b>D</b>	Violence/Sexual
or		or		Exploitation
Harboring		Fraud		or
or		or		Forced Labor
Receiving		Deceit		or
		or		Involuntary
		Deception		Servitude
		or		or
		Abuse of Power		Debt Bondage
				with unfair
				wages
				or
				Slavery/Similar
				Practices

*Note.* If one condition from each category is met, the result is trafficking. For adults, victim consent is irrelevant if one of the Means is employed. For children consent is irrelevant with or without the Means category.

Precise figures and reliable data on trafficking remain abstract and hard to obtain due to the underground, illegal and invisible nature of the crime of trafficking.

Organizations, both government and private, disagree on the range and severity of

trafficking activities and vary on how trafficking is defined. Factors such as the difference between trafficked persons, vulnerable migrants and exploited labourers confuse the exact definition process. As research continues and the actual depth of trafficking emerges, - that is, individuals trafficked within their own country, individuals trafficked across international borders, places of origin and recruitment, the transit or destination, illegal immigration turned to trafficking, women, men it is crucial to have a cohesive definition of human trafficking for data collection purposes (Farrell & Fahy, 2009).

Not only are cohesive definitions crucial for data collection purposes but also for after-care services. How we treat smuggled individuals versus an individual who has been trafficked is a slippery slope for some law enforcement agencies. Smuggled individuals, often trying to escape from economic or political oppression or civil unrest, consensually enter a country illegally for what they hope is a better life, they are not forced. If these individuals are apprehended by law enforcement they are generally treated as criminals, are detained and usually deported back to their country of origin. There are few services available to illegal immigrants who have been detained. It is not uncommon for individuals who have been smuggled to become victims of human trafficking when, at the end of their passage they are held hostage, and documents taken from them until the debt to transport them across the border is paid either by themselves or family members. Distinguishing between a smuggled migrant and a trafficking victim is important when determining aftercare services.

## **Background of Slavery and Human Trafficking**

### *18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century Slave Trade*

Slavery has been a part of history since the beginning of human civilization when people began gathering in towns and cities and surplus food supplies were being grown in the countryside where the need for reliable cheap labor became increasingly valuable. War was a leading source of supply in which slaves were acquired but it wasn't long before criminals were being sentenced to slavery for their crimes and debtors were being enslaved in order to pay off their obligation (historyworld.net). By the 18<sup>th</sup> century the triangular slave trade was in full operation between Africa, Britain and America. Ships departed Britain with items in demand in Africa (firearms, alcohol, cotton goods, metal trinkets and beads) and traded for slaves captured in the African interior. The slaves were then packed into vessels among inhumane conditions and sent across the Atlantic to America to be sold to the highest bidder. It wasn't until January 1, 1863 that President Lincoln issued his Emancipation Proclamation declaring all slaves free however, eight states refused the Proclamation and it wasn't until the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution was adopted in 1865 that the remaining slaves were emancipated.

### *Modern Day Slavery*

Slavery did not end in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, instead it became a clandestine crime that thrives on secrecy and the physical isolation of its victims (polarisproject.org) and remained relatively unnoticed until recently. In the past 30 years globalization has linked developed, underdeveloped and undeveloped countries together in a capitalist society making it an epidemic of unquantifiable proportions. Globalization can be defined as the

development of an increasingly integrated global economy marked especially by free trade, free flow of capital, and the tapping of cheaper foreign labor markets (Merriam-webster.com). In her article, *Selling Souls: The Effect of Globalization on Human Trafficking and Forced Servitude*, Luz Estella Nagle explains that, “The allure among nations to jump into the globalization arena as a means to prosperity has made human beings more tangled and intertwined with each other in their cultural, economic, social and political dimensions – a strong force boosting human trafficking” (2008, p. 137). With the development of globalization, goods and money are crossing borders with greater ease. Globalization of the world economy has allowed the increase of movement of people across borders legally and illegally, especially from poor to wealthier countries. International organized crime rings have taken advantage of the economy and the ease of an increased flow of people, money, goods and services. As previously stated, slavery and human trafficking is not new however, the ease of moving these goods, money and humans has made the business of buying and selling people the fastest growing criminal venture in the world. Globalization has created a transnational union that allows thug-like entrepreneurs to capitalize on whatever goods and/or services are readily available even if that includes exploiting fellow human beings in what has been named the third largest international crime only behind arms trading and drug trafficking. However, it must be acknowledged that human trafficking is not just an outcome of globalization but rather a part of the globalization process itself that involves integration of dispersed economic activities (Bales 2005). Consider the following account of Irina, who was a minor at the time of her harrowing experience.

Irina is sixteen years old and from the Ukraine. She responded to an ad in the newspaper for placement as a nanny for a family in the United States. She was told she would take care of two young children, be able to attend school part-time, and would have the weekends free. Instead, she was forced to work 7 days a week. Her documents were withheld, and she also had to care for an elderly parent who was ill. She slept in the basement and was not allowed out of the house. The employers were physically and verbally abusive to her and threatened to turn her into the authorities if she tried to escape. (Walts & French, 2011, p. 27)

For the past ten years traffickers have been able to utilize the internet to expand their business to reach millions of people not previously accessible. Traffickers create websites to engage in trafficking and can have that website shut down and another reopened in a matter of hours to avoid detection by law enforcement agencies. They also use social media outlets such as Facebook, MySpace and Backpage not only to solicit victims but to also advertise the services they offer. It is only through the stories of survivors who have been rescued that the disturbing world of increased global mobility is revealed.

### *The Numbers*

It is estimated that there are 27 million people enslaved throughout the world today ([www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov), 2012) with some activist groups raising that estimation to as many as 200 million (Bales, 2005). The U.S. State Department has estimated that there are more than 1 million children exploited by the global commercial sex trade every year, 80% of the transnational victims are women and girls and 70% of the female victims are trafficked into the commercial sex industry, the remaining 30% are victims of forced labor (<http://www.state.gov/j/tip/>). There is no way to know exactly how extensive trafficking, in the U.S. and around the world, actually is. Trafficking in humans usually

involves underground crime rings which utilize secret operations and covert actions which make it very difficult to monitor this illegal activity. In addition, in some countries, traffickers have the support of local law enforcement by either bribery or as active conspirators in the business, making it even more complicated to obtain accurate measures of how widespread trafficking really is. What we do know is this: There are currently more people trafficked and enslaved in the world today than there were during the history of the Trans-Atlantic slave movement during the entire 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century (Batstone, 2007).

According to the 2005 Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP 2005) from the U.S. State Department, between 14,500 and 17,500 people are trafficked into the United States each year (TIP Report, 2005). By the time the 2013 Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP 2013) was authorized and released by Congress, 47,000 victims had been identified in the previous year alone. As the economic crises rages on and the gap widens between affluence and poverty, more women and children are being lured into the sex trade. Traffickers are targeting, poor rural areas, homeless people in all areas, runaway teens and unemployed women, due to the lack of economic opportunities, leaving people desperate to earn enough money to maintain even a bleak existence. Other factors that increase vulnerability are illiteracy, lack of education, racial and/or religious discrimination, political and social instability, natural disasters, and organized crime (Kristof, 2009). While these are certainly the most prevalent factors that create trafficking situations, a new trend in U.S. domestic trafficking has eroded this theory. Young women from seemingly stable family environments are being lured into trafficking through the

promise of modeling contracts or professional dance careers. Traffickers are becoming increasingly savvy in who and how they recruit women. In addition:

Domestic minor sex trafficking (DMST) is becoming a burgeoning risk factor for American youth as gangs find that prostituting minors is a source of prestige and income and traffickers discover that American children are easier to recruit and sell than foreign victims because there is no need to cross the border. (Washington State Office of the Attorney General, 2012)

It is easy for Americans to imagine human trafficking occurring in “other” countries but they do not want to accept that a child or adult can be kidnapped or lured from their home to be prostituted at a local truck stop (U.S. State Department, 2008).

#### *The Economy of Human Trafficking*

The new global economy has opened the floodgates to the lucrative world of human trafficking. With booming international industrialization and Americans climbing out of the worst economic recession since the Great Depression the economic inequality gap is continuing to increase dramatically with the rich prospering and poor struggling to survive. Capitalist production has experienced a global restructuring over the past 30 years, with capital moving towards regions where labor is cheap, unions have little or no influence and policies regarding employment favor the employer (Bruckert and Parent, 2002). Slaves keep costs low and return on investments high. Business and government have ostensibly abandoned the values of human rights and individual liberties in order to boost their bottom lines:

Transnational companies today do what European empires did in the last century – exploit natural resources and take advantage of low-cost labor – but without needing to take over and govern the entire country. Similarly, the new slavery

appropriates the economic value of individuals while keeping them under complete coercive control – but without asserting ownership or accepting responsibility for their survival. The result is much greater economic efficiency: useless and unprofitable infants, the elderly, and the sick or injured are dumped. (Bales, 2004)

The value of the slaves lie in their sweat equity and volume of work forced out of them and in our current global economy, time is money. Where there is the opportunity for financial gain the possibility of slavery exists.

Human trafficking is a phenomenon that is widespread and has become a highly profitable business worldwide. It is estimated that the profits alone from trafficking, in the US, range between 5 billion and 7 billion dollars per year and 32 billion dollars globally (ilo.org, 2008). The Administration for Children and Families, a division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services report that following drug dealing, the trafficking of humans is tied with weapons dealing as the second largest criminal industry in the world, and is the fastest growing (acf.hhs.gov, 2011). Globalization has enabled buyers and sellers to rapidly exchange goods and services while the globalization of commercial, communication, financial, and transportation networks have allowed traffickers and consumers to identify each other, identify points of common interest, and establish terms of cooperation quicker and more efficiently than ever before. Most consumers in the free world support unethical practices, such as slave labor, with their everyday purchases, without even knowing it. Chocolate, coffee, toys, clothes, shoes, electronics can all be a product of slave labor. Supply chains run deep and complicated paths that do not begin with the retailer. Quite often retailers are unaware of the chain of production each and every component churns through before reaching their store.

Corporations outsource work to other countries because human capital is cheaper overseas. In order to decrease overhead and increase bottom lines, corporations look to overseas human labor without regard for how companies are treating or paying their employees or in many cases their slaves. These corporations can unknowingly utilize slave labor and child slave labor when outsourcing production and services such as customer service call centers. With businesses focusing more on their bottom line and less on employees the “comparative advantage in goods and cheap labor in developing states has played a significant role in objectifying and exploiting humans for economic ends” (Brewer, 2009, p. 47) therefore, human capital becomes human slaves. It has become characteristic for underdeveloped countries to serve as the factories for the developed world. Incredibly high demand for cheap labor by multinational corporations has resulted in the exploitation of desperate people who are subjected to the inhumane conditions that result from trafficking and slavery. On November 2, 2012, Microsoft Network News, Money Edition, released a story entitled, *Hershey shareholders sue for child labor records* (The lawsuit claims the chocolate maker gets cocoa with the help from forced West African workers). The article states, “That one of the world’s leading confectioners – whose primary market is children – could exploit child laborers to meet its bottom line is an outrage” (MSN, 2012). Hershey’s has been on the radar of many advocacy groups over the past decade but the company has always avoided the claims that they utilize slaves in their supply chain. Without having directly admitting the illegal use of children and adult slaves, Hershey’s committed to using “100% certified cocoa” in all of its products by 2020 (MSN, 2012).

Currently, as the financial crisis grips the global economy women and children are at an even greater risk of being trafficked. There is growing evidence that criminals are turning to trafficking humans because of the high profitability and low risk. These victims are trafficked for forced labor such as factory, agricultural and mining work and/or sexual exploitation, forced prostitution for sex trafficking or sex tourism. Today there are no lines drawn, nor boundaries that exclude anyone from falling victim to such cruelty. “The new slavery race means little. . . The otherness of the slaves made it easier to employ the violence and cruelty necessary for total control. This otherness could be defined in almost any way – a different religion, tribe, skin color, language, custom, or economic class” (Bales, 2004, p. 10). Today the vulnerability of a victim is all it takes for predators to move in and take control of their lives. Economic and social change, civil war and an increased gap between the rich and poor have decreased the likelihood of these lower income individuals to maintain a sustainable livelihood for themselves and their families. Women and children, who are desperate for a better life, tend to be the easiest targets for exploitation.

### *Legislation*

Women, in particular, are subject to economic, political and social injustices that lead to lack of opportunity and poverty and can create situations that make them vulnerable to human trafficking situations. These women come from every corner of the world, some have passports and travel visas, others are undocumented, some have graduated from high school and a few even college; they have very little in common with each other except that they hoped for and were promised a better life, usually in the west

and particularly the United States. We have to move beyond the current research and studies that merely define and outline what human trafficking is, specifically sex trafficking/slavery, and determine the size and scope of the problem and work on aligning U.S. policies and procedures with those of other countries and the United Nations anti-trafficking goals. The goal of this project is to identify, from a survivor's perspective, how their experiences can help educate others and make a difference in our global society. This research is a critical steppingstone to enter into the challenges of policy making and academia in order to share research, findings and theory and gain critical feedback from peers to help advance this research.

The war against human trafficking is relatively new so it stands to reason that the laws and services are inefficient and ineffective. In the year 2000 the Federal Government enacted the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) to “provide legal structure for prosecuting individuals engaged in human trafficking activities” and to provide assistance to the victims. In addition, President Clinton issued an Executive Memorandum on the Trafficking of Women and Children while the United Nations adopted the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, also known as the Palermo Protocol. Notwithstanding all of these acts and reports and the federal agencies efforts to track down and prosecute traffickers and provide assistance and services for the victims, it has become clear the TVPA and Palermo Protocol are insufficient given the vast trafficking operations throughout the United States. In 2012 Congress allowed the TVPA to lapse, thereby leaving millions of victims unprotected. There is a tremendous gap in support and services provided in our

recovery system between the moment victims are rescued or escape and the time our government recognizes them as trafficking victims. In an unsuccessful effort to close this gap,

The federal government acknowledged that state and local authorities were the likeliest to locate and identify instances of trafficking at the community level. Therefore, it was imperative that state and local law enforcement agencies be armed with the appropriate statutes to prosecute these cases within their own borders. (Bales & Soodalter, 2009, p. 208)

While there is an increased awareness to trafficking among state legislators many have been slow to create effective legislation. This creates the gap between rescue and recognition as a victim. When this occurs, victim services are also slow to respond.

Unifying indirect and direct service providers into a cohesive coalition, who together, help the victims of trafficking should be as easy as training public service officers who, as Bales and Soodalter suggest, are the most likely to come into contact with the victims.

It is a matter of community networking and sufficient training.

Government and legislation play a major role in constructing and maintaining sex trafficking as a social problem (Meghjani & Shikerpurlya, date unknown). Though the laws passed are supposed to protect the victims and prosecute traffickers, in reality, these laws do little accomplish either task. Because of the laws, there are certain procedures required to prosecute traffickers which make it very difficult to bring justice to this crime. Some countries, such as Sudan, do not meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and are not making the efforts to do so, which helps maintain the sex trafficking industry. In addition, laws vary from country to country and the differences

make it difficult to prosecute across international borders. In the specific case of the child sex trade industry, for example, the definition of a “child” varies in different countries (i.e. Australia defines a child as a person under 16 years old, whereas Japan’s definition of a child is anyone under 18 years old, and Sweden considers anyone under 15 years old a child.) In November of 2001, UNICEF issued a press release that brought light to the world of the sex trade industry and the statistics woke the world up to the devastating effects of this crime. The statistics revealed that there are over 1 million children forced to work in the sex trade industry around the world. Not only that, the children are being abused, violated, suffer unjustly, and they are the most at risk to be infected by human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). This press release indicates that UNICEF was at the forefront that brought the issue of sex trade industry into the public eye by shedding new light onto the sex trade problem by connecting human trafficking to the deadly HIV problem. This further helped them identify the sex trade as a global issue that needs to be resolved. The UNICEF solution was to sever the demand of sex tourism, thus helping to prevent the further spread of HIV (<http://www.unicef.org>).

### *Aftercare*

How victims are treated after their traumatic human trafficking experience may affect not only how quickly they recover but how likely they are to succeed in the future. Victims are in need of social and emotional support and are likely very sensitive to how others react and respond to the traumatic event. If these reactions and responses are negative, blame the victim, or are perceived to blame the victim, it is possible the victim’s recovery process will be hindered thus, creating a psychological barrier between

transitioning from that of a victim to a survivor. For many victims, shame is the barrier that keeps them from participating in mental health aftercare. They are quite often afraid others will find out what has happened to them, or, depending on their nationality, fear the stigma associated with mental health issues. This shame can cause victims to disassociate and pretend the trauma did not happen to them. Those who have been raped often feel a deep sense of shame even though rationally they know they have done nothing wrong. In their book, *The Slave Next Door*, Kevin Bales and Ron Soodalter explain further the shame many slaves feel:

By assuming responsibility for her state, the slave feels a deep sense of personal remorse, especially if she has been sexually abused. This shame keeps her from situations where she would have to share her condition with others; she wouldn't even tell her own parents. In this we see a parallel to the experiences of other women who are sexually assaulted or are victims of domestic violence. . . . Slaves will also feel shame, even self-loathing, in a way that paralyzes them and prevents escape. (2009, p. 23)

Beyond the physical and emotional abuses that victims endure during captivity the problems that continue post rescue can be equally debilitating. Many freed slaves convey feeling numb, going blank, or not feeling anything. It is these coping mechanisms that help them get through the nightmare (Bales, 2009).

*The Voices of Victims*

I swore never to be silent whenever or wherever human beings endure suffering and humiliation. We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented.

—Elie Wiesel

Most of us have heard the saying, “Children should be seen but not heard,” or “Children are to be seen but not heard.” Some believe these sayings are sexist in origin and that they were intended for young girls. Regardless of the application, the implication is that children, perhaps females, should not speak, or even think for themselves and this is a glaring example of classic white male privilege.

In this particular study, social support or acknowledgement is defined as, “a victim’s experience of positive reactions from society that show appreciation for the victim’s unique state and acknowledge the victim’s current difficult situation” (Maercker, et al., 2004, p. 345). Social support, in this context, includes not only family and friends but local authorities, service providers, clergy, the workplace, fellow citizens, and the media. How these groups and individuals acknowledge the experience of the victim can have a tremendous effect on the recovery process. Providing interpersonal networks or buffers, (networks in which the victim receives acceptance, stability and problem solving information), may help victims navigate through the process of coping and emotional responses to the traumatic event (Johnson et al., 1997). Each victim of traumatic experiences responds differently to treatment and aftercare services. The variables of trauma are infinite and no two victims are alike in their experiences. Recovery from this type of trauma can only take place through relationships therefore, cannot occur in isolation and no relationship or intervention that removes power from the victim can foster recovery (Herman, M.D., 1992).

### *Process of Reconciliation*

Case workers and direct service providers often point out that it is impossible to address issues of employment, education or reintegration until the trauma has been addressed. Perhaps after the fear has subsided and trust relationships have started to build sharing their lived experience is the beginning of long journey towards recovery. Ani Kalayjian and Raymond Paloutzian, in *Forgiveness and Reconciliation*, suggest that:

A core feature in the forgiveness process is the victims telling their stories. Story telling allows for personal healing by reducing the painful emotionality contained in the narrative (Niederhoffer & Pennebaker, 2002) and by helping the teller find life enhancing meaning in the offence (Goleman, 1995). Story telling also reveals the victim's humanity to the transgressor. . . Sharing stories fosters empathy and empathy expands one's social identity. (2009, p. 163)

In the process of helping victims transform and move through the progression of a healing forgiveness it is important to emphasize that,

Forgiveness should be differentiated from 'pardoning' (a legal term), 'condoning' (a justification of the offense), 'excusing' (implying the offender had a good reason for committing the offense), 'forgetting' (implying that the memory of the offense has simply decayed or slipped out of conscious awareness), and 'denying' (suggesting an unwillingness to perceive the harmful injuries that one has incurred). (Kalayjian and Paloutzian, 2009, p. 123)

The first initial hours and days after a victim is rescued are usually filled with multiple overwhelming emotions. Some victims experience a sense of relief and joy to be set free while others are terrified. Most of the victims have been stripped of their passports and visas and threatened with arrest if they attempt to leave their "employment." Their movements have been monitored and are quite often forced to live with several people to a room in sub-standard housing, some of which could be described as utter squalor. When

victims are rescued, or they find the means to escape, it is quite often a dramatic scene and if there is a language barrier, this makes the rescue or escape even more frightening for the victims. In the midst of the chaos, many victims believe they are the criminals being targeted for arrest and jail.

While I do not believe forgiveness is necessary in the healing process, reconciliation is essential and is the, “creative vehicle for substantive exploration, healing, and change, or it may be manipulated to promote self-serving narratives and power struggles” (Green, Kalayjian and Paloutzian, 2009, p. 252). Reconciliation is about the relationship between the shattered past and the envisioned future. Gobodo-Madikizela, psychologist and members of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa says, “Forgiveness does not overlook the deed. It rises above it. This is what it means to be human. ‘I cannot and will not return the evil you inflicted on me’” (Green, Kalayjian and Paloutzian, 2009, p. 254). Helping victims of trauma overcome these effects can be complicated and requires more than just a cursory understanding of what they have been through. The role of empathy, as a healing mechanism, is essential in the active intervention for addressing the problems most common among trauma survivors. While this is probably one of the most difficult steps in the healing process it is important to help victims understand and move beyond anger, hurt and shame and on to a life of hope and possibilities. It is with this in mind that I will inquire what methods, during the aftercare process, can aid in the recovery process of a survivor’s human trafficking experience.

## **The Research Problem, Focus, and Questions of the Study**

### *The Research Problem*

We know a great deal about the mechanics of human trafficking. We also know some of the social, political and economic indicators that lead to trafficking and there is a large body of conflict, social science, feminist, legal and human rights literature and research on the issues of human trafficking. Yet, there is still little in the way of research or discussion on survivors and their stories nor how survivors can use their voices, stories, and agency to promote a better understanding of how we disrupt this pattern and end the cyclical nature of trafficking (FBI.gov). The psychological, emotional and physical abuses these victims incur are brutal and will have lifelong implications. Rescuing the victims from their captors is only the beginning of the long road to recovery and healing. Helping to reintegrate these victims back into a productive and meaningful life in society is a vital component of aftercare services that is often forgotten or overlooked. These victims often suffer emotional problems, physical problems, suicidal behaviors, disassociation, angry outbursts, self-mutilation, drug and alcohol abuse and nightmares, just to name a few problems. These problems, without proper care, will continue to haunt the victim for years, possibly for life. Clawson, et al. (2009) suggest,

Given the impact of these trauma symptoms on the emotional and physical well-being of the victims, it is not surprising that some victims of human trafficking experience difficulties obtaining and holding down a job, paying bills and reintegrating back into society. (p. 3)

I will discuss how survivors of human trafficking can use their voice to help educate and combat trafficking while improving the aftercare programs that are currently available. I

will review and critique the relevant theoretical and public policy literature on the practice of human trafficking and lay out the major intervention issues inherent in this issue, including prostitution, racism, labor, and slavery and discuss how the voices of survivors can help in the resolution of modern day slavery.

### *The Focus of the Study*

In the past, research on human trafficking has lacked consistency regarding the theoretical framework because it usually requires a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approach which can be conflicting. Salt (2000) emphasizes that,

Trafficking in migrants has become a global problem which affects a complex matrix of origin, transit and destination countries, their international relations and security of their economies. A number of axioms have emerged which provide a generally accepted framework for the evolution of trafficking, although many details have yet to be empirically verified. (p. 32)

Although there are many different forms of trafficking, all of which are global problems, this project will focus on women in the United States who have been involuntary enslaved into the sex industry. This project will be based on the critical feminist theory paradigm which involves examining women's social roles and lived experiences through dialogue, storytelling and interviewing that encourages conversation and reflection.

Research conducted using the critical feminist paradigm is used to raise consciousness and transform lives. As Hatch (2002) suggests, this research framework encourages conversation that helps, "Researchers and participants work together to expose injustices in society. Critical and feminist research purposes include helping participants recognize and challenge the oppressive conditions under which they operate"

(p. 49). It is also important to select participants who understand the transformative intent to raise awareness, evoke resistance and encourage political action (Hatch, 2002). Critical feminist research seeks to uncover the issues of justice and power and, “are committed to uncovering and understanding the forces that cause and sustain oppression” (Glesne, 2006, p. 17). This research project and the choice to interview women who are survivors of human trafficking will focus on power relationships that are, in particular, applied to women (Glesne, 2006). Therefore, this research will focus on events that are meaningful for trafficking survivors in the hope that it will provide a process through which problems can be clarified and new ways of building advocacy and assistance programs can be designed (Stringer, 2007). Critical feminist theory stresses human dignity, care, justice, and interpersonal respect with a belief that, “those studied are active participants in collaborative research process” (Stringer, 2007. p. 205). It is through the voices of trafficking survivors that we can learn, implement new policy and educate the public on this pervasive crime.

The findings of this critical feminist theory study might help assist professional service providers and policy makers to help women who are currently struggling to overcome their trafficking experiences progress through the healing process and to assist in bringing greater weight to the education about human trafficking.

### *Research Questions*

This project seeks to develop research that has been severely lacking thus far, to further the knowledge of education about human trafficking and to help legislators and service providers improve the current laws and advocacy/assistance programs available to

human trafficking survivors. This will be accomplished by interviewing survivors of human trafficking and hearing, from their perspective, what changes need to be made in the current aftercare landscape. Data concerning the voices of the survivors of human trafficking is almost non-existent. I will be interviewing six survivors of human trafficking, specifically sex trafficking, who have successfully built their own business, started an anti-human trafficking NGO or non-profit or who are spokeswomen for anti-trafficking organizations. More than 50% of trafficking survivors return to the streets or to their traffickers (FBI.gov, 2013). The perspective interview participants have successfully built a life and career out of devastating circumstances. It is the goal of this research project to uncover what aftercare services are successful and what needs to be changed in order for more survivors to be successful.

The questions guiding my research are: 1. How can we make heard the invisible voices of those survivors who want to speak out against trafficking and, from this perspective, how can we improve education about trafficking? 2. How do we disrupt the pattern of slavery? 3. How can we, particularly in the conflict and education fields, bring more weight and direct action to the resolution of these issues in the U.S. particularly, as well as internationally?

This dissertation employs qualitative research as defined by Corrine Glesne (2006), “To understand some social phenomena from the perspectives of those involved, to contextualize issues in their particular socio-cultural-political milieu, and sometimes to transform or change social conditions.” A qualitative methodology from a critical feminist perspective will enable me to ask the participants questions, “of the role power

and relationship play at a societal level” (Glesne, 1992, p. 17). Feminist ethnographers focus on justice and power and understanding the causes that support oppression. In addition, “they, too, hold as a primary focus of their work the transformation of asymmetrical power relations, particularly as applied to women” (Glesne, 1992, p. 17). As a female who has struggled with my own conflicts and oppressive issues this narrative approach will allow me to make sense of the human experience that each participant relates through the stories they tell. By structuring questions that will invite storytelling, versus, structured one-word answers, participants will be able to articulate lived experiences that are critical to this research. I will encourage the participants to use language and speech that they are comfortable with and that they would normally use in everyday discussions with family and friends.

This study will also utilize a Narrative Inquiry approach that will use fieldwork such as stories, conversations, interviews and life experiences as units of analysis for my research. By applying the Narrative Approach, this qualitative research will use human experience to provide links to answers to the research questions presented. Maria Joyce, in her article, *An Exploration of Narrative as a Research Method*, defines this approach as, “Narrative derives from a long history of literary tradition and is increasingly used as a research method. Narrative in essence is the stories of our lives and the stories of the lives of others. Narrative is open to interpretation. This interpretation develops through collaboration of researcher and respondent or story teller and listener. Narrative, explored through interpretive research allows access to the respondent reality via their socially constructed stories” (Joyce, 2008).

## **Chapter Presentation**

The remaining chapters of this dissertation will begin in Chapter two which will include; a review of the literature regarding the 'neoliberal masculine violent global culture' that leads to human trafficking, sex trafficking in particular; an exploration of how this type of cultural violence can affect human beings and lead to dehumanization and oppression; and what is currently being done to end the violence against women. Chapter two will also outline the critical feminist theoretical framework that provides the foundation for this study.

Chapter three details the methodology used to answer the three research questions set forth in this study. This chapter will discuss the narrative research strategy, participant selection and inclusion/exclusion parameters. Data collection procedures detailing the four stages utilized in this project will also be described as well as, data sources, data analysis, validity and trustworthiness, and the limitations of the study.

Chapter four will describe the findings and conclusions of the data collection and explore how the data may or may not answer each of the three research questions. Chapter four will end with overall conclusions from the data collection.

Chapter five wraps up the research project by presenting a discussion of the research questions and how these findings can further develop research, education and policy on human trafficking.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.  
—Nelson Mandela

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study is to: 1) help survivors, who so desire, break the silence and give voice to their stories of trafficking; 2) to help increase awareness and education of human trafficking; and 3) to help legislators and service providers improve the current legislation and advocacy/assistance programs available to human trafficking survivors. This chapter will present the literature and theoretical framework, which provides the foundation for this study. Feminist theory paradigm, critical theory paradigm and the narrative inquiry approach, the guiding theoretical framework for this study, will also be discussed, detailing how a critical feminist theory paradigm can be used to empower women to speak out against oppression. There has been a general lack of consensus regarding the structural analysis of a theoretical framework on the question of human trafficking. Up to this point, research has been focused on describing trafficking, defining the players, the routes, the practices, and the consequences and the mechanisms for combatting the problem (IOM, 2001c; Bruckert, 2002).

To gather a thorough compilation of literature I utilized searches that included the terms: gender, violence, gender violence, female objectification, popular culture, religion and female oppression, patriarchy, religion and patriarchy, media and female

objectification, economic subordination of women, political subordination of women, rape and war, globalization, neoliberalism, neoliberal globalization, neoliberalism and female oppression, neoliberalism and human trafficking, globalization and human trafficking, and neoliberal globalization and human trafficking.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework is what provides the foundation of a study. Historically, and particularly in the United States, the view of slavery has evolved. What began as a trans-Atlantic slave trade in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries has now developed into the third largest international crime. An integrated framework would be best to describe the sequences of events that leads up to the involuntary sexual exploitation that occurs during human trafficking because there are multiple causes leading up to a trafficking situation. However, this project will be guided by the critical feminist theory paradigm that will be used as a tool to consider forms of empowerment and experiences resulting from various aftercare services that helped with survivor's recovery responses. Through the critical feminist lens, the stories of actual trafficking survivors will be viewed. Human trafficking, particularly sex trafficking, is an exploitive crime that is based on gender and economic inequality.

The theoretical framework will review the theories of the critical feminist paradigm, specifically as it relates to a transformative healing process and educational possibilities by utilizing ones voice. Knowledge, power, and spaces of empowerment (de Saxe, 2012) will be discussed given that these ideas are critical elements in this research.

### *Critical Feminist Theory*

Critical theory focuses on relationships, inequalities and power relationships without emphasizing gender related issues. A goal of critical theory is assisting those without power to attain it (Willis, 2007). Kilgore states:

Critical and postmodern theorists alike believe that knowledge is socially constructed and takes form in the eyes of the knower, rather than being acquired from an existing reality that resides “out there.” Theorists from both perspectives are also interested in power as a factor in determining what and how we come to know a lot about certain things and not others, and have certain ideas while not others. Different individuals and groups see the world from different positions, some having more power than others. (p. 53)

Critical theory is an attempt to understand how injustice among people is sustained and reinforced by those who are interested in maintaining power over others, and how emancipatory ideals are thus prevented. (Welton, 1995, pp 12–13) (as cited in Kilgore, 2001)

While critical theory addresses issues of, “oppression and marginalization based on factors including gender, race, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation, social class, and work” (Mace, as quoted in *Diversity, Critical Multiculturalism, and Oppression: Interaction and Transformation*, 2013), it doesn’t specifically focus on power relationships as they relate to gender inequalities.

Feminist theory focuses on women’s rights and gender equality and includes the role of women in society; their rights, privileges, interests, and concerns (Erwin, 2011). Researchers in feminist theory focus on theories related to, “Women, men, femininity, masculinity, and their historically and conceptually associated values, practices, and objects, including identity, sexuality, work, the state, relations with other oppressed categories (race, class, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation), and so on. (Grosz, 2010, p. 100)

The primary interest underlying feminist theory is the relationship between two sexes, addresses their existence and the inequalities that exist. It encourages new ways of thinking about gender, inequality and oppression issues and how they can be transformed to build a better social structure that currently exists (Grosz, 2010).

Both of these theories offer interesting principles that could have easily been used in this research however, critical feminist theory provides unique and various ways to think about disrupting the norm, questioning our understanding of oppression, and reconsidering gender and power roles (de Saxe, 2012). Together they share elements that make up one paradigm (Hatch, 2002).

Feminist critical theory begins from gender issues to understand and challenge all forms of contemporary subordination, domination and oppression. Such a feminist critical theory foregrounds the relation between theory and practice, thought and passion, academia and activism, in terms of the problem of “engaged” intellectual, the radical-political-intellectual whose “interest” in is emancipation. (Fraser, et al., 1994, p. 211)

Critical feminist theory is being used in this study as the most appropriate guiding theoretical framework because it seeks to bring attention to a gender related oppressed and exploited population being, women who have survived human trafficking.

### *Critical Feminist Theory and Human Trafficking*

This research project continues to develop the work of prior human rights activists, social justice, critical and feminist theorists by offering legislators, aftercare service providers and anti-human trafficking activists a look into how survivors of human trafficking view the aftercare process, what services worked, what needs to be changed

and by exposing the extent of how voices are being oppressed, “Call for awareness, resistance, solidarity, and revolutionary transformation” (Hatch, 2002, p. 17).

This critical feminist paradigm serves as the platform for the research project to help bring about social, political and legislative change while exposing the mistaken belief that human trafficking does not occur in the United States. A crucial element in fostering change that is relevant to the theoretical framework of this research is that the survivor’s, who, for this project, are female, need a safe space in which to find a voice for their stories, so they might take an active role in their own empowerment.

We must challenge the misunderstandings, lack of awareness and improper assumptions about human trafficking that continue to contribute to the oppressive circumstances they have survived without exploiting, “Research participants by using their vulnerabilities to gain an advantage” (Hatch, 2002, p. 110). The goal of this project is to identify, through interviews with human trafficking survivors, what works and does not work during the aftercare process and what changes are needed, not just to increase knowledge about the subject but to put into action new training and programs that will increase the awareness and education of human trafficking and also help victims of human trafficking discover their voice that will generate their own empowerment. Critical feminist researchers seek to use this type of research as, “a practical tool for solving problems experienced by people in their professional, community, or personal lives.” (Stringer, 1999, as quoted by Hatch, 2002, p. 31)

The following sections are an investigation of the literature relating to the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation and how this 'neoliberal masculine violent

global culture' dehumanizes and objectifies women through media, economics, politics, religion and war/terror. This study will explore the effects these conditions of cultural and structural violence have on human beings and how they lead to the problem of human trafficking and sexual slavery. Finally, this chapter will discuss the counter narratives and what is currently being done to end this pervasive violence against women.

### **Global Masculine Culture and the Dehumanization and Objectification of Women**

#### *Neoliberal Globalization and Economics*

As stated earlier, in Chapter 1, globalization is the development of an increasingly integrated global economy marked especially by free trade, free flow of capital, and the tapping of cheaper foreign labor markets (Merriam-Webster.com). Neoliberalism is an economic theory favoring free-trade, privatization, minimal government intervention in business and reduced public expenditure into social services (Merriam-Webster.com). Makwana (2006) describes neoliberal globalization as, “the removal of all barriers to commerce, and the privatization of all available resources and services” (p. 1) wherein all public life is at the mercy of an unstable market and the profits will only benefit the top richest few. The ideology of neoliberal global economics is reinforced by the three major international financial institutions, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the World Trade Organization (WTO) and is vastly supported by official development assistance organizations such as the European Union (EU) and the United States Agency for International Development (Heron, 2008). With the globalization of resource allocation and the privatization of resources only a select few can generate

massive wealth while the rest of the population is left in abject poverty competing for jobs that do not provide a living wage.

Neoliberalism, this not so new but dizzying economic, political, racial, social, and psychological regime (Harvey, 2004) has been ushered in by a well-funded conservative social movement and accelerated by public policies which facilitate and justify the upward consolidation of wealth, control, and class power while undermining the social health of poor, working class, and increasingly middleclass communities. The strategic redesign of our gender, race/ethnicity, and class structure is being launched at the dangerous intersection of radical economic transformation in the private sector and severe cuts in the public sector. (Fine, 2012, p. 421)

Neoliberal globalization creates vast inequalities and imposes economic hardships on women in exploitative and dehumanizing ways that are creating or reproducing gender, racial and class inequities (Lindio-McGovern, 2007). Neoliberalism promotes the privatization of both schools and hospitals which prevents the majority of people from being able to afford education or healthcare. It is this inequity and economic gap that leaves women at severe risk of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. Ramonet (2011) explains that:

Responsibility for this expansion of human trafficking lies largely with the current dominant economic model. In effect, the form of neoliberal globalization that has been imposed over the last three decades through economic shock therapy that has devastated the most fragile levels of society and imposed extremely high social costs (p. 1).

In the name of free trade, this has created fierce competition between labor and capital. It is here we see regional and international markets being integrated making the world, especially for women, unsafe, unethical, under-inclusive, impoverished and in which, “the rule is inequality for many and prosperity for a few within and between nations; a

world in which everything is a commodity with an economic value and a market price to be traded and sold, including our fellow human beings” (Nagle, 2008, p. 131). In a capitalist society, human capital is viewed as something that employees bring to an organization in the form of competencies or knowledge. In a neoliberal global capitalist society, human capital is the exploitation of human beings for cheap labor in order to increase a bottom line.

Wilson (2003) explains that capital accumulation is, “predicated on exploiting cheap wage labor. The cheaper the labor, the greater the surplus value generated, and this the higher the profits” (p. 56), whether this occurs locally or globally is irrelevant. Globalization has allowed easy access to products and services, including intangible goods that include a better life, better job opportunities, healthy environment and respect for human rights like never before (Nagle, 2008). However, these global conditions to easy access also contribute to a supply and demand of humans for cheap labor. It is the capitalistic exploitive theory of supply and demand and commodities and services that is the driving influence behind sex trafficking. Hughes (2002) explains that,

The trafficking of women and children is based on supply and demand between sending and receiving countries. Countries with legal or tolerated prostitution create the demand and are the receiving or destination countries, while countries where traffickers easily recruit women are the sending countries.

The demand is the driving force behind trafficking. The trafficking process begins when men and pimps create the demand for women and girls to be used for prostitution. (p. 182)

Neoliberalism is about simplifying unrestricted movement of goods, resources, services and enterprises across national and international boundaries, seeking cheaper means to

maximize profit and efficiency while promoting a progressive approach that emphasizes growth and competitiveness over social justice and reallocation (Heron, 2008). With the opening of trade barriers there is an enormous demand for cheap or free labor in manufacturing sectors and sexual exploitation in the expanding sex tourism industry (Nagle, 2008). Neoliberalism has exacerbated global poverty rather than decreased it as Lindio-McGovern (2007), explains,

Poverty, unemployment, migrant labor all interact in the creation of cheap labor, consisting often of women and children. Unemployment and low wages create poverty. Poverty creates the preconditions for migration and migration creates cheap labor elsewhere. Thus cheap labor contributes to the perpetuation of global poverty. Neoliberalism has not eradicated poverty; instead it has produced poverty and increased gender, race and class global inequalities. (p. 292)

With the global economy integrated, we are seeing more migrants working long distances from their place of origin usually from migrating from poor countries to rich countries. These people are termed “economic migrants” and are delegitimized in an effort to force them into cheap or slave labor (Skrobanek, et al., 1997).

More and more of the world’s poor, mainly women struggling to support themselves and often a family, are left with no way to obtain basic food, water, shelter, clothing, sanitation, medicine or protection (Heron, 2008). As seen in the literature, neoliberalism seeks to reduce government spending on social services to help these women, which leads to a decline in their lives and a deterioration of the human condition in both the developing and developed world (Heron, 2008). The expansion of neoliberal global capitalism into different parts of the world has only been achieved through, “military force, violent removal/dislocations of peoples, slaughtering of different groups”

(Heron, 2008, p. 86) and the domination of people based on ethnicity, class and/or gender for cheap or slave labor. Technological advances play a broad role in the scope and scale of moving capital and commodities and, “blurs the meanings of privacy, freedom and agency” (Heron, 2008, p. 87).

Disempowered human agency or human agency, which unquestioningly submits to the technological demands of capitalism, is a life that exists solely as a mere peg in the wheel of capitalism – a consumer citizen. Globalization, as the technological era of global capitalism increasingly governed and led by the use of technological instruments, tempts us to question the meaning and the value of human life. (Heron, 2008, p. 87)

These technological advances in the current global economy are equally beneficial in the swift movement of human beings in the slave trade industry.

Gender inequality, global poverty, lack of education and illiteracy all affect females in greater numbers than men. All of these vulnerabilities contribute to the trafficking of women into the sex trade industry. This neoliberal global economy places women at risk for exploitation given the patriarchal society within this system. It is the capacity to use force or to inflict suffering that “remains the essence of the capacity for domination.” (Heilbroner, 1985, p. 39)

### *Patriarchy*

Patriarchy has been defined as a society that is ruled or controlled by men that includes a system that controls women’s access to resources and, in turn, allows men to control labor power, thereby, dominating political, economic and social structures within a given society. Domination is defined as the supremacy or preeminence over another; the exercise of preponderant, governing or controlling influence (Merriam-Webster).

Male dominance is this ‘controlling influence’ of males over females, in both public (the work place and the state) and private (within the household) spheres. There is no shortage of literature on male dominance and patriarchy. Long before the women’s rights movements began in force in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, women’s rights advocates such as Abigail Adams were fighting for women’s equal education and property rights. Adams believed women should take a larger role in domestic decisions rather than simply serving their husbands, and suggested, in a 1776 letter to her husband that, “all men would be tyrants if they could” (Library of Congress). Despite the action and courage of resistance across the globe for women’s rights and equality, we are still faced with what I term a 'neoliberal masculine violent global culture' that continues to dehumanize and oppress women. With the current global patriarchal political and economic systems in place, women continue to suffer from abhorrent inequalities and structural violence. It is the damage from this oppression that leaves women open and vulnerable to sexual exploitation and trafficking.

The concept of patriarchy conjures up images of gender hierarchies, dominance and power structures that emphasize social systems and social arrangements that reinforce domination, oppression and subordination (Hunnicut, 2009). Gender, male versus female, determines an individual’s quality of life, location in social hierarchy, chances of survival and determines privilege instead of their intelligence, aptitude and desires (Epstein, 2007). It is this sexual divide and male superiority that creates patriarchal views of women. Much of the literature reviewed suggests that patriarchal societies, which limit women’s opportunities, contribute to the vulnerability and

oppression of women. Within these patriarchal societies, females are regarded as subordinate to males, receive less education, and have limited participation in decision making and highly rewarded roles (Epstein, 2006). When females receive less education than males they are at a higher risk of being exploited. Millett (1969) describes the historic system of male dominance based on Max Weber's definition as:

Herrschaft, a relationship of dominance and subordination. What goes largely unexamined, often even unacknowledged (yet is institutionalized nonetheless) in our social order, is the birthright priority whereby males rule females. Through this system a most ingenious form of "interior colonization" has been achieved. It is one which tends moreover to be sturdier than any form of segregation, and more rigorous than class stratification, more uniform, certainly more enduring. However muted its present appearance may be, sexual dominion obtains nevertheless as perhaps the most pervasive ideology of our culture and provides its most fundamental concept of power.

This is so because our society, like all other historical civilizations, is a patriarchy. (p. 26)

Wilson (2003) suggests that patriarchy "signifies diverse types of sex/gender systems characterized by male domination oppressive and exploitative of women" (p. 57). All societal institutions and division of labor assign roles based on the sex of individuals; labor forces, religions, political systems and nation-states all rely on the biology of sex for organization (Epstein, 2007; Hunnicutt, 2009). Patriarchy encourages a misogynistic hegemony that promotes female oppression and normalizes the objectification of women as possessions for sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation occurs in all forms of sex trade, i.e., sex trafficking, forced prostitution, consensual prostitution, pornography, sex shows, and any type of sexual abuse. Hughes (2006) states,

There is no dignity in prostitution. Acts of prostitution are acts of misogyny, not respect or affection, and have nothing to do with love or intimacy. They are acts that are based on objectification and projection of racist, ethnic, and sexist stereotypes onto the woman or child. Women don't emerge from prostitution into positions of power, respect or admiration. They are confined to powerlessness as individuals and to an underclass as a group. (p. 182)

Historically, prostitutes have been treated as scapegoats, “man unloads his turpitude on her, and he repudiates her. Whether a legal status puts her under police surveillance or she works clandestinely, she is in any case treated as a pariah” (de Beauvoir, 1949. P. 599). As prostitution and sexual exploitation is normalized within this male dominated society human trafficking will continue to grow and increase in economic importance. Epstein (2007) suggests that, even in egalitarian societies, “Women’s autonomy over their bodies, their time, and their ability to decide their destinies is constantly at risk when it intrudes on male power” (p. 4). The number one vulnerability of human trafficking is the one factor victims have no control over and that is being born female (Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, 2001).

### *Media*

Turn on a television, open a magazine and you will find women being objectified as a sexual object rather than a human being with equal rights to men. It is common, even normal, in today's society for advertisements to dehumanize women by treating them objects to be ogled, touched, used and even purchased as a commodity. It is not uncommon in both print and television ads to see a full image of a female body without showing the head thereby implying the two are separate or that the female form is a ‘thing’ without a brain which takes away a woman’s identity and leads to explicit sexual

objectification of a woman's body (Aubrey, 2006). These images lead to the denial that women are human and entitled to basic human rights and equality. Popular culture continues to sell the lie to women that their value is in their sexuality. *Sexual objectification* is the act of a person (for this study, a female) being made into a thing for others' sexual use, rather than being appreciated as a person with the aptitude for independent thought, action and decision making (Grabe and Hyde, 2009). Aubrey (2006) explains that *Objectification Theory* (Fredrickson and Roberts, 1997), "contends that media that places women's bodies and appearances at a premium can acculturate women to self-objectify (i.e., to view the self primarily in terms of externally perceivable attributes), or to feel anxious or ashamed of their bodies" (p. 159).

Research finds an unequivocal and harmful increased acceptance of cross-gender aggression and rape within society as a result of sexualized violence in media (Capella, et al., 2010). Research also shows that,

By viewing women as exclusively sexual beings whose purpose is to sexually arouse and gratify men, a power differential is created in which women generally are subordinate. This power hierarchy may support development of perceptions of women as appropriate targets for sexually aggressive behaviors. (Lanis and Covell 1995, p. 647, as quoted by Capella, et al., 2010, pp. 37–38)

It stands to reason that consumer behavior is impacted by sexually violent ads and portrayals in movies and on television. In order for advertisers to gain the attention of consumers, who ultimately pay their bills, they continue to find ways to shock viewers by "pushing the envelope" and have found that sexualized violence against women sells (Capella, et al., 2010). This idea of the effects of media violence is not new. Media

broadcasting began in 1946 and by 1972 the U.S. Surgeon General had produced empirical evidence that suggested consistent and extensive television viewing of violent programs is associated with increased aggressive actions (Anderson and Bushman, 2002).

Haslam (2006) describes pornography in media as a dehumanization of women by, “representing them in an objectified fashion, by implication removing women from full moral consideration and legitimating rape and victimization” (p. 253). Haslam (2006) also cited Nussbaum (1999) as identifying seven components of this dehumanized objectification:

“Instrumentality” and “ownership” involve treating others as tools and commodities; “denial of autonomy” and “inertness” involve seeing them as lacking self-determination and agency; “fungibility” involves seeing people as interchangeable with others of their type; “violability” represents others as lacking boundary integrity; and “denial of subjectivity” involves believing that their experiences and feelings can be neglected. (p. 253)

It is through sexualized violence in the media that women are assigned less ‘humanness’ than men and seen as representing a lower order of being (Haslam, 2006). When society and culture turn women and their bodies into sexual objects and dehumanize them this creates a situation where violence and exploitation are tolerated and encouraged. In her documentary, *Killing Us Softly* (1979), Jean Kilbourne states, “turning a human being into a thing is almost always the first step toward justifying violence against that person” because once a woman has been objectified, her identity has been removed and she becomes a disposable object without feelings or emotions. This objectification and dehumanization of women through media outlets encourages criminals, such as human traffickers, to exploit women without regard to their humanity. In addition, the rapid

expansion of broadcast and telecommunications media, including the Internet, across the developing world has increased the desire to migrate to developed countries. (UNODC, 2005)

*Politics*

I know only that this world is off its rocker when it comes to women. I must admit that I live in such a state of perpetual rage at what I see happening to women in the pandemic, that I would like to throttle those responsible, those who've waited so unendurably long to act, those who can find infinite resources for war but never sufficient resources to ameliorate the human condition. (Stephen Lewis, UN Special Representative of the Secretary General on HIV/AIDS in Africa, 2005 as quoted by Anderlini, 2007, p. 191)

In today's contemporary political landscape we are plagued by increasing inequality gaps, elitist power mongers, oppression and violence and a swift movement towards individualism and freedom that places a sense of powerlessness upon those excluded from the wealthiest 1% who seemingly make the rules (Fine, 2012). In a political and economic move away from social welfare and towards individualized and privatized social responsibility, the state is effectually punishing women, who through no fault of their own, are already marginalized and oppressed by a patriarchal system they have no choice in, by blaming these same women for failing to thrive. This limited government in social responsibility framework was reinforced in 1996 in the United States by the passing of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act wherein the dominant argument in support of the passage was that women's use of public assistance was the source of their social problems and women's reliance on others, "was a devalued social condition to be overcome before they could

reach the promised land of self-sufficiency” (Haney, 2010, p. 31). In the current political arena men hold the power and women are powerless which is predetermined by gender, being male, and as Allen (1998) proposes that, “The patriarchal construction of the difference between masculinity and femininity is the political difference between freedom and subjection” (23). To be masculine is to be free and to be feminine is to be subjected (Allen, 1998). Connell (1987 and 1995) defines levels of power as “hegemonic masculinity” which is,

The ideal form of masculinity performed by men with the most power attributes, who not incidentally populate most global power positions—typically white, Western, upper-class, straight men who have conferred on them the complete range of gender, race, class, national, and sexuality privileges. (as quoted in Peterson and Runyan, 2010, p. 7)

Although the United Nations has implemented provisions in its Universal Declaration for Human Rights that protect women and their rights, women are routinely denied access and full participation in local and global political affairs (Carter, 2014). Even the United States has struggled with women’s political rights issues. It was only white women who were granted the right to vote with the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 1920. It wasn’t until the enactment of the Voting Rights of 1965 a mere 49 years ago that all black women gained this privilege (Carter, 2014). In today’s political environment we are still challenged by this masculine hegemony through “growing and hardening inequality gaps; the explicit protection of elite power; a psychic numbing to crisis, oppression and violence; an ideological valorization of individualism and freedom tithed to a cumulative sense of powerlessness” (Fine, 2012, p. 419). It is hegemonic masculine political

frameworks such as this, “under which the bureaucrats who run these systems are obliged to address the situation of women, their empowerment and protection” (Anderlini, 2007, p. 38). Every country in the world has erected barriers for women through economic and political systems even though the new global political system offers the state as the provider of security and social justice however, the state is nothing more than a system built predominantly by male public officials who reinforce striking structural inequalities. Public administrations in Western democracies still remain structurally male and extremely restrictive to the participation of women (Levine, 2009). The goal of women increasingly around the world is of a state that “fosters greater social justice, transparency, freedom and democracy” (Anderlini, 2007, p. 38).

### *Religion*

There is a religious dichotomy surrounding religion and human trafficking. This section will describe the oppressive systems within different religious sects that support the domination of women through religious patriarchal fundamentalism. Alternatively, the consolation and hope that religion brings to survivors of trauma will be discussed within the ‘Counter Narratives’ section of this chapter.

Most, if not all, major religions throughout the world are patriarchal and founded to spread male supremacy, which is why their gods are all male (French, 1992). Fundamental Christianity, as an example, is rooted in the literal translation and interpretation of the Bible and provides, “an epistemological foundation for patriarchy” (Grasmik, et al., 1990, p. 352). In addition, if treated literally, the Bible also offers negative and oppressive views on issues such as abortion, premarital and extramarital

sex, homosexuality, and gender roles which have become serious matters of contention on the United States political agenda within the past four decades. In many fundamental religions the term “headship” is used to define the patriarchal system of, not just the private family, but of public structures as well. It is a chain of existence wherein children should be submissive to their parents and wives submissive to their husbands (or women submissive to the state) and husbands (men in general) should be submissive to God and the Church (Coates, 2009). According to Grasmik, et al. (1990), “As Christian teachings were interpreted, the male was to be the leader of the family, and wife was to be subservient to him” and notes that the Bible tends to portray, “men as kings and prophets but women as followers and occupants of traditional family-home statuses” (p. 353). While most religious groups vary in their belief systems, the doctrine they utilize and the source of their philosophies all maintain an authoritarian patriarchal structure that remains oppressive to women. This dominance of religious patriarchy continues to inflict, “symbolic and material violence” (Coates, 2009, p. 65) by not allowing any autonomy to women. Despite the advances in the United States for equal opportunities and affirmative action, struggles for equality of women continue, particularly for immigrants and women of color. Many fundamental religious institutions are diligently working to invalidate any forward progress by attempting to return women back to a more subordinate station in society (Levine, 2009).

Fundamentalists of any denomination, are quite militant about their doctrine and whatever text they draw their foundation of beliefs. Most forbid smoking, drinking, dancing, card playing (gambling), immodest dress and any sexual behavior outside of

marriage (French, 1992). Throughout the world there are religious dogmas that restrict women's rights to marriage, divorce, custody, clothing, even reproduction that not only oppress women but, often silence them. It has been argued that women are very often used as political pawns in radical conservative Muslim countries (Shauer and Wheaton, 2006). Militant Islamic movements, often called Muslim Brotherhoods, which are Muslim fundamentalists, are overtly woman haters and resent the Western policies and customs that have pervaded their societies. The Brotherhood routinely uses women as examples of Western infiltration by blaming them for their liberal dress and perceived sexual promiscuity. They are fiercely, "nationalist and religious, anti-modern, eager to fight religious war; and all concentrate obsessively on women" (French, 1992, p. 68). It is often this militant religious fundamentalism that is nonnegotiable that guides human action to promote or protect the views that lead to war and the willingness to die or kill others in the name of the cause (Peterson and Runyan, 2010). It is not uncommon for these groups to use their religious ideologies to promote a political agenda that usually includes a systemic oppression of women. It is the relegation of women to an inferior status demarcated by many religious leaders that is one of the primary reasons for the perpetuation of sexual abuse (Carter, 2014). It is here, at this juncture of religious patriarchy and oppression that we find women who have been silenced and left vulnerable to human trafficking.

### *War and Terror*

The already disadvantaged positions and gender inequalities of women are magnified during war both as a victim and as a female soldier. War and acts of terror

have been propagated through all of the above-mentioned paradigms; neoliberal globalization, economics, religion, politics, media (social media), and patriarchy. The history of war presents a variety of brutality and cruelty, particularly to women through the enslavement of women, prostitution, rape as an inherent ancillary practice of war, and violence as a normal course of action. When conflict erupts, it is women who are disproportionately disadvantaged in relation to personal safety (Jansen, 2006) and who are the primary victims of displacement, bombs, and victims of rape (Carter, 2014). Rape has been systematically used as a tactic of war by military, and governments to advance one group's political, economic, religious, or social position over another (Farwell, 2004, Milillo, 2006). Although sexual assault within combat zones and occupied territories has been pervasive within every war in human history (Mullins, 2009), the first documented mass rapes happened in Nazi Germany during World War II and has been a common tactic in the wars of Iraq, Rwanda and Sudan, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia, Kosovo, Albania, Chechnya, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, just to name a few, women's bodies become the receptacles of hatred by using rape as a weapon of war (Milillo, 2006).

In her book, *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape*, Brownmiller (1975) states that although rape is punishable by death or imprisonment under the international rules of war, it still persists as a common act of war, and that:

It has been argued that when killing is viewed as not only permissible but heroic behavior sanctioned by one's government or cause, the distinction between taking a human life and other forms of impermissible violence gets lost, and rape becomes an unfortunate but inevitable by-product of the necessary game called war. (p. 35)

During the Rwandan genocide of 1994 between 250,000 and 500,000 women were raped; in the early 1990s during the first Yugoslavian genocide, between 10,000 and 60,000 Muslim and Croatian women were raped; between 200,000 and 400,000 Bangladeshi women were raped by Pakistani soldiers during the 1974 civil war (Mullins, 2009). During the Chechen conflict, rape was used by Russian soldiers as a means of torture, designed to flush out rebel fighters by sexually assaulting female members of their family.

Weapons of modern war kill and disfigure civilian women and men in equal numbers (Hynes, 2004). Jeffreys argues that, women in the military suffer from double jeopardy, that is, not only do they face the danger of being killed or wounded by the enemy but they also face the danger of being raped by their male colleagues (2007). The military, among other systems, is a masculine institution not just because it is male dominated but because the military provides what some consider the “masculine protection of turf,” in other words, the protection of their homeland (Jeffreys, 2007, p. 18). This masculinity within the military is deliberately created through the delivery of pornography and prostitution which allows men to ‘other’ women and build themselves up as strong and aggressively masculine (Jeffreys, 2007). Patriarchal masculinity (whether religious, political or social) has always been the basis of violent conflict and is perpetuated by the infliction of sexual violence against female soldiers. Military training, specifically, not only promotes the acceptance of violence but also trains soldiers to objectify others, including women. In contrast, the Israeli military rationalizes that

integrating women within combat roles increases the probability of sexual attraction, pregnancies, and women being raped should they become a prisoner of war.

### **The Effect of Cultural Violence on Human Beings**

I decided to devote my life to telling the story because I felt that having survived I owe something to the dead and anyone who does not remember betrays them again.

—Elie Wiesel

Culture violence, as defined by Galtung (1990), is “those aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence – exemplified by religion and ideology, language and art, empirical science and formal science (logic and mathematics) – that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence” (p. 291). Structural violence is a form of violence where social structures or social institutions such as, elitism, ethnocentrism, classism, racism, sexism, nationalism, heterosexism, and ageism, may harm people by preventing them from meeting their basic needs (Galtung, 1969). Throughout the world there are large numbers of people who struggle daily against these structures that prohibit them from sustaining even a moderate subsistence (Shapiro, 2010). Neoliberalism is just one of the many cultures of structural violence in which, globalization, economics, politics and religion breed the patriarchal system that continues to oppress women. It is the current neoliberal policies that have created increased vulnerability and oppression, which leads to an increased possibility of being trafficked.

Cultural and structural violence such as the lack of human rights, lack of social or economic opportunities, danger from conflict all generally caused by political instability are common factors that make people want to migrate, in search of better conditions. It is

through these conditions that people often begin to feel invisible, disrespected and insulted with no real connection to land, nation or even home. In 2000, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan defined human security as “freedom from want and freedom from fear” (Anderlini, 2007) and includes the “livelihoods and food security, health, psychosocial well-being, enjoyment of civil and political rights and freedom from oppression, and personal safety, in addition to absence of conflict” (Parmar, et al., 2010). Cultural violence strips human security from all who are in its path.

Rules and expectations of behaviors from cultural and social norms are highly influential can encourage violence and abuse and cultural acceptance of violence, either as a normal method of resolving conflict is a risk factor for all types of violence (WHO, 2009). Survivors, not just from human trafficking but all forms of violent trauma, have often faced complex multiple layers of trauma that can include the physical and psychological damage inflicted while held captive and for some that can reach back as far as family violence, community violence or national violence (French, 1992). Some of the physical consequences of cultural violence are chronic pain and migraine headaches, anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation, substance use/abuse, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and in some instances, death. Clawson, et al (2008), explains further the effects of this trauma:

The exposure to trauma results in a condition referred to as Post –Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). PTSD is a mental health diagnostic category created originally for war combatants and disaster victims but which also applies to victims of other traumas, including trafficking victims. For those that struggle with PTSD, the characterizing symptoms include intrusive re-experiencing of the trauma (e.g., flashbacks, nightmares, and intrusive thoughts), avoidance or numbing of trauma-related, or trauma-triggering, stimuli (e.g. avoiding certain

places, people, and situations), and hyper arousal (e.g., heightened startle response, and inability to concentrate). For both adults and youth, once established, PTSD is usually chronic and debilitating if left untreated. (p. 2)

Traumatic events are extraordinary because they overwhelm the ordinary sense of control leaving the victims feeling violated and helpless (Herman, M.D., 1992). Case workers and direct service providers often point out that it is impossible to address issues of employment, education or reintegration until the trauma has been addressed (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2009).

When trying to help survivors of human trafficking, service providers must remember that threats, intimidation, and fear of retribution are very powerful to a victim who is already traumatized. It is this type of treatment that often entails unrestrained physical, psychological, and sexual abuse that prevents victims of trafficking from speaking out or attempting to escape. Many victims stay because they develop a sense of loyalty to their trafficker because, although irrational, they feel responsible for the “debt” they owe or feel the enslavement is their own fault (Bales, Soodalter, 2009). Victims of human trafficking feel completely abandoned and alone, cast out by humanity and left without any sense of care or protection (Herman, M.D., 1992). It is here, that the humiliating aspects of an oppressive silence, destroys all dignity and hope. When an individual is silenced, feels they being silenced, or are not being heard, they are disempowered. The ratio between trafficking victims/survivors and anti-human trafficking advocates is astoundingly disproportionate, with victim/survivor numbers heavily outweighing the available advocate resources leaving many victims disempowered and disconnected from others. It stands to reason that recovery is based on

empowering and creating new connections for the victim (Herman, M.D., 1992). There are thousands of survivors of human trafficking who carry around the weight of their past because they feel neglected and disregarded. Research consistently shows that being unable to talk about their experiences results in both physical and emotional health problems and by keeping the weight of their secret hidden leads to a painful, broken life (Petronio, et al., 1997). A vital process for survivors is the reclaiming of self. By listening to their voices and privileging their experiences we can help them take back the power they feel they've lost. June 7, 2010, Jana Kohut from Bosnia told the United Nations Human Rights Council how she was trafficked and sexually exploited in Slovenia. Jana called for the creation of safe spaces and support programs for survivors of trafficking and, "Involve those who wish to break the silence and nurture those who need to keep the silence."

Cultural violence reaches far past the physical and mental ailments to those who have been affected. Loss of identity, poverty, oppression, alienation, no job opportunities, no educational opportunities are just a few of the debilitating effects. The loss of identity and feeling of invisibility is perpetuated when victims leave their home for better opportunities but are greeted with indifference, alienation or, physical violence in their new destination. Victims can lose all sense of purpose and meaning, as Shapiro (2010) states,

Without structures of meaning that offer purpose and coherence to our lives, existence becomes miserable at best and a source of emotional pathology at worse. Bereft of meaning, life quickly becomes a nightmarish journey into despair. And despair offers fertile soil not just for the internalized anger of

depression, but for outwardly directed rage at a world that seems to offer frustration without consolation. (p. 130)

Muffling or silencing the voices of individuals in pain continues to dehumanize them perpetuating the cycle of violence. This is what Kenneth Hardy describes as a “dehumanized loss” which leads to rage, sadness, sorrow, and despair that leads to violence toward self and others” (Cormier, et al., 2011, p. 273). Personal and political oppression can take on many forms and excludes people from full and equal participation in public life, imposes economic burdens by restricting access to basic needs and severely limits any personal choice (Snow, 2013). Psychological trauma is a condition of the powerless, those who have been rendered helpless by oppressive force (Herman, M.D., 1992).

### **Counter Narratives: What Is Being Done to Solve the Problem**

In today’s media driven society we are bombarded on a daily basis with what is wrong in this world, the murders, the conflicts, the wars that we rarely take the time to see what is right or what is being done to correct the wrongs. International interventions that challenge cultural and social structural violence are quite prevalent however they are often incorporated and hidden within a broader approach to disrupting the pattern of violence (WHO, 2009).

#### *Social and Cultural Narratives*

The social norms approach is an intervention program that challenges the dichotomies of what is considered the forefront of oppressive structures such as gender inequality, class and race matters, religious and patriarchal systems and the idea that

violence is how to solve these matters (WHO, 2009, Parmar, et al., 2010). Through this approach, it is assumed that by challenging and intervening in violent acts that people will indicate to their peers, whether privately or publicly, that this type of behavior is unacceptable (WHO, 2009). Another approach the United States has developed, through the World Health Organization is a social marketing campaign that was tested on university campuses by distributing posters and flyers with messages that address the norms that support or tolerate sexual violence, race violence and religious intolerance.

The Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe (OSCE) has developed an action plan to help challenge the neoliberal patriarchal system of violence that is currently in place that leads to vast human rights violations, violence, trauma and human trafficking. This action plan addresses the economic and social policies aimed at tackling the root causes of social and cultural violence through awareness-raising measures and legislative measures (OSCE, 2014). By fostering social, economic and political stability, improving access to educational and vocational opportunities and enhancing job opportunities for marginalized groups, especially women, it is believed that vulnerability to oppression and violence will be greatly reduced.

*Prostitution: To Legalize or Not*

There has long been the argument over the legalization of prostitution and whether it is beneficial for all who participate. Sex work and prostitution is globally endemic whether legal or not. Anti-prostitution feminists have posited arguments that the johns (those who purchase sex) should be arrested and jailed instead of the prostitutes while providing services to help women leave the sex industry. Other activists argue that

only the complete decriminalization of prostitution and the recognition of sex work as a voluntary form of labor can protect prostitutes from disease, violence and trafficking (Clemmitt, 2008). Adding further attention to this social issue, Sloan and Wahab (2000) state that,

Since the 1990s, the debate about sex work has taken place against a backdrop of economic injustice and social inequity for women, who do not have the same opportunities for employment and self-support available to them as do men. Given the inequitable status of women in society, some feminists have characterized women who work in the sex trade as victims of exploitation and abuse. Other feminists, however, believe that despite the lack of equity between men and women, sex work is a legitimate profession stigmatized by a sexually repressed society. (pgs. 460–461)

There is no question that sex work stigmatizes women whether the labor is voluntary, forced, legalized/regulated or illegal and questions regarding the need for changes in social policy are currently the focus of social movements around the globe (Levin and Peled, 2011). In the current social and legal structure, it is not uncommon for the prostitute to be arrested, face social stigma, and lack of economic opportunities while the johns risk little to nothing.

Legalizing or regulating prostitution or sex work allows for several things: 1) women's autonomy over their bodies and work, 2) makes it easier for prostitutes to leave the business, should they choose, 3) establishes rules under which sex work should proceed, and 4) offers protection to those who choose to work within the industry. In the current global political and economic landscape there has been an increase in awareness of laborers being trafficked around the world for the purpose of sex trade. Some proponents of legalizing prostitution believe that decriminalizing and regulating the

global sex industry would decrease the risk of trafficking and the violence that goes along with it. However, there are opposing views that argue the only way to effectively tackle sex trafficking and violence against women is by eliminating all forms of prostitution and sex work (Clemmitt, 2008).

### *Religion*

Is it possible to support women's rights, to advocate equal pay for equal work, and to be willing to vote for a woman presidential candidate while also believing that in the home the husband should make the major decisions while the wife is subservient (Grasmik, et al., 1990)? We have seen in the literature that religion can indeed be oppressive to women through patriarchy, rules and expectations. However, we need to be cognizant that not all women see religion as oppressive but rather a place where she can worship and on occasion use her faith as a symbol of protest against a society that some consider to be morally corrupt. Women, within the Islamic faith, often use the wearing of veils as a form of protest against western standards of capitalism and social structures versus viewing them as sources of oppression (Grasmik, 1990). In some Jewish communities new opportunities are being created for an increase in female participation (Kress). The doctrine of many religions has been used to regulate the oppressive roles of women in both the public and private sphere however, there is an increasing shift with the right to equality and individual freedoms of women.

In the alternative to religion being an oppressive patriarchal system, a new paradigm shift has emerged recently through which religious leaders are visionaries and foster greater social justice, transparency and freedom for women (Anderlini, 2007). This

is not to be confused with this same patriarchal system bestowing women the right to speak or to be heard, this, in and of itself, would continue to serve the same gendered system. This shift is about women claiming their right to all the roles and possibilities, including the rights and powers associated with the pulpit (Lawless, 2003). This shift is occurring in the understanding of the roles of women both in society and within the church and there is now a challenge to take a wider global stance against the widespread abuse and violation of women's rights while promoting the empowerment of women (worldspss.org, 2014).

Also dangerous is the argument for distancing or complete banishment of religious narratives from all public discourse in order to make the world safe for secular democracy and the continued separation between church and state (West, 2004). As West (2004) states, "All citizens must be free to speak out of their respective traditions with a sense of tolerance-and even respect-for other traditions" (p. 159). For many, it is through religious convictions that loyalty to state and national ideals are grounded (West, 2004) and where peace is found. Funk and Woolner (2001) suggest that utilizing religion for peace processes can both unite and divide:

Religion evokes universally resonant ideals such as peace, even as it underscores the importance of particular, of irreducibly distinctive truth claims and symbols. It can provide virtually unrivalled motivation for peacemaking activity, but can also be interpreted in ways that are deeply problematic for those who aspire toward human solidarity.

Religious visions and vocabularies have contributed greatly to the theory and practice of reconciliation, and socially engaged religious intellectuals are often among the most perceptive challengers of new orthodoxies and subtle "idolatrics" in the modern world, from the often ambiguous "national interest" of power politics to the "invisible hand" of economics. (p. 355)

In addition, many survivors of violence often find solace from religious organizations that offer aftercare services in the form of safe-houses, monetary aid, and often provide access to health care and mental health care not available through any other sources, including government (Bales, Soodalter, 2009). It is not uncommon for religious organizations to work in tandem with local and federal law enforcement agencies to not only help locate victims of human trafficking but to also offer extensive aftercare services that extend through repatriation, education and career services.

#### *Globalization and Social Media*

It has been shown, through the literature, that globalization is the development of an increasingly integrated global economy marked by free trade, free flow of capital and the tapping of cheaper foreign labor markets. We have also seen how this system is oppressive to many, women in particular. With this global integration has come an unexpected development, which is the idea of “critical mass” (Baird, 2011) that, aside from physics, is the minimum amount of people needed to start or sustain a movement, rebellion or revolution. It is through globalization and the increased use of social media that has made it possible for thousands of people to come together to support a cause and incite change.

Although social media was non-existent, and the instruments utilized were archaic compared to modern technology, the first televised revolution was in Romania in 1989. Twenty-one years later the revolutionary wave known as the Arab Spring was the first revolution to affect change in power relations by utilizing social media through avenues such as, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube (Tudoroiu, 2014). They used the internet, cell

phones and satellite television to gather support and tell the world that Egyptians were taking to Tahrir Square in Cairo, as well as in Alexandria, Suez, and Mansoura, to challenge the patriarchal power that rested within the Mubarak regime. There has been abundant research done on the power of social media activism and the ability to help motivate protest movements and its effectiveness in harnessing political and social movements throughout the world, most recently in the Middle East (Markham, 2014). Markham also suggests that different movements have successfully used various media outlets with successful results stating that, “Facebook was particularly popular in the Tunisian uprising, Twitter was the medium of choice in an already well-established culture of blogging in Egypt, while online the civil war in Syria is largely being played out on YouTube” (p. 90). It is through these channels where people are normally socializing, networking and seeking entertainment that statements and calls of democratization and political transformation are being broadcast globally to engage supporters and onlookers for transformative justice.

### *The Voice of the People*

When democratic seeking people rise up and stand bravely against oppressive forces radical change becomes a real possibility. The people of Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Iran, Bahrain, Jordan, Oman, Iran, Algeria, Sudan, Saudi Arabia and the women of Chechnya are speaking up and demanding democracy through freedom of speech, economic equality, human rights, land rights, women’s rights, religious rights, education rights and voting rights to just name a few (Baird, 2011). In 2003, in a small Chechen village, 200 women blocked traffic, holding signs declaring, “Return our sons!” after

several local men disappeared when Russian militants swept through the area (Conley, 2004). While their men did not return home alive, their bodies were returned for proper burial. January, 2011, thousands of protestors took to the streets in Egyptian cities to protest the corrupt patriarchal power of the Mubarak regime. On February 11, 2011, Mubarak's resignation was announced. While there are still struggles in Egypt, there are still people protesting in the streets (Hafez, 2012). Speaking about the protests in Egypt and Tunisia, writer and academic Mona Eltahawy said:

What's happening in North Africa and the Middle East is a seismic shift; the people have woken up; it's the people speaking. If you want peace, talk to the people, not the men who have suffocated us for decades. Talk to the people about what freedom and dignity means to us. (as quoted by Baird, 2011)

These democracy-hungry citizen driven protests are spreading throughout nations in an effort to overthrow corrupt regimes, keep politicians honest and reinvent local politics. This is a time when new ways of thinking and doing can be born (Baird, 2011).

#### *Victim Centered Approaches*

On the backend of violence a victim centered approach is being utilized in the aftercare services of trauma survivors. The Florida State University Center for the Advancement of Human Rights conducted a qualitative research project that included interviews with 11 female human trafficking survivors. The results indicated that using a victim centered approach was successful in determining the needs of these survivors and suggested that physical security and providing basic needs were priority for these women (Coonan, 2004).

Establishing a safe environment requires not only the mobilization of caring people but also the development of a plan for future protection. In the aftermath of the trauma, the survivor must assess the degree of continued threat and decide what sort of precautions are necessary. She must also decide what actions she wishes to take against her attacker. Since the best course of action is rarely obvious, decision-making in these matters may be particularly stressful for the survivor and those who care for her. She may feel confused and ambivalent herself and may find her ambivalence reflected in the contradictory opinions of friends, lovers, or family. This is an area where the cardinal principle of empowering the survivor is frequently violated as other people attempt to dictate the survivor's choices or take action without her consent. (Herman, M.D., 1992)

Resilience has been directly related to the ability of the survivor to find their voice and utilize it in a way that is beneficial to their recovery, whether that be in a public or private manner, only the survivor can decide (Banyard & Williams, 2007). A survivor who made the decision to speak out after many years of silence wants other victims to know, “Remember you are not alone. You are not alone” (Polarisproject.org).

Thirty-nine states now have criminal anti-trafficking legislation in place making it a state felony offense however, until education and training make it to the local level of law enforcement these statutes remain ineffective (U.S. Department of State, 2013). At the Federal level laws have been created regarding: peonage; involuntary servitude; forced labor; trafficking with respect to peonage, slavery, involuntary servitude or forced labor; sex trafficking of children or by force, fraud or coercion; and, unlawful conduct with respect to documents in furtherance of trafficking, peonage, slavery, involuntary servitude, or forced labor (See Appendix F) . Even with these laws in place, the Federal Government and state officials must create a comprehensive, anti-human trafficking initiative that will be utilized at all levels of the criminal prosecution process, as well as, protecting the survivors.

## **Summary**

This chapter has presented some of the literature related to a 'neoliberal masculine global culture' that dehumanizes and objectifies women through media, economics, politics and religion and how this cultural violence leads to human trafficking, in particular the trafficking of women. It has also offered counter-narratives wherein, some of the same oppressive cultures are being used, in the alternative, to help empower women and utilize their voice for change. The theoretical framework and the use of feminist critical theory was discussed, specifically how the need to formulate new action to improve the aftercare services by utilizing the voices of survivors to increase the research and legislation that can protect and support the victims of human trafficking. This project aims to map out the research that currently exists and make note of the research gaps that need to be filled in order to establish appropriate and effective policies and programs for trafficking victims. The following chapter will discuss the methodology that was used in this study.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### **Introduction**

Chapters One and Two established this study's research problem, reviewed the related literature and identified the project's three research questions:

1. How can we make heard the invisible voices of those survivors who want to speak out against trafficking and from this perspective, how can we improve education about trafficking?
2. How do we disrupt the pattern of slavery?
3. How can we, particularly in the conflict and education fields, bring more weight and direct action to the resolution of these issues in the U.S., as well as internationally?

These three questions relate directly to the main goals of the research: 1) to help survivors, who so desire, break the silence and give voice to their stories of trafficking; 2) to help increase awareness and education of human trafficking; and 3) to help legislators and service providers improve the current legislation and advocacy/assistance programs available to human trafficking survivors. This chapter explains the methodology used in this research project and includes an examination of the 1) research design; 2) research

participants; 3) data collection; 4) data analysis; 5) trustworthiness; 6) limitations and positionality of the researcher.

### **Research Design**

The research paradigm used in this study is the qualitative approach utilizing a narrative study and an advocacy/participatory worldview by conducting a holistic interview process with research participants (Creswell, 2007). By using this design it allowed me to draw data from the stories and experiences of the human trafficking survivors. Qualitative research is used for its collection of rich description gathered from the research participants relating stories about people, places, conversations and experiences and are not easily applied within the quantitative design of statistical analysis (Bogdan & Biklin, 2007). Qualitative methods entail exploring and understanding experiences, actions, interactions and behaviours of groups or individuals that relate to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2009).

A narrative study research strategy is best utilized if the researcher wants to ask questions about life stories, personal experiences and histories that raise awareness and promote resistance which is based on the notion that humans make sense of their lives through stories (Hatch, 2002). This narrative research approach, as described by Stephens (2010), is,

Epistemologically different to methods such as questionnaires, interviews and focus groups. Whereas the latter three popular research methods are centered upon *questions* and *answers*, the narrative “turn” calls for a fundamentally different – and I would argue – more meaningful representation of reality. (p. 326)

The emphasis on this type of work is on the meanings the individual research participants will generate through their stories and experiences that are revealed through the narrative process. “Critical/feminist interviewers are involved with their informants in bringing about social and political change, and their products include calls for action” (Hatch, 2002, p. 23). Narratives are useful because they put personal testimony into often-depersonalized theories of violence and aggression and illustrate the range of a woman’s lived experience (Milillo, 2006). Focusing on issues of justice and power to help uncover and understand the influences that cause and sustain oppression and asymmetrical power relations as they relate to women and, specifically, trafficked women, makes the narrative study the best choice of research strategy in which to gather the richest and thickest data.

Narrative research strategies are not without risks particularly during unstructured interviews when working with sensitive topics and vulnerable subjects such as human trafficking survivors. When vulnerable participants are asked to share their stories and experiences they are sharing intimate, personal and sensitive details about their life (Bahn and Weatherill, 2012; Corbin and Morse, 2003). Sensitive data can include any details that are “intensely” personal or that ‘which potentially poses a substantial threat to those who are or have been involved in it’ (Lee, 1993 as quoted by Bahn and Weatherill, 2012, p. 19). Lee & Renzetti (1990) (as quoted by Corbin and Morse, 2003), suggests that:

Some topics have a higher probability of causing distress than others. These topics include those that delve deeply into the personal life or experiences of persons. Also included are topics that explore deviant or illegal activities, expose vested interests of powerful persons or persons engaged in coercive or domineering behaviours, and are of a meaningful religious nature. (p. 337)

The participants in this study were informed of the potential risks prior to consenting to the study and they retained considerable control over the narrative interview process to reduce any potential risks.

Sensitive data collection involves risk to the participants and relies heavily on the ethical practices of the researcher (Bahn and Weatherill, 2012). Ethical principles that should guide a narrative research strategy are: 1) the research participants are people; 2) they have value; 3) they have rights (to choice, respect, dignity, self-determination; and 4) they should receive the same ethical treatment and consideration as any of subject of research inquiry (Booth and Booth, 1994).

The advocacy/participatory paradigm is a worldview that Creswell (2007) describes as research that,

Should contain an action agenda for reform that may change the lives of the participants, the institutions in which they live and work, or even the researchers' lives. The issues facing these marginalized groups are of paramount importance to study, issues such as oppression, domination, suppression, alienation, and hegemony. As these issues are studied and exposed, the researchers provide a voice for these participants, raising their consciousness and improving their lives. (pp. 21–22)

This collection of data and the findings herein do not necessarily establish answers to the research questions but it does embody the voices of six women who have systematically beaten the odds and are continually striving to raise consciousness about human trafficking while improving their lives and the lives of other survivors. Creswell (2007) summarizes key components of advocacy/participatory practice as developed by Kemmis and Wilkinson (1998):

1. Participatory action is recursive or dialectical and is focused on bringing about change in practices. Thus, at the end of advocacy/participatory studies, researchers advance an action agenda for change.
2. It is focused on helping individuals free themselves from constraints found in the media, in language, in work procedures, and in the relationships of power in educational settings. Advocacy/participatory studies often begin with an important issue or stance about the problems in society, such as the need for empowerment.
3. It is emancipatory in that it helps unshackle people from the constraints of irrational and unjust structures that limit self-development and self-determination. The aim of advocacy/participatory studies is to create a political debate and discussion so that change will occur.
4. It is practical and collaborative because it is inquiry completed “with” others rather than “or” or “to” others. In this spirit, advocacy/participatory authors engage the participants as active collaborators in their inquiries. (p. 22)

I was able to collaborate with the research participants by utilizing the advocacy/participatory approach, asking for their help with analysing the data and shaping the final description of the research which allowed the voices of the participants to be heard throughout the research process (Creswell, 2007).

This study is bound by subject and sample areas. The objective and goal of this study is:

1. To help survivors, who so desire, break the silence and give voice to their stories of trafficking

Further objectives and goals are:

2. To help increase awareness and education of human trafficking

3. To help legislators and service providers improve the current legislation and advocacy/assistance programs available to human trafficking survivors

### **Data Sources**

There are several data collection methods within qualitative research; interviews, direct observation, participant observation, surveys, content analysis, and analysis of physical artifacts (Creswell, 2003). The data sources for this study are:

1. Face-to-face interviews
2. Secondary analysis of human trafficking statistics and legislation within the United States.

Qualitative research can help uncover and understand the system in which individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2009). Merriam (1998) describes some of the assumptions that reinforce qualitative research as a way to accomplish an in-depth understanding to these social or human problems:

Qualitative research assumes that there are multiple realities-that the world is not an objective thing out there but a function of personal interaction and perception. It is a highly subjective phenomenon in need of interpreting rather than measuring. Beliefs rather than facts form the basis of perception. Research is exploratory, inductive, and emphasizes processes rather than ends. In this paradigm, there are no predetermined hypotheses, no treatments, and no restrictions on the end product. One does not manipulate the variables or administer a treatment. (p. 17)

By conducting qualitative face-to-face interviews, unstructured and open-ended questions were presented that were intended to elicit views and opinions from the participants

(Creswell, 2009). The use of face-to-face interviews in this study enabled the research participants to share their experiences from surviving human trafficking and to communicate their perceptions and opinions about the aftercare process and what changes need to be made in the current system.

The secondary analysis of human trafficking statistics and legislation within the United States aids in understanding the current estimated number of victims of human trafficking generated by the limited research currently available and provides an overview of the legislation that has been enacted and the gaps that still remain.

### **Participant Selection**

The target population for this study is women who have identified themselves as survivors of human trafficking specifically, sex trafficking, and have, 1) started a business; 2) started an anti-trafficking non-governmental organization (NGO); or 3) is an advocate or public speaker about the subject of human trafficking. This population was targeted based on the potential of these women to provide valuable information on the topic of human trafficking, after care services and legislation due to the experiences of the participants. The targeted geographical location was the southeast of the United States however no region was excluded. The actual sample is represented by those participants who responded to verbal recruitment by the researcher.

Creswell (2003) states, “the idea behind qualitative research is to purposefully select participants that will best help the researcher to understand the research question” (p. 185). Qualitative researchers tend to choose their participants purposefully instead of

performing random samplings of large populations generally used in quantitative research (Glesne, 2006). Patton (2002, as quoted by Glesne, 2006) suggests that,

The logic and power of purposeful sampling . . . leads to selecting information rich cases for study in depth. Information rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research. (p. 34)

In a narrative study the participants need to have stories to tell about their lived experiences that are central to the topic being studied (Creswell, 2007). Hence, a purposeful sampling was the sampling technique used in this research study because the target participants lived experiences were central to this research project. The actual sample participants are the representative population based on the researcher's analysis of female human trafficking survivors, whose lived experiences and knowledge about trafficking, aftercare services and legislation could assist in answering the research questions posed in this study.

Participant Inclusion Criteria will be: participants will be aged 18 and above who identify as females, are survivors of human trafficking and have started their own business, started an anti-trafficking NGO or works as an advocate or spokesperson in anti-trafficking campaigns.

Participant Exclusion Criteria will be: trafficking victims under the age of 18 and male trafficking victims.

### **Data Collection**

As Stephens (2010) suggests, there are three popular techniques for data collection for narrative studies; questionnaires, interviews and focus groups. Unstructured

narrative interviews were the primary technique used in this study along with reviewing existing data and literature. Data was collected by the use of an interview guide that included questions to facilitate the narrative interview process. The documents that were reviewed included statistics related to the number of individuals being trafficked in the United States and internationally, the number of cases that have been successfully prosecuted, the available aftercare services currently available to survivors, and current legislation, both at the federal and state levels. A four stage approach was used in the data collection for the study:

1. Conducted verbal recruitment to schedule interviews
2. Selected participants based on recruitment, scheduled interviews
3. Conducted face-to-face interviews with selected participants with follow-up interviews, telephone calls and emails.
4. Returned transcribed interviews to participants for review and edits

#### *Unstructured Interview Protocol*

I received approval from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro's (UNCG) Institutional Review Board (IRB) for my study's protocol and consent form prior to collecting data. Samples of all documents approved by the UNCG IRB and utilized with research participants are attached to this study in Appendixes A - D. The researcher developed the questioning guide to help answer the three main research questions presented in this study. Appendix D, Research Protocol (12.17.13) is the

protocol utilized in this study and was informed by existing literature related to human trafficking specifically, sex trafficking of women.

This research project used an interview guide (Appendix B) developed by the researcher, was created specifically for this study and therefore has not been used in any previous research studies. The interview guide is made up of eleven open-ended, exploratory questions designed to encourage narrative storytelling and interpretive in nature. The interview guide is based on an unstructured interview protocol and is ideal for a qualitative narrative research design because it encourages the participants to tell their stories based on their lived experiences which created a participatory dialogue between participant and researcher and offered a chance to expand the parameters of the interview guide, “to create a context of conversational intimacy in which participants feel comfortable telling their story” (Corbin and Morse, 2003, p. 338).

The interview guide did not contain demographic questions as that data was gathered through the narrative process when I, the researcher, asked the participants to tell me about themselves at the beginning of the interview. The interview questions utilized as a guide to this process are as follows:

1. Tell me how you became a victim of human trafficking.
2. How did you get out?
3. What have you done in the aftercare process that helped you?
4. What are your thoughts about aftercare?
5. Which organization, or advocate, played a significant role in your healing/empowerment process?

6. What are your thoughts about how to educate service providers, i.e., police, doctors, psychologists, and the public on human trafficking?
7. What are your thoughts about what policies should be enacted to punish traffickers and attempt to eliminate trafficking?
8. What are your thoughts about what policies should be enacted to protect victims?
9. What policies do you believe should be passed regarding the aftercare process?
10. What message would you like to pass on to other survivors of human trafficking?
11. What message, about human trafficking, do you most want to communicate to the public?

### *Establishing Trust and Building Rapport*

Conducting narrative research with vulnerable subjects requires a significant time commitment to the research participants. Human trafficking survivors have endured multiple horrifying events that have shaped their perception of people and how the world operates. Establishing trust and building rapport with these participants was an investment not only in their time but their lives. Booth and Booth (1994) explain that:

There are two ways of looking at trust: as a form of mutually beneficial exchange or as a form of moral currency. In the exchange model, trust is a function of reciprocity in the relationship between the researcher and the subject where each gives the other something they desire or need. As a moral status, trust is dependent on the actions and attitudes of the researcher which must both validate

the researcher's identity and what he or she claims to be doing as well as show that the subject is valued as a person in their own right. (p. 417)

Not surprisingly, I found as I was in the recruitment phase of this study, that all of the potential participants required complete anonymity even though some spoke publicly about human trafficking and others owned businesses with their stories on their websites or blogs. I came to learn that all 6 participants were using pseudonyms in their public life. As the researcher and interviewer, I was careful to maintain complete concealment of their identity and ensure strict confidentiality procedures.

According to Booth and Booth (1994), "building rapport demands a measure of intimacy that goes beyond the normal relationship between interviewer and informant" (p. 417). I encouraged a two-way process of communication inviting personal questions, offering my phone number and e-mail address and let them know I would be happy to hear from them if they needed or wanted to contact me. I was very honest and upfront with each participant about my research, why it was important to me and tried to instill a sense of caring. I have, in fact, stayed in contact with 3 of the 6 participants in an ongoing effort to help build their business or organization by helping them network with my own field of contacts.

The interview process was estimated at 60–90 minutes for the initial interview and an additional 60 minutes for a follow-up meeting. The participants were given the choice of date time and location of the interviews for their convenience.

A formal pilot study was not utilized for this research however during the pre-interview process time was taken to speak to some of the participants and aftercare

service providers about the interview guide and the interview process. According to Glesne (2006) the idea of the pilot study is not to obtain data necessarily but to familiarize oneself with, “the research process, interview questions, observation techniques and yourself” (p. 43). The interview guide was piloted in two phases, the first was piloted to professionals who work directly with human trafficking survivors in safe houses to determine the practicality of the questions and if the questions would encourage the narrative conversation needed for this study and to identify any questions that could be misunderstood. The second phase the interview guide was piloted to two survivors of human trafficking who are professional spokespersons for anti-human trafficking campaign events. These individuals were recruited personally and are people I know through personal connections from my experience working with anti-human trafficking organizations, classes and training programs. The aftercare individuals would not have been appropriate research participants because not all were female and none were survivors of human trafficking. However, the second phase individuals, who are survivors of human trafficking and spokespersons for anti-human trafficking campaigns were recruited to participate in the study but declined for scheduling reasons.

### *Procedures*

The recruitment protocol was implemented in January 2014, after the Christmas holiday season. The recruitment script (Appendix C and D) was then used to present the study to the perspective participants and explain the purpose of the study, its importance, the participant’s role in the study, and the interview process. The search for participants started in the southeast United States and was spread out to include a search in Texas and

Nevada. Ten of the 12 perspective participants showed interest in participating. Six participants were ultimately chosen based on the inclusion and exclusion parameters set out in this study and the willingness of the perspective participants to share their stories and experiences. The demographics of the chosen participants will be discussed in Chapter 4. The twelve interviews and meetings were held between March and June of 2014.

Each interview was recorded using a digital audio recorder to ensure the accuracy of the data collected. Recording the interviews did not increase the risk of a confidentiality breach because when not in use, the recorder was held under lock and key in the researcher's home. Each interview was immediately downloaded onto the researchers password protected computer into a file folder that was also password protected then erased from the digital recorder. No names or identifying characters were recorded to protect the identity of the participants. The estimated total participant investment time was two and a half hours with one hour for each interview and 30 minutes to review the transcript.

#### *Four Research Stages*

Stage One. After an internet and social media search for businesses and non-profit/non-governmental organizations owned or run by human trafficking survivors, a list of 6 businesses and 6 organizations was generated for a total of 12 potential participants. All research and recruitment of potential participants was conducted by the researcher by making personal visits to anti-human trafficking awareness meetings and

trainings, phone calls to businesses or organizations or emails sent with the recruiting script.

Stage Two. As discussed previously, the participants were selected utilizing the purposeful sampling. Participants were selected based on the inclusion/exclusion parameters with 6 meeting the criteria. Six initial interviews were scheduled at the participant's convenience. At the end of the initial 6 interviews 6 more interviews/meetings were scheduled with the participants and an additional 2 meetings were scheduled for follow-up and general exchange of information and ideas.

Stage Three. The first 6 initial face-to-face interviews took place in 6 separate locations including the private offices of four participants, one private study room at local public library and one in the private office of the researcher. The first interview was limited to 60–90 minutes in an effort to keep the participants and the researcher from becoming overwhelmed with emotion and information. Participants were each given two copies of the consent form (Appendix E) one to keep for their records and one to return to me. Participants were also provided with a copy of the interview guide. Once the participants were ready to begin, the digital recorder was turned on and the interview commenced. After a personal introduction and an explanation of the interview process I began the interview by asking the participant to tell me their personal story, including basic demographics, age, current occupation and where they are originally from. All of the participants were eager to tell their story and experiences and I was very careful not to interrupt the narrative process. The interview session ended with a brief question and answer regarding clarity of the interview data. I kept a journal following each interview

to record my reflections about what the participant had shared, themes I heard and additional questions to present. The interviews were transcribed within 24 hours of the interview to maintain the accuracy of my notes, non-verbal information and memory matching the context of the transcription (Hatch, 2002).

Data saturation had occurred by the end of the fourth initial interview. The data collected had become redundant however, I continued with the remaining two interviews hoping to learn more (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). All six participants had different stories and experiences but were reporting the same definitions, aftercare needs and political challenges. The follow-up interviews and meetings were used to clarify any questions, add new ideas and review transcripts from the first interview.

Stage Four. The final stage occurred after all interviews were completed and consisted of returning final transcripts which included all interviews and meetings with each participant for their assessment of accuracy of the recorded and transcribed data. This meeting was approximately 30 minutes in duration to read through the transcript of the interview to help with accuracy, validity and trustworthiness of the data. All six participants confirmed the accuracy of the transcription.

### **Data Analysis**

Early data analysis and coding was utilized in this research study. Data was analysed simultaneously with the data collection to focus and shape the study as it proceeded so that reflection on the data was occurring consistently throughout the collection process (Glesne, 2006). This type of analysis also aided in the identification of patterns and categorical aggregation and helped to make sense out of the data that was

being collected (Creswell, 2007). Glesne (2006) states that, “Data analysis done simultaneously with data collection enables you to focus and shape the study as it proceeds” (p. 148).

Conducting narrative research studies generates stories and experiences from participants that require focused and intense analysis and interpretation. In addition to an interview journal, a digital recorder was utilized by the researcher to record and log entries as they occur which enabled linking across interview data. Data analysis is utilized to organize,

What you have seen, heard, and read so that you can make sense of what you have learned. Working with the data, you describe, create explanations, pose hypotheses, develop theories, and link your story to other stories. To do so, you must categorize, synthesize, search for patterns, and interpret the data you have collected. (Glesne, 2006, p. 147)

The goal of data analysis in this study is to explain the aftercare process from a survivor’s perspective, uncover the gaps in the aftercare process and examine what changes need to occur in the legislative process in order to further protect survivors of human trafficking. As such, early data analysis and coding were utilized as the most appropriate method of research analysis.

This study relies on the inductive reasoning process by using the data to interpret and structure meanings from the data and generate new ideas (Clayton & Thorne, 2000). Inductive reasoning is the process of, “letting the analysis emerge during data collection rather than structuring a study around a hypothesis or narrow questions” (Bogdan & Biklin, 2007, p. 272). Using an inductive process in early data analysis is beneficial

because it helps build theory while still collecting data and steers the direction of the study instead of focusing on trying to prove or disprove a hypothesis. Because the stories of the survivors are told in the beginning in an open narrative manner, themes begin to emerge early on that help focus on particular ideas and uncover more specific questions that help guide the inquiry and analysis in a holistic approach.

The interviews were recorded on a digital audio recorder. Once each interview was completed each interview was immediately downloaded onto the researchers password protected computer into a file folder that was also password protected then erased from the digital recorded. The data was transcribed word for word within 24 hours of the interview. After all interviews were conducted, downloaded and transcribed, they were returned to the participants to ensure accuracy and credibility.

Because the early data analysis was utilized in this study, themes began emerging by the end of the second participant interview. Some of the early themes that began to emerge were:

1. Identity
2. Trust
3. Interventions
4. Recovery
5. Changes in consciousness

After all of the interviews had been completed, transcribed and accepted as accurate by all participants and all of my field notes had been transcribed I began coding based on the themes that had developed through my early data analysis.

The data collected from the 6 research participants was so rich and thick in description, limitations had to be established and refocused on the research questions presented in this study. Glesne (2006) suggests that, “In order to complete any project, you must establish boundaries, but these boundary decisions are also an interpretive judgment based on your awareness of your data and possibilities” (p. 150). Care was taken to preserve the additional data, without breaching the security of the participant’s identity, to use in future research projects.

### **Validity and Trustworthiness**

Ensuring credibility is one of the most important aspects of establishing trustworthiness in qualitative inquiry (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). According to Creswell (2009) qualitative validity means that the researcher checks for accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures. As such, in order to ensure credibility and establish trustworthiness in this study I first immediately transcribed all hand written notes and face-to-face audio recordings verbatim after each interview. I then re-read all hand written notes and transcribed notes to make sure nothing was missed. I again listened to the recorded interview while following along with the notes and audio transcription to make sure all conversation was captured while ensuring that any voice inflection changes, long pauses or other physical movements and shifts not easily captured on audio recording were noted in the transcription. This method was utilized to determine any

additional themes that might have emerged that were not captured on audio recording, i.e. did all interviewees become uncomfortable at certain moments in the interview or just one? Because I utilized early data analysis, I was aware of the themes that were emerging when I read the transcripts for a second time annotating these general early themes in the columns. When that phase was complete, I then reviewed the notes and transcriptions and began categorizing by assigning a different highlight color to each of the goals and research questions of this study. I was then able to correspond quotes to their respective goal or research question.

### **Limitations**

In order to demonstrate the trustworthiness of data one must realize the limitations of the study (Glesne, 2006). This particular research study, utilizing the narrative study approach, describes the research at hand with thick, rich description of the participants and findings and includes the parameters of the inclusion and exclusion process. By doing so, this helps readers know how they should read and interpret my work and makes it possible for others to decide if they wish to use the results in additional research (Glesne, 2009).

There are a limited number of participants in this study, not all survivors of human trafficking who have started their own business or an NGO were interviewed for this study for three reasons: 1. Not all survivors are willing to participate; 2. There are more survivors that meet the research criteria than time and resources allow to interview; and, 3. Many of these survivors live in foreign countries. This research project focuses on female trafficking survivors inside the United States.

As stated in Chapter 1, human trafficking is an extremely covert and hidden crime and as such, statistics are difficult to obtain making it even more difficult to identify the victims. This is a limitation that is beyond the reach and scope of this research project.

### **Positionality**

One's positionality is deeply influenced by identity, race, class, gender, ideas, culture, and commitments (Noblitt, et al., 2004). How we learn, come to know things and understand the world is informed by our lived experiences. My positionality comes from my lived experiences as a female, storyteller, paralegal, raised in a Southern Baptist home who has lived abroad, has been a single parent, cancer survivor, has overcome adversity that includes, bullying, gender and economic inequality, tragedy and then some more tragedy. As such, my epistemology/positionality is categorized as 1) a feminist, 2) a critical theorist, and 3) an ethnographer. As a female who has struggled with issues of patriarchy, economic oppression and religious oppression I seek to eliminate abuses of oppression, power and structure that lead to human rights abuses and encourage social justice. As discussed in the theoretical framework in Chapter Three the theories of the critical feminist paradigm, specifically as it relates to a transformative healing process and educational possibilities by utilizing one's voice is my personal epistemology from where I approach this research. Critical theory focuses on relationships, inequalities and power relationships without emphasizing gender related issues. Feminist theory focuses on women's rights and gender equality and includes the role of women in society; their rights, privileges, interests, and concerns.

I began this project as a researcher and human rights advocate. As an outsider to any significant human rights violation it can be difficult to personally relate to research Participants who have suffered as the women in this study did. My only connection to these incredible women is that we are women and we are passionate human rights advocates. It was through these positionalities that we bonded. I employed self-reflexivity by being critically and explicitly conscious of the experiences and narratives I collected throughout this research through reflective journal writing. What we learn about ourselves as a result of studying “others” is an important component in any ethnography (Cheseri-Strater, 1996). I recognize my power and social structure as an educated, white, middle class, female and how these differences could influence my data collection, analysis and findings. It is this awareness of my positionality and the knowledge that we have different ways of knowing that caused me to evaluate my approach to the Participants of this study who, without question, come from multi-diverse backgrounds, economic and social classes, abusive families then to be stripped of all identify, freedom and forced into sex trafficking. As an ethnographer and researcher eager to find answers to my burning questions I understood that I was interviewing a vulnerable group of sex trafficking survivors and it was very important to allow them to tell their own story in a narrative format without multiple interruptions from me. Assessing my own privileged life of power is critical in negating the perpetuation of oppressive experiences that these Participants are still vulnerable to.

**Summary**

This chapter set forth the methodology used in this research project including, the research design; participant selection; instrumentation; data collection; data analysis with validity and trustworthiness; and limitations. The following chapter will present the findings from the data collection from the six research participants and the conclusions gathered about the three research questions.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the results of this qualitative study, not as concrete answers solving a quantitative question or theory, but through the narratives of survivor's voices as they relate to the three major goals, the three research questions and the major categories and themes identified in the data collection. I began this study to learn how these women, who are willing to invest themselves in the education and prevention of human trafficking, can use their voice of experience to offer other victims the hope desperately needed in the after-care, recovery process. As previously stated in this research project, there is a need for the creation of protected spaces for survivors of trafficking where those who choose to *break* the silence feel safe and for those who choose to *keep* silent will be nurtured and it is through the stories of the survivors that we can identify some of the conditions that lead to trafficking, thereby, helping us to disrupt the pattern of slavery, creating a paradigm shift that can assist in combating the problem. I wanted to hear from survivors their stories of what was instrumental in their aftercare success.

This chapter also discusses the demographics of the six participants and how they are important to the research goals and questions. These women were strong, courageous and quite passionate about the current state of human trafficking and the lack of

knowledge and education occurring about it in the United States. These Participants were selected because of their success throughout their aftercare process and their continued work, although admittedly frustrating, within the field of human trafficking education and survivor aftercare.

## **Demographics and Participant Introductions**

### *Demographics*

This section presents the demographics and participant introductions that corresponds with interview questions one and two although, throughout the narrative process of the interviews, additional personal information was collected as they addressed the remaining questions three through eleven. Table 2 presents the demographic data collected about the six study participants. Staying within the parameters of the research criteria, all six participants identified as human trafficking survivors who are female, over the age of 18 and either started/owned a business or started an anti-human trafficking NGO and/or working as a spokesperson speaking out against human trafficking. One participant identified as African American, one identified as Caucasian, two identified as Hispanic/Latina, one identified as Asian and one identified as mixed race, Asian and Caucasian. The participants ranged in age from 19 – 32. All six identified themselves as survivors of human trafficking, specifically sex trafficking. Mary was trafficked for 1.5 years; Star 12 years (the first year was spent in consensual prostitution before being trafficked); Alice for 5 years; Lyn for 5 years; Rose 6 years; and, Sue for 8 years. Participants One, Two and Six have returned to school. Mary is a college graduate with a Bachelor's degree, Star is currently enrolled in a Bachelor Degree program, Sue has a

Bachelor's Degree and is currently enrolled in a Master's program. Participant's Three, Four, nor Five have high school diplomas although all four expressed interest in earning their GED (General Education Development) and continuing on for some form of higher education or vocational training.

Table 2

## Participant Demographics

Participant	Gender	Race/ ethnicity	Age	Years in traffic	Description
Mary	Female	African American	27	1.5	Owens a bakery and recently opened a safe house for trafficking victims. Works diligently to ensure all ingredients and products used are Fair Trade.
Star	Female	Caucasian	32	12	Started an organization that ministers to street prostitutes and helps identify trafficking victims.
Alice	Female	Hispanic/ Latina	19	5	Designs, makes and sells jewellery through an online store, jewellery and craft fairs and festivals. Researches supply chains to ensure Fair Trade products. Works with Lyn.
Lyn	Female	Hispanic/ Latina	21	5	Designs, makes and sells jewellery through an online store, jewellery and craft fairs and festivals Researches supply chains to ensure Fair Trade products. Works with Alice
Rose	Female	Asian	23	6	Working as a marketing assistant in a church organization that helps identify victims of human trafficking and also travels to different churches giving presentations on trafficking.
Sue	Female	Asian/ Caucasian	28	8	Started a church and Christian ministry for trafficking victims. Through a local church she runs a safe house for victims. She is currently pursuing her Master's in Religious Counselling.

*Participant Introduction*

**Mary.** Mary is a female African American who is 27 years old. She was lured into sex trafficking at the age of 18, not long after she graduated from high school. She answered an ad in the newspaper that was offering job opportunities that included travel and large salaries. She comes from a lower income background and wasn't ready for college at that time in her life. She remembers hoping that a job that involved travel would help her escape from the town she was living in. She was 20 years old when the police arrested her captors and she spent two weeks in jail for prostitution until it was confirmed that she had been held against her will. She doesn't know how it happened, or who contacted the NGO but, she was moved into a safe house where she was given free medical and mental health care. Growing up she enjoyed cooking but it was here at the safe house that she developed a love for baking. After six months at the safe house and with the help of the sponsoring NGO and financial aid, she enrolled in the local college where she took some culinary classes but ended up majoring in Business Administration, which has served her well. While in school, she began creating and selling her baked goods for friends, birthdays, parties, and eventually small catering jobs. She also started working as an advocate for the anti-human trafficking campaign her sponsoring NGO was working on. Today, she owns her own bakery and has recently opened a safe-house specifically for trafficking victims. She considers herself very lucky that she never developed a drug or alcohol dependency and that she was given an opportunity for a second chance.

**Star.** Star is a 32 year old Caucasian female who was from a broken and abusive home she quit school and moved out West when she was 16 to try her hand at modelling and acting. Within one year she was an alcohol and drug addict and had entered into prostitution to pay for drugs and survive financially. Within one year of starting “the business”, as she refers to it, her “Daddy” (pimp) sold her to a friend in Las Vegas where she was transported and forced to work in the sex industry for another 11 years. In 2010, under pressure from law enforcement for charges not related to prostitution or human trafficking, her captors fled the area leaving her and 10 other women homeless. She and several of the other women found a homeless shelter where she was approached by Mormon missionaries who asked her to read their literature and eventually invited her to a service. She began attending meetings regularly and joined the church a year later. The church helped her financially to get back on her feet, get her GED and enroll in college. She started an organization that ministers to street prostitutes by providing gift bags, blankets and her business card with her number so they can call for help at any time. She walks the streets of the popular communities where prostitution is prevalent every evening speaking to women who are involved in prostitution as well as the pimps trying to identify trafficking victims. She also educates communities about human trafficking and operates on donations alone. She is currently serving a one year mission in the field as required by Mormon doctrine and attending college part-time for her Bachelor’s degree in Psychology. She wants to work as a licensed therapist for those in the sex industry.

**Alice.** Alice identified as a 19 year old Hispanic/Latina woman from a small town in Mexico who was brought into the United States at 11 years old for what she and her family thought was domestic work and a better education. When she arrived, she was sold to a pimp and forced into sex work for the next five years. She and three other young women (one of whom was Lyn) actually escaped when a “John” (a male who pays for sex) felt sorry for her and paid extra to take them away to a motel for sex and allowed them to leave. Although terrified, because they had no money and no documentation, they eventually went to the police. They were all taken into protective custody but released after their captors were arrested. The total number of women rescued because of their brave escape and presentation to the authorities was 48. Because she was a juvenile, 16 years old, at the time of her escape, she was placed in a safe harbour home for youth. While at the home she was required to take high school classes but because her captors kept her and the other women alienated from the outside world, she had no English skills, she eventually quit and left the house because she was confused, scared and there were too many rules and requirements. She lived on the streets with Lyn and started working as a prostitute to make money. She did this for two more years, until she was 18, when a church group began handing out bags every week with basic necessities, blankets and cards with a toll-free number to call if they wanted help. After weeks of talking to the church group, she accepted their help, was given a place to stay and medical and mental health care. She was also provided with English lessons and is almost fluent in reading and writing. During her stay she was introduced to art therapy and she learned to make jewellery. She now designs and makes jewellery and sells it online, at jewellery and craft

shows and at festivals. She has recently moved into an apartment with Lyn and plans on getting her GED soon.

**Lyn.** Lyn is a 21 year old Hispanic/Latina woman who came from a small neighboring town of Alice in Mexico. She was 13 years old when she left and, like Alice, was also promised domestic work and an “American education.” As stated in Alice’s introduction, Lyn escaped when a “John” paid extra to take them away to a motel for sex and allowed them to leave. She was also taken into protective custody and released after her captors were arrested. Because she was 18 years old at the time of her escape, she was released with no money and nowhere to go. She lived mainly on the streets or stayed with different people for a few nights at a time and eventually went back to prostitution for income. She and Alice remained friends, and when Alice left the youth home they lived together on the streets for approximately two years until the church group began offering help while handing out bags every week with basic necessities, blankets and cards with a toll-free number to call if they wanted help. Together with Alice, she also accepted help from the group and was given a place to live, medical and mental health care. She also took advantage of the English classes offered and communicates easily in both Spanish and English. She developed a love for drawing during art therapy and discovered that she had a creative eye for designing and drawing out jewellery ideas. She and Alice now sell handmade jewellery online and at jewellery and craft shows and festivals. She also sells her paintings. She wants to earn her GED and eventually attend college to either become an art teacher or an art therapist.

**Rose.** Rose is a 23 year old Asian woman from Thailand who was sold by her parents to her traffickers when she was 13 years old. She was first transported to what she believes was Germany to work in a massage parlour that was a front for a sex trafficking ring. She doesn't know how long she was kept there because she and the other women were drugged daily. Over the next six years she was moved multiple times and ended up here in the United States again working in a massage parlour that was a front for a brothel. Again, she has no idea how long she was kept in the brothel before her release. A church organization began visiting the massage parlour dropping off bags with toothbrushes, hairbrushes, soap and papers with phone numbers. At the time her English was broken and she had no access to a phone. She didn't know at the time but the church was working with the local authorities and eventually her traffickers were arrested. She and the other women were taken to the police station but not arrested. She was 19 years old which made her too old for juvenile protection but she had no money, nowhere to go and she was terrified. The church group working with the police had been called and a member of the group showed up offering help to those who wanted it. Reluctantly, she went with the group member, along with five other women, and was provided a place to stay, food, medical and mental health care. She said it took her four weeks before she would speak to anyone other than the women she was rescued with. She lived in fear of being re-trafficked for a very long time. She eventually began working with the church organization traveling to different churches in their state giving presentations on human trafficking. She is now on staff at the church scheduling events to present at and is helping with a new national marketing campaign to help end human trafficking. She

hasn't gone back to school yet but disclosed that she wanted to get her GED and eventually go to college.

**Sue.** Sue is a 28 year old Asian/Caucasian female who was prostituted by her father for drugs beginning at the age of 12 years old and continuing until she ran away from home at 15 years old. She lived on the streets where she was lured into the sex trade by an older man who showered her with affection, bought her new clothes and shoes, gave her a place to live and told her he loved her. He forced her to have sex with multiple men a night in order to pay for his lifestyle. When she was 17 she was arrested for prostitution, he paid her bail and she went back to him. She admitted that she thought they loved each other and she was helping him by continuing to perform sexual acts for money. One evening, while working on the street, a young female missionary, approached her asking about her work and gave her a business card explaining that if she ever needed help to please call. She spoke to the woman almost daily for many months. She kept the card but didn't call. At the age of 18 years old she got pregnant and because she was unsure of whom the father was he beat her until she miscarried. She got pregnant again almost immediately but this time he allowed her to have the baby, a girl, and used the child as leverage to keep her close and earning money. She decided she didn't want her child growing up the way she did so she hid and saved money as she could without getting caught. A year later she found the card from the missionary, called and with her help she took the baby and left. The missionary found her and her baby a room in a safe house specifically for trafficking victims where they stayed for six months. She began attending church regularly and one of the members opened their home to her and the

baby to live. It took her almost six years but she earned her GED and her Bachelor's degree in Religious Studies and is currently pursuing her Master's Degree in Religious Counselling. With the help of the church she started her own ministry, which includes a safe house for women who have suffered traumatic injury through abuse and specifically, human trafficking. She has heard, through a friend, that her trafficker was eventually arrested on various charges. That was eight years ago and she still lives in fear that he will find her one day.

### **Three Research Questions**

Six research participants were interviewed two times for a total of 12 face-to-face interviews using an interview guide that corresponded with the study's main research goals and three main research questions.

1. How can we make heard the invisible voices of those survivors who want to speak out against trafficking and from this perspective, how can we improve education about trafficking?
2. How do we disrupt the pattern of slavery?
3. How can we, particularly in the conflict and education fields, bring more weight and direct action to the resolution of these issues in the U.S., as well as internationally?

The unstructured interview process was estimated at 60–90 minutes for the initial interview and an additional 60 minutes for a follow-up meeting. The first set of six initial interviews ranged in length from 75 minutes to 140 minutes with the average interview

lasting 107.5 minutes. The second set of interviews ranged in length from 35 minutes to 105 minutes with the average interview lasting 70 minutes. This section discusses the findings for each of the research questions in detail based on the nature of qualitative narrative research from the responses of each of the participants. Verbatim excerpts from the participants are provided where appropriately related to each theme identified.

The main themes identified were:

1. Identity
2. Trust
3. Interventions
4. Recovery
5. Changes in consciousness

As the Participants began telling their stories early themes of identity and trust began to emerge by describing their experiences from the onset of trafficking through their aftercare process and what it felt like to be a trafficking victim and then a survivor. Not wanting to re-victimize the Participants by asking them to speak about details they didn't want to share I asked each of them to tell their stories based on their own comfort level. Surprisingly, four of the six Participants shared very intense and striking details that will only be shared here when absolutely necessary. Their identities were profoundly tied to the victim/survivor characteristic and shared in great detail the experience of powerlessness and what it felt like to be completely controlled by another human being. All six of the Participants were deeply engaged in the discussions on trust and how it felt

to not trust anyone and then transition into trusting loving relationships that helped them during their aftercare process and how building trust was instrumental in their recovery and current success. Each of the Participant's story disclosed interventions in their lives that greatly impacted their transformative identity, aftercare process and the work they are currently doing. Interventions included, law enforcement, aftercare/service providers and religious organizations. Five of the six Participants were provided aftercare through religious organizations and their stories present feelings of hope and meaning and the ways these organizations have helped them reconstruct their positionality from victim to survivor. Each Participant struggled in her own way with recovery and each described still being in varying phases of the process. They each had their own definition of 'recovery' and what that meant in their own lives. How they identified themselves and the changes in consciousness changed dramatically as they transitioned through the before, during and after process and how they identified as a victim and now, survivor. It was these changes in consciousness that led these participants to work towards re-empowerment and utilize that power to speak out and work towards ending trafficking.

### **Identity**

The theme of identity i.e. what it felt like to be a victim of trafficking, the feeling of powerlessness and what it meant to be under the power of someone else was prevalent throughout each of the six interviews conducted. For all of the participants it was the feeling of helplessness and being completely trapped and controlled by another person that led to their experiences of powerlessness. The terms 'trafficking' and 'trafficked' are still not promoted as phrases connected to victim identity. None of the six Participants

had ever heard the word trafficking and had no idea what it was until they were participating in their aftercare process. This is a critical oversight in that identity, having a language to describe your situation, is decisive in the recovery process. Identity is often wrapped up in labels and a general lack of knowledge or education about trafficking can be part of the progression, along with the abuse, of disempowering women. Although none of the Participants spoke specifically to the subject of identity they all shared struggles of being a victim and feeling helpless and hopeless. Before their trafficking experience they identified as young girls, some from broken and abusive homes, some just looking to make changes in their lives. During their trafficking experience they all identified as victims who had been stripped of all power and hope. After their experience four of the Participants identified as a survivor who now feels empowered to take control of her own life and feel this transition is what has led them to their current anti-trafficking and aftercare work. It is important to note that putting a name or label to the abuse was intrinsically vital not only to their recovery but their unyielding desire to prevent other young women from falling prey to sex trafficking.

### *Before*

All of the participants identified as having difficult lives growing up, all related to poverty, economic hardships, lack of employment and education, a few suffered abuse ranging from emotional to sexual and one from the cultural expectation that she would be sold by a certain age.

Mary identified as an African American who is 27 years old and shared,

You know, I grew up on the streets, I mean, before, I was just your typical black girl from a poor neighborhood. But like, I wasn't abused or anything growing up, I mean, my parents were divorced and they weren't overly involved in my life but, you know, I got through high school, I mean, I graduated. . . I just wasn't ready for college and they didn't tell us about financial aid or any of that stuff in high school and, you know, my mom couldn't afford that but I knew I didn't want to stay there either. I was ready to move on but I didn't know how to make that happen. I didn't want to be the girl flipping burgers the rest of my life, you know?

Mary described her home life as typical of a poor black community with one parent who worked a lot to provide for her and her siblings. There were no economic opportunities and college was not an option but she desperate to make a better life for herself. She continued,

Me and my friend were looking through the paper, not the regular newspaper but one of those small free ones you get like at the grocery store. Anyways, in the job section there was this ad that said something like high school grads wanted, good pay, they would train, you could travel and, of course, I thought, hell yeah, that's my kind of job. Thinking back, the ad never said what kind of work it was, but whatever, I called. . . I talked to this guy on the phone who said he was doing the phone interview and if he liked me and I passed that part then I could come in for the real interview. He said I had a real nice voice, asked me about my grades in school and if I had any job experience. Like, he really made it sound legit, you know? So, at the end of the call he said I did real good and said he wanted to invite me to the office for the real in person interview, so, of course I went. . . The interview was in a office, you know, a real office with a computer and all that. I talked to a black man and woman. They just asked me the same questions as the guy on the phone but they had me stand up and turn around and walk across the room. . . I was 18 and had never been to a real job interview, what did I know? Anyways, they said I would be selling stuff and told me to be back there the next day for training. I went back the next day and there were lots of other women there, like, probably 10, maybe. Then they said they were taking us to the training place so they loaded us in this van and took us to this warehouse. They divided us up in groups of two or three. I don't know where the others went but my group was taken to this beat up run down house. Up until that point, we really had no idea what was going on, I mean, we weren't yelled at, we weren't threatened. They just kept telling us we were going to our training spots. It was when we got to the house that we knew something was really wrong.

Star shared that her home life growing up was very difficult and abusive with a mother who regularly accused her of stealing her boyfriends after they had raped her. She regularly skipped school and never felt like she belonged anywhere,

Well, you know, um, I moved out there to really escape my life back home, I mean, um, it was bad, you know, um, my mom's boyfriends would do stuff to me and then she would accuse me of stealing them from her, um, it was just bad. . . I mean, um, I definitely wasn't a typical teenager I don't guess, I mean, no, not at all. . . I just wanted to become a model or an actress, you know (laughing). Yeah, I became one all right. So, after about a year or so I was already messed up on drugs and alcohol and didn't have any money. I mean, um, age wasn't an issue, you know, um, I was only, well, by that time, I guess I was 17 but, so, I met this guy at a bar and he started paying attention to me, telling me how beautiful I was and that I should be a model. I thought he was 'da bomb, you know? I mean, he had expensive looking jewellery drove a BMW and always wore, like, you know, um, really nice clothes. After a couple of weeks he started buying me nice expensive things and of course feeding my drug and alcohol habit. . . It's what they call, um, "grooming." He was grooming me, for sure.

Yeah, so, um, it wasn't long after that I moved into his place and there were like, um, three other girls there. They were my wives-in-law. But, you know, um, I had my own room, nice stuff and then he made his move. He convinced me that I'd make a great dancer so he had one of the girls teach me how to dance which um, you know, led to stripping, which, um, led to prostituting but he had me convinced he loved me and I loved him and really, I loved all the stuff. . .

Alice added,

I was so young when I left Mexico for the US, I was only 11 and I was just a typical little girl. In our town there wasn't much work and everyone lived the same way, we were all poor but we didn't know that when we were young. I did what every other kid did, we played and worked in the house and learned to cook and helped take care of brothers and sisters. . . we really only went to school up to a certain age, maybe 3<sup>rd</sup> grade for the girls then we stayed home and learned how to cook and take care of babies.

One day a man and a woman drove up to our town in a very fancy shiny car telling people that they had jobs for the girls in the US working as, like, babysitters that paid well and we could go to school, real schools and then to

college. . . It was very exciting to think about that possibility and to go to the US. That was big.

Although from a different town, Lyn echoed Alice,

We didn't have much growing up. I shared a room with two sisters and I also had one brother. . . The girls didn't go to school as long as the boys. I guess there really wasn't any reason to go. I never knew a single girl who went to high school or college, that's just not what they did. You didn't leave, you stayed and got married and had kids and cooked, that's all.

When they came around telling us about jobs in the United States, I didn't really know what they were talking about but they started showing pictures of girls dressed in really nice clothes and carrying book bags. The people in the pictures looked so different from us and they looked happy. . . You know, even at 13, it didn't take much to convince me that I needed what they were offering.

Rose shared her story of inequity as a young child and the commonality in her community of being sold by parents at such a young age,

It was common, almost expected, that when a young girl reached a certain age she would be sold. It was never a secret and really, I think we all kinda knew where the girls went but it was never really talked about. . . and once the girls left, they almost, they almost never came back. . . if they came back, they didn't stay long because, well, it was very shameful to the families, which to me is ironic because they sold them in the first place.

I asked Rose if she ever considered herself a victim even before her family sold her, knowing what would eventually occur, she answered,

When it is expected of you, no, no, I don't think any of us thought of ourselves as victims, I mean, we were scared, we were terrified of having to leave our families, not knowing what was going to happen but, it was expected of us. It was how we contributed to our family. . . it was kind of our obligation, I guess. I mean, of course, looking back now, it's easy to see that we were victims of our, culture, I guess you would say but at the time, no, I didn't see it that way.

Sue had what seemed like a lifetime full of victimization. Her drug addicted father began selling her when she was twelve and although she doesn't know for sure, she believes that her mother was either voluntarily selling herself for drugs or her father was selling her as well. During the interview process Sue never blamed her mother because, as she described, "My mother was never there when it happened, although, I'm sure she knew it was happening, how could she not?" She added,

You know, when it's your own father, you pretty much feel like you have to do what he says, especially when you're 12. . . It wasn't until I was 15 that I really, I just really, well, it was either leave or I was, I was really considering suicide. . . of course, then, I jumped out of the frying pan and into the fire.

I never had a, I guess what most would consider, a normal childhood, I mean, I was surrounded by drugs and alcohol and some real losers, like, real thugs and scumbags. My parents didn't work, they sold drugs, that's just what they did, we just, I just really lived in what you call the projects and it was a way of life. . . I didn't know anything different. I didn't really have friends but the kids I knew lived near me and they pretty much had the same life. Thinking back, even the school I went to was poor. . . like, there weren't any rich kids that went to school with me, not that I know of or remember.

As we saw in some of the literature that was reviewed, Lindio-McGovern (2007) suggests that vast economic hardships that create or reproduce gender, race and class inequalities impose exploitive and dehumanizing circumstances upon women such as human trafficking. While listening to these women speak, it was clear that economic, racial and social identity and inequality played a large role in the creation of the unsafe spaces in which they became victims of trafficking.

*During*

When we discuss victims of trauma we often don't think about the implications of the term 'victim', what it actually refers to, to whom it refers and what message it implies (Meredith, 2009). Each of the six participants speak to being victimized, powerless and completely defenseless.

Ritual abuse is often used as a function to destroy the identity of a victim and create a sense of powerlessness, "abusers use repetition, routine and ritual to force [victims] into the patterns of behaviour they require, to instill fear and ensure silence, thus protect themselves" (hopesurvivors.com). Mary described how she quickly learned to do exactly as her traffickers told her to lessen the abuse that would ensue should she fight. Being a young black woman from a poor community she said that she was educated on the "ways of the world" and knew what it was like to grow up around street violence and a drug infested neighborhood but could never have imagined something like this would happen to her.

So, yeah, it was there that they made us strip and put on these tight slutty dresses and heels. That's when it clicked that what we were selling was ourselves. . . That house was where I stayed, in the basement for the next year and a half. . . all I could think about was my momma and wanting to go home. Like, physically, I had no clue where I was, I mean, we didn't stay in the van that long but, you know, all that reasoning stopped the first time I was raped and then the beatings started and we were barely fed. But, that's how they "train" you and keep you in submission, they take away your dignity, your strength. . . One of the girls fought, I mean she fought hard but the more she fought to more she was raped and beaten. I learned real quick to keep my mouth shut and just do what they told me.

You know, as mad as I was about being arrested for prostitution and being in jail those two weeks, it was almost a relief. I had a bed and food and didn't have to work 18 hours a day. . . My biggest fear was being released and having to go back to them.

Star described being controlled by her trafficker and the process of ‘grooming’ girls and being sold and exchanged between traffickers.

I had to give him every dime I made but I had everything I needed so I thought I was happy but then he started getting, um, he started getting real possessive and I wasn't allowed to go anywhere without him and he controlled all of our work. Instead of the girls going out on the street for work, the johns started coming to us. . . I guess it was about a year, maybe, later, um, that it changed. One night a group of real thug looking guys came in grabbed me and one other girl by the hair and they um, they duct taped our mouth and hands and threw us in the back of this big truck. . . No clue how long we drove, it was morning when we got to Vegas. . . We were told he had sold us to these guys.

So, yeah, um, then I was just trapped, like, I didn't see any way out. They, um, you know, they um, just took over our lives but it wasn't like before, we didn't have the good room or clothes or jewellery, you know? It was bad for a long time.

Alice described her enslavement that started out as an adventure full of hope and promise and turned into her worst nightmare filled with terror,

It's strange to think back about how excited, but scared, I was to come to the U.S., I didn't know what to expect, I was very young, but the pictures they showed us and the stories they told us of the great life we could have was very exciting. . . It didn't take long for our excitement to turn to terror. Our clothes were taken from us, all of our things were taken. We were beaten if we didn't do exactly what they told us to do. Several men at a time would take turns raping us, they said they were training us for our new jobs. . . We weren't allowed to leave our rooms except when someone bought us for sex or a couple of times we were taken to some place to dance, like strip stuff. I wasn't good at it and I guess too young for that so I didn't do much of that.

The only reason we escaped is because I convinced a repeating john that we were not doing this by choice, he felt sorry for us. It was unusual for the traffickers to let a john leave the premises with a girl but he offered a lot of money and told them he was entertaining business associates and needed at least four girls. I would probably still be there if it wasn't for him. . . I wish I knew how to get in touch with him, I never really got to thank him.

Lyn shared her lack of freedom, complete control by her traffickers and how the only way to keep them happy was by bringing in money,

My life wasn't my own, I belonged to the traffickers. We had to eat what they gave us, wear the clothes they gave us we had no freedoms at all. . . We had quotas we had to fill, you know, a certain number of men we had to have sex with. It was usually 18 a night about 2 an hour for 9 hours, sometimes more but never less even if we were sick or on our periods, it didn't matter. We always had to do exactly what they told us and it was never good if you didn't and we always had to make the customer happy, no matter what. . . Sometimes, the only way to get through it is to imagine hurting or killing them (laughing), I probably shouldn't say that but it's true. We did all kinds of things just to get through the nights.

I asked her if that quota was for every girl or 18 men total per night and was there that many people wanting to purchase sex, her response was,

No, that was every girl every single day. . . and if you cried, complained or refused to work you were beaten, raped, not fed and kept away from the other girls for a few days. . . There were always men coming through there every night, it never stopped, even on holidays, sometimes there were even more on the holidays. . . more than one girl tried to kill herself but only one actually did it. It was really sad because she found out she was having a baby and they made her have an abortion, but not at a hospital or anything, they did it there where we lived and she was in so much pain and got really, really sick and we weren't allowed to help her. So, anyways, she got some pills somewhere and took a bunch of them. . . We used to say she was the lucky one.

Rose described how her traffickers would use what could be defined as psychological warfare to influence their victim's attitudes and create a sense of gratitude that they were protected from the johns while being beaten and raped by their captors.

There were many girls that fought the men who had us and refused to do the work. They were beaten sometimes beaten to death. . . None of us wanted to be doing it but it was either that or beaten and raped. . . it was easier to do the work. . . Sometimes the johns would try to get rough with us saying they paid so

they could do what they wanted but they were thrown out and not allowed to come back. . . So, I guess, in some weird way they protected the girls but then they would beat anyone who disobeyed. . . it was like, they could beat us but nobody else could. . . we were told all the time that we should thank them for not letting the men beat up on us but we weren't thankful, we still hated them.

Our traffickers always held our families lives over our heads, they would threaten to kill our parents or threaten to bring our younger siblings into the same torture we were having to endure.

Sue talked about how her trafficker kept her isolated from the outside world so that he could maintain complete control over her. She also shared how special he made her feel at first when he was buying her clothes telling her he loved her and admitted that even after he forced her into prostitution she couldn't see what he was really doing to her, he convinced her it was normal. For her, it was easy to believe the lies after growing up in drug and physical abuse while her own father trafficked her for drug money.

When I first ran away from home, I really thought I had done something, you know? I was 15 and just left, just left the house one day and never went back. That was really, I don't know, I guess I just felt strong even though I was living on the streets and had no money, I just felt like I had this strength now. . . I met him one day I was with a group of other girls who had left home and he started talking to us but he focused on me. I was 15 and he was older, dressed nice, drove a nice car. He didn't pressure me he just took his time doing his thing, he knew what he was doing that's for sure. . . but it didn't take long before he was buying me things and people have asked me, "Why didn't you just leave sooner?" and I just say, "You don't have to be tied down to be held hostage. Fear can control you." It's hard for people to understand, I guess if you haven't been there. I mean, yeah, I had free movement, I guess you could say, like, most of the time I could come and go but he always made sure I knew that he would find me if I ever tried to leave or he would guilt me into staying and really, what was I going to do, I was so young, just a baby really. He controlled me without me knowing it.

Of the six Participants, only Participants Three and Four referenced women who were involved in their trafficking and they were only mentioned at the recruitment stage and

not during their captivity. While new research shows that women are playing a larger part in the recruitment of trafficking victims it has been a largely male dominated system whereby they simply control the women by use of physical force that includes physical abuse, rape, and psychological abuse. Heilbroner (1985) suggests that it is our current patriarchal society that places women at risk or exploitation and the power to use force or inflict suffering that “remains the essence of the capacity for domination” (p. 39).

*After*

I am not what happened to me, I am what I choose to become.

—C.G. Jung

Of the six Participants, four of the women rejected being identified as a victim and choose the term survivor to adequately define their current lives. Below they discuss what it means to them to be free and to take back control of their lives. Sue offered,

I thought that leaving, both times, would give me some control over my life I could make my own decisions. Boy was I wrong. The truth is it wasn't until I started grad school that I felt free from others. . . and I can't really explain it except it was literally, one day it was like a light bulb came on and I realized, hey, I'm calling the shots now. . . You know, I grew up having to do things on my own, I didn't have the mom or dad that cooked for me or made sure I did my homework. We didn't have holidays either, there wasn't Christmas or Thanksgiving or anything like that so I learned really early on that whatever I got, I had to get myself, nobody was going to do it for me, that's for sure.

It's weird to think about, now, I mean, back then I didn't recognize myself as a victim. You know, I don't really know if anyone does that because you do what you have to do to survive or you check out.

I don't really like the word victim, to me, that's something that is ongoing, like you never get over it or move on, you know what I mean? I like survivor much better, sounds more hopeful to me.

Star shared,

You take for granted your freedom, I mean, um, we don't really think about it until, um, until it's gone, you know what I mean? To be able to eat what I want, when I want, um, to have friends, make my own decisions, um, it's, you know, it's, I'm just really enjoying my freedom.

You know, um, it's funny sometimes because some people really give me a hard time about, um, about being Mormon and question whether I'm really free because, you know, um, I guess there are, um, all sorts of stories out there about us and the whole, um, Sister Wives thing and, um, you know, that just really cracks me up because I'm like, 'what kind of stupid question is that?'

It is hard, though, sometimes, um, you know, to be Mormon. I mean, we have a lot of rules but it just, um, it just really depends on how you look at it. They're my family, we, um, we are a family and you know, I don't, um, I don't know what I would do without them. They've helped me become, um, they've really helped me become the person I am today and support the work I do.

Mary shared,

I think about the irony so often of being free. Before, when I had graduated from high school I just wanted to get a job and make money so I could be free. . . when you're a kid all you can think about is being free from your parents, being free from school, being free from people telling you what to do.

I know I was a victim of trafficking, I mean, that's not something anyone can deny but, I don't see myself that way anymore, I don't think anyone should that's come out the other side. You know what I mean? I mean, if you've survived anything like that and you're not playing a victim, you're definitely a survivor and should really move into that role, if that makes any sense. Survivors don't play that victim card, that woe is me, I've been wronged thing. I mean, I'm compassionate and empathetic and people need time to move on, I get that but, I really like to tell the girls in my house that until you can put it behind you and move forward, you're only going to dwell on the past not focus on the future. . . I'm not all hard-core, you know, suck it up and get over it, that's not what I mean. It's just, after a while, you have to make that decision that that's not who you are any longer and you have to keep moving forward.

In their interviews, Participants Three and Four still identified as victims. Both were very young when they were trafficked into the same trafficking ring, eventually went through aftercare together and continue to live together while running a jewellery making business. Lyn discussed her future of continuing her education to become an art teacher or art therapist. She shared,

I don't want people to feel bad for me for being a victim of trafficking that's why I don't really tell people, like, just in conversation. I mean, of course, people know because when we sell our jewellery, especially at things like human trafficking seminars or conferences our little brochure says we were trafficked and now we are making this stuff to sell and we do give some of our money back to the house that helped us get out, so, people know, but I don't like come out and just say, "hey, I'm a trafficking victim."

I like that art is kinda my job now. It's sort of therapy and work all in one. I want to help other girls that are victims learn how to use art as a way to sorta help them.

Alice was 11 years old when she was trafficked and now, eight years later, although she has a successful business and a strong support system she struggles daily with feelings of inferiority and worthlessness wondering frequently if her life will ever amount to anything more than what she is currently doing. She shared her feelings,

I have had guys ask me out but I can't let myself say yes, I can't even be friends with guys. Sometimes I still have a hard time trusting them just in general but mostly it's because, how do you tell him something like that? I don't think I could keep my past a secret from my boyfriend but how could I expect a guy to date me or love me knowing that I've been with hundreds, literally, hundreds of men. . . my therapist always tells me that when I meet the right person I will be able to tell him and he won't judge me for it but I still don't really believe that.

I asked her if she would like to get married and have a family some day and she responded,

I would really love to get married and have kids. I come from a big family and we are all still close even though I don't see them often, I hope that will change one day. But, yes, I really want to. I always hope that my therapist is right and one day I'll meet somebody that I can tell things to and he will still stay. I don't know, it seems so, it just doesn't seem like that would happen except maybe in the movies or something.

Rose identifies as a survivor and admits to utilizing her current speaking engagements with the public about human trafficking as learning experiences and sources of empowerment to help her combat the occasional feelings of low self-worth and self-esteem. Although she speaks in public on a regular basis and had no trouble during the interview, she is very shy and only engaged in her storytelling after we had several telephone conversations and we had talked for almost 45 minutes in person about random topics. She shared,

I love what I'm doing with the church, the traveling and talking to different people and organizations and sometimes it gets old and frustrating telling my story over and over to strangers and answering all kinds of questions from people I don't know but a lot of the time I kinda use it to make me stronger because I know if I can do this then I can do anything and most days I really believe that.

For the most part, I'm happy where I'm at, I mean, I would like to, no, I WILL go to school and get a education because it's something I just feel like I can do now. I kinda feel like I should, like I've been given a second chance and I just have to.

In my village, where I come from, you know, it was just expected that girls would be sold and it was not spoken but everyone knew what would happen to them and where they would go. But the crazy thing is, if a girl was lucky enough to escape or whatever and go back home, she would either be shunned by the entire village or she would be killed by her family because of what she had been doing, it was shameful. That's why I never went home, I never wanted to. I miss my family, mainly my brothers and sisters and I wonder what happened to them but the older I get the less I understand how parents can sell their own children. It makes no sense to me.

All six of the Participants acknowledged that their identities had been stripped from them when they were trafficked, they were no longer individuals with names, families, lives of their own; they became faceless bodies whose only purpose was to make money for their traffickers. Each of the six participants shared the struggles they still face on a daily basis trying to reconcile their current identities. The women who had attended college seemed more confident and hopeful about their future than those who had not. Although Star relies heavily on the Mormon community for support she acknowledged that she wrestles with the identity conflict between being Mormon and being a feminist who works tirelessly for the women who are still enslaved in sex trafficking. She admits that there is a fine line within the Mormon community between being the proper Mormon female and being a feminist that you have to be careful not to cross. Participants Three and Four identities are slowly evolving from a victim-centered powerlessness to reconstructing the way they view their lives, freedom and their ability to create art to support themselves financially. For all six Participants the battle between what they were, a powerless victim, and what they are now, an empowered survivor, of human trafficking is very real and their identities are embedded in this struggle.

### **Trust**

Another recurrent theme and what I consider one of the most important, throughout all six participant interviews was the development of trust between survivor and service provider/counsellor and the creation of a safe space. All of the participants described varying levels of trust that had to be built before any of them would fully open

up to service providers and before any type of healing could begin. Rose was particularly resistant to trusting anyone and stated,

I wouldn't just not talk to anyone I wouldn't look at anybody in the eye either. All I did was cry and hide in my room. In my mind I didn't know they were trying to help me. I kept thinking any minute, men would start coming in for sex or I would be beaten or raped again. Some of the other girls who were with me in the home tried to tell me it was okay, but I was too scared. I wouldn't talk to any therapist and I wouldn't go to the group meetings. Even though I wouldn't talk or look at anyone they were still very nice to me, fed me and gave me clothes to wear. It took many weeks, maybe four, when my friend talked me into going to a group meeting. I listened to the other girls talk about the same things I went through but they weren't crying about it, they were laughing and joking with each other and they didn't act scared at all. No one tried to make me talk that meeting they just let me sit and listen. I don't know how many meetings it was, maybe five or six, when a girl was imitating a john, walking around all funny and it made me laugh. Nobody looked at me or made me feel weird and that was the day I started feeling a little safer.

Rose added,

I was scared for a long time that I would be taken away again but my house mother and my counsellor and my friends kept telling me I was okay now, everything would be okay. I don't know what I would have done without them, I might probably be dead somewhere. They made me feel safe and I started trusting them.

Sue shared,

My own dad started pimping me out for drugs when I was twelve, my own father! If you can't trust your parents, who can you trust? When I made the initial phone call for help, I was terrified, not for me but for my daughter. I knew he would hunt us down and take her from me. I didn't know if I could trust this missionary but I knew I had to try and I figured that she was from a church so who better to help us. She actually found us a room at a safe house seven states away. She paid for our bus ticket, it was the longest trip of my life, I just knew at every stop he would be there waiting for us. When we finally made it there were four people waiting at the bus station for us. They fed us and took us to the house. They made doctor and dentist appointments for both of us. My biggest concern was someone

trying to take my baby from me because she was over a year old and had never been to the doctor but they kept assuring me that wouldn't happen.

Sue continued,

I don't know when it happened that I actually started feeling safe and trusted the people who were helping us. I think it sort of happened gradually but one day I realized that we were going to be okay. They never pressured me stay or to start going to church, it just felt like the right thing to do. I know there are so many other women who aren't as lucky as I was and it makes me very sad to think of all the women out there who can't trust anyone. That's why I started my ministry, to help build trusting relationships with other victims so they can heal.

Mary said,

I didn't trust the police or anyone in authority. I grew up on the streets and saw first-hand how blacks were treated even if they didn't do anything wrong. So, when I was arrested for prostitution even though I was being forced to do it, it just, you know, reinforced that idea that you can't trust anybody.

When asked what the turning point was, when she thought the trust came, Participant One continued,

I don't know if the police contacted them or who but when they finally released me two weeks later there were some people from this agency or organization, I guess you would call them that was there waiting for me to get out of jail. They didn't force me to go with them or anything 'cause I was like 20 at the time but they sat down with me and told me how they could help me. I didn't have no place to go, I was broke and didn't want to see my family yet till I got cleaned up. I wasn't on drugs or nothing but I was just a mess. It was hard for me to really trust them at first but they helped me get medical treatment and I went to therapy by myself and with a group. That's when I found out there were others like me and we were all kinda going through the same or similar things. I guess I started building trust out of all that. I guess I've never really thought too hard about it, I mean, when you feel like you don't have any choices, you just sort of do what you have to do and hope for the best.

When I asked Mary if she thought trust was important in the healing process she stated, “Oh, absolutely, you can’t, you know, most people can’t or won’t talk or open up unless they trust whoever they’re talking to.” Star echoed that trust is the most important aspect of aftercare but also shared,

Trust? I trusted nobody, no how, no way. I still have a hard time trusting anybody and that makes it hard for the work I do today, you know, walking these streets every night trying to talk to these ladies in the business and the pimps out there. . . I mean, if I don’t trust anyone, especially them, why would they trust me to help them? I’m still a work in progress, you know (laughing)? This place is a mean business, there’s no mercy out there, you either perform or bad things happen so I’m trying to, you know, make myself more, what would you say? Approachable, maybe. Yeah, approachable. I need these girls, and guys sometimes, to trust me if I’m going to help them, you know?

When asked how she overcame her addictions and stayed off the street without trust, she answered,

Well, I guess, I probably had some level of trust somewhere that maybe I just didn’t realize ‘cause, I mean, there’s no way I could have survived without help. I mean, I’m pretty strong and everything, I’ve survived this long, but not totally by myself. It’s weird, I’ve never really thought about it, I don’t guess. Thinking back, I think most of my trust was placed in my church and the people there, you know? I can rely on them, no one there has thrown me under the bus yet.

I asked, “Yet?” she replied (laughing), “Well, you know, there’s always tomorrow. I’m kidding, I guess I’m always kinda waiting for something bad to happen.”

Participants Three, Four and Five had interesting views on trust because, upon their escape or rescue, their English was broken, which made it difficult and in the case of Rose, impossible to understand what was happening to them. Rose said, “The only English words I knew were “hello,” “goodbye,” and “thank you, very much,” it’s

terrifying when people try to talk to you but you have no idea what they are saying, which is one of the reasons I refused to talk for so long. I didn't know how to communicate, at all." Alice shared,

I was really scared because I was so, so young at the time, 16, and my English was very bad. There was a translator at the police department but I think her Spanish was worse than my English (laughing). . . They took me to a house for juveniles where no one spoke much Spanish they called it a "Safe Harbor Home" that was bullshit, it was a house for kids with all kinds of behaviour and mental problems. I hated it. I cried every day. They stole my shit and tried to pick fights. I thought every day, "What the fuck? I don't belong here." I look back now and I guess I can see how they were trying to help me, keep me off the streets but I didn't trust anyone there and I was just as miserable as I was when I was being prostituted. . . I finally got sick of it and ran away. My friend was waiting on me so we just bounced around living on the streets and went back, you know, to the life because, you know, it's like we knew we could make money doing that even though that's not what we wanted to do. . . I still couldn't speak much English but I got by enough.

When asked how the church group gained enough of her trust to help her she offered,

Honestly, they spoke fluent Spanish and not just some patched together words, they actually could hold a conversation. My friend didn't want to talk to them, she thought they were trying to trick us again, you know, like the pimps, or traffickers, or whatever you want to call them, did. . . They also gave us stuff like blankets, toothbrushes and toothpaste and they never pressured or forced us they just came around like, every week. . . I guess by that time, it had been about two years, I think, on the streets and I was just really tired of it. Tired of never knowing if I was going to eat that day, tired of wondering if the next john was going to smack me around or kill me. Tired of not having a bed to sleep in. I missed my parents but had no idea how to get in touch with them. So, after a few weeks, I guess, I just convinced her to give them a try, you know, it was all I had left at that point.

Lyn shared her trust issues with the church group and her desire to protect Alice,

I didn't want to accept their help. . . You know, I was older than her (Alice). I sort of felt like I had to protect her even though we were both just kids. . . When

you've been through what we did you don't trust people and I didn't want to trust them. . . She, she finally wore me down one night after they had been coming to see us for a couple of weeks, she just, man, she just begged me, she was just crying and just, desperate and she said she didn't want to go with them without me. Yeah, so, I finally said, "okay" and they next time we saw them, we just said we were ready for help. It was hard at first. . . I didn't want to like them. . . but, eventually, you know, I felt safe and I could see that she (Alice) felt safe, so, you know, like, what else was I going to do?

Survivors of human trafficking suffer with identity and self-perception problems, depression, demoralization, loss of confidence and dignity. As shared by Rose, trusting others did not come naturally to her as indicated by her inability to speak to or look at anyone for quite a while. She was fortunate in that her aftercare providers didn't force her to speak or participate and let her move through the process at her own speed. She eventually started joining small group sessions where she learned that she wasn't alone in her journey and that others were dealing with similar experiences. It was in a small group session that she laughed, really laughed, for the first time in many years and admitted that, "It felt so good I cried." It is through the development of trusting relationships that these women are able to develop new identities and position themselves in spaces that are safe and empowering.

### **Interventions**

Interventions within the aftercare process of human trafficking can come in many different forms. For the purpose of this project and the data pulled from the Participant's interviews I will focus on aftercare safe houses, art in the form of therapy, law enforcement and education as forms of intervention.

All six Participants attributed their current success in progressing from victim to survivor to the differing roles of intervention that were offered to each of them. Some of the Participants credit the law enforcement officials who took the time to understand the situation and obtain the proper system of care while others suggest law enforcement still needs proper training to understand exactly what a trafficking victim is and what course of action or protocol should be followed to ensure proper treatment. All of the Participants felt the safe house, whether religious or non-religious in orientation, was critical in their recovery process and some believe the art therapy they received was the catapult that initiated their current careers. Additionally, all six Participants felt that education about human trafficking is an important intervention practice that will help end human trafficking.

In her discussion about the aftercare process and moving forward, Mary talked about the influence her service providers had on her and her continued success as a baker/bakery owner and now owner of a new safe house for trafficking survivors.

I definitely would not be where I am today, I know that for sure. They made sure I got all the help I needed, supported me, encouraged me and really helped me develop my love of baking by letting me cook for the residents at the house. It's funny because the rules were, we were only allowed to have sweets or desserts on the weekends so that really cut into my baking time but I would come up with some recipe that was maybe a little lower fat or less calories so they would let me bake during the week. They helped me get into school and even after I moved out of the house which was right around a year later, I would still drop by for group meetings and take cupcakes or cookies that I had baked. Even when I moved out on my own, I never felt alone, I always knew they had my back.

When asked about the new safe house she opened, she shared,

I'm very excited about it, it's been a goal of mine for about 5 years now and my mentors, the ones who helped me when I needed it, have been there every step of the way helping me help other girls. It's been pretty amazing. If I can keep just one girl off the street then I've done something right.

Rose credits her aftercare therapy, particularly group therapy, for her ability to stand up in front of a crowd of people and talk about her experiences. She doesn't yet know when she will go to school but she is hopeful that it will be soon and she is considering majoring in Psychology and Social Work.

I was very shy as a little girl and even now I'm still shy around people I don't know but I can still get up and talk to people about sex trafficking because it's just very personal to me and I don't want any other girls to go through what I did. . . Being in group therapy helped me to talk in front of different people. Helped me to not be scared. I'm not sure I would be doing the work I'm doing if I hadn't done the group thing. I still go and sometimes I lead different groups. . . I think that's where I got the idea of becoming a social worker.

Along with Mary, Participants Three and Four both benefited from art/creative therapy in the aftercare process and led to the development of marketable job skills. Alice shared,

I love making jewellery. I never thought I was very creative growing up, you know, I drew and colored like most little kids but I wasn't good. I didn't realize, when I was first shown how to make jewellery that it was, what do you call it? Therapeutic? I guess I thought she (her therapist) was teaching me how just to give me something to do. I don't know, I don't really know what I thought but I know I liked it. I started mixing colors and textures and different size stones and eventually drawing and designing different pendants. I would spend hours trying new things. . . I was wearing a necklace I had made and a girl asked me where I bought it. I told her I made it and she asked if I would make her one. I did and then it seems like I was making 15 or 20 pieces a week and giving them away. . . It was my therapist who suggested I should sell them.

Lyn shared that the therapist at the safe house also introduced her to art therapy,

When I was a little girl I loved to draw. I didn't grow up going to school all the time like they do here so when I wasn't in school I would draw and draw and draw. . . When she first asked me to draw, I didn't know what to draw, I really didn't know what she wanted, I was blank. The first picture I drew was like, a horse, but not really a horse and it was a sketch with no color. I don't really know how to explain it. But, after a few times of her encouraging me I opened up and just really started drawing all kinds of things. Then, she let me paint, that's when I really started getting into it and really enjoying it. I started expressing all sorts of emotions through the color and pictures. . . It really helped me when I had a hard time talking about things that had happened and sometimes even my family.

She added, "I like that art is kinda my job now. It's sort of therapy and work all in one."

When asked about her future plans and where she wanted to take her art, she shared,

I'm signed up for GED classes right now so I want to get that and then go to college. I'd like to either be an art teacher or maybe an art therapist and help other girls like me. I don't know, maybe I'll do both.

Table 3 identifies the results concerning what type of organization or advocate played a significant role in each participant's aftercare process. The results show that 4 out of the 6 participants were rescued through police involvement, 5 out of the six participants received care and attribute their recovery and success to religious organizations. Participants One and Three were helped through privately run organizations with no religious affiliation. However, Alice was actually placed in a home because she was a minor at the time and had unsuccessful results, which led to her to run away and ended up back on the streets for another two years before receiving help from a religious organization.

Table 3

## Organizations That Played a Significant Role During Aftercare

Participant #	Aftercare organization
One	Police; Non-governmental organization (non- religious related)
Two	Religious Organization
Three	Police; Private Safe House (unsuccessful); Religious Organization
Four	Police; Religious Organization
Five	Police; Religious Organization
Six	Religious Organization

*Religion and Spirituality as an Intervention*

Participants Two, Three, Four, Five, and Six spent at least one year in a safe house that was run by a religious organization and received all of their medical, dental, mental health care through agencies that were associated with the religious organization.

Table 4

## Significance Religion Plays in Their Life

Participant #	Significance of religion
One	Important; Attends church but not regularly
Two	Extremely Important; Attends every church meeting and Bible study
Three	Important; Attends church but not regularly
Four	Important; Attends church but not regularly
Five	Very Important; Attends church regularly; travels to different churches to give presentations
Six	Extremely Important; Attends church regularly; developed her own ministry; majored in Religious Studies; pursuing Master's in Religious Counselling

Participants Two and Six felt very strongly about their religious and spiritual beliefs and shared that it was what helped them emotionally move past their experiences and it is their belief system and spirituality that continues to gets them through any dark

days. They both feel it is the foundation to their ministries and helping other victims of human/sex trafficking. Star shared,

My faith in God is where I get my strength to go back out on the street night after night. You know, um, I couldn't do that alone, not, um, not without His help and not without the support of my church. I know what people say about Mormon's, people try to argue me down all the time but I know what I know and I know what I believe and I know who has been there with me helping me and encouraging me.

When I asked if she felt that religion was oppressive to women she laughed and stated,

Oh sure, but, um, those are the very conservative people and from what I see, um, the women put themselves in those positions. They, um, they don't really know any better or they don't want to know any better. I mean, um, I can't hold any high position up in the church but, you know, I don't want to either, so it, um, doesn't really matter to me. I don't really think it's always a religion problem either, it's sorta like male problem in general trying to keep women down.

When asked about her support system and who helps Star offered,

My church family is my salvation, like, not literally, because we all know who really saves us. I mean, without God, we don't amount to anything. They helped pull me out of the gutters and they still support me and encourage me. I'm getting ready to start my year-long mission, it's a little late (laughing), I'm kinda old compared to most of the kids doing their missions but it's required and it's a good opportunity to help my cause. I can, you know, spread the gospel while looking for women who are being pimped out, abused, all that nasty stuff. . . And without sounding completely selfish, it helps me secure more funding for my organization.

Sue shared that she felt her spirituality is a part of her identity now, it's who she is and how she functions in this world today,

It's not just a part of me it's my entire being. I try not to get wrapped up in religion as far as denominations go. I really believe denominations are going to be a thing of the past. I think the church as a physical state and the rules they

subscribe to are quite archaic and don't offer the compassion and reception for people the way Jesus intended. . . In my ministry I stay away from labelling people Baptist, Catholic, Methodist, whatever, because I feel like it alienates them, that's not what's supposed to happen. We're all supposed to worship freely and accept each other's differences.

When asked how she felt about religious oppression, she shared,

Religious oppression breaks my heart. In my very limited experience I've seen it mostly in very conservative fundamental religions. . . Southern Baptists, Mormons, some Muslims, in my opinion, are probably the worst offenders and of course Amish and Mennonites but it's hard to compare those because that's an entire culture not just a religion. . . What really makes me the angriest, (laughs) I probably shouldn't say that because I'm studying to be a Religious Counsellor, but what makes me really mad is when I see or hear people killing in the name of religion or their god. I'm sorry, but my God would never tell anyone to kill in His name.

Rose continues to travel to different churches and give presentations on human trafficking and shared these thoughts,

Yes, my faith is very important to me. I spend a lot of time in prayer daily. It helps me stay mindful of why I am here doing the work I'm doing and it also gives me strength. . . It's happened a lot of times where I'll see a man somewhere and panic hits me because I think, "They've found me, they're coming to take me back." But I have to remind myself, and I still talk about this in therapy, that I am very protected here, no one is going to hurt me. So I pray for God's protection and to keep me strong.

Participants One, Three and Four admitted to attending church but none of them regularly. Participants Three and Four both went through aftercare with a religious organization and although they both seem very committed to the safe house and the people who run it neither of them are actively involved in church. They were both born and raised in Mexico and are from Catholic backgrounds. Neither had much to say about

religion but said that God is important to them. Mary is the only participant who went through aftercare in a non-religious organization and she shared,

I know I should go to church more often, like more than just major holidays (laughing). I spend most of my Sunday mornings in the bakery so that really cuts down on the church time. I didn't really grow up going to church so it's never been a part of my life. I'm very thankful for everything I've been given because, you know, things could have turned out much differently and I definitely believe in giving back to the community. I mean, I guess when I said religion or spirituality is important to me, I guess I mean on a more personal level, like how it feels to me, not necessarily going to church, singing hymns and listening to a preacher preach.

All six of the Participants continue to work with survivors of sex trafficking in some capacity. Mary has recently opened a safe house for trafficking survivors; Star started a non-profit organization dedicated to helping victims of human trafficking and sex workers; Alice regularly co-leads group sessions at the safe house where she received help and teaches the women how to make jewellery; Lyn also co-leads group sessions at the safe house where she received help and helps the women with art projects, therapeutic scrapbooking and jewellery making; Rose works for a church travelling to different churches, schools and organizations telling her story and educating others on human trafficking; Sue created a ministry for trafficking survivors and is currently working on her Master's degree in religious counselling to provide further treatment and care for survivors.

#### *Intervention by Law Enforcement*

There were varying opinions about law enforcement among the Participants. Mary was arrested and incarcerated for more than two weeks for prostitution. She stated

that the police either didn't want to listen to her story or just didn't believe her even though there were several young women who were telling the same story. She also theorized that the police had no idea what human trafficking actually was until they eventually started investigating the case, it was at that point she and the other women were released and all charges dropped. Star currently works with law enforcement and revealed that she doesn't trust them because she sees them buying sex on a regular basis from the same girls she is trying to rescue. She also equates their lack of education and knowledge about human trafficking for their victim blaming mentality. Participants Three and Four had a somewhat better experience with police even though there was a significant language barrier the girls weren't arrested but because of their lack of understanding about human trafficking none of the girls received proper help and ended up homeless out on the streets. Rose was never arrested and once she was rescued from her traffickers, law enforcement made sure she received the appropriate treatment and care. However, even though she didn't have a negative experience she is often discouraged while speaking to police officers about human trafficking and their lack of knowledge and understanding and the stories of mistreatment she often hears from other survivors. Sue was arrested multiple times for prostitution and not once was questioned about her age, why she was engaged in prostitution or offered any help or alternatives. Additionally, while growing up, her parents were often arrested on drug charges and investigated for child neglect or abuse but she was never removed from the home nor was she ever offered any help. She currently works closely with law enforcement at both the

local and federal levels and admits that she still harbors distrust in their processes when it comes to human trafficking and survivors.

When asked how she felt about law enforcement and did she think the police do a good job with trafficking victims Lyn said,

I don't think they do a good job of finding victims and putting traffickers or johns in jail because, you know, we had to escape but when we got to the police, I mean, they didn't really arrest us they just kept us safe but they really didn't help us either so I don't really know about that, you know, if they do a good job. I don't think so, not really.

I asked why she thought they didn't do a good job,

They probably don't know what to do, I mean, they at least found and arrested the men who bought and sold us but for us, the ones of us over 18, we were just let go and pretty much turned out onto the street with no money and no place to go. We didn't speak English, not much at least. I think, maybe, they should be taught what to do when they come across somebody that has been trafficked.

Sue shared,

It wasn't until after I escaped that I ever heard the term human trafficking. Even the missionary who talked to me on the street never used those words. And actually, it wasn't until last year that I found out I should have never been arrested and charged with prostitution, I was 17. Under the Federal Statute, anyone under the age of 18 involved in prostitution is automatically considered a trafficking victim. . . There's no consistency when it comes to human trafficking definitions mainly because people still don't know what it is. If the police don't know what it is then how is the public supposed to know what it is?

I don't really know how we can stop this madness if no one knows what they are looking for. I mean, I know to look for, you know what to look for, every victim, or survivor as you call us, and I like that by the way, knows what to look for, so why aren't the police getting the memo?

Star walks the streets almost daily of local neighborhoods known for prostitution, finding them isn't hard in the city she lives. She quite often gets frustrated with law enforcement for their harsh treatment and punishment of prostitutes while the pimps and the johns walk free.

Aw, you know, I, um, I work close with the police here but seriously, they still just make me mad because, um, you know, they don't even check to see if the girl they're arresting is doing it because she wants to, but who really wants to? Or if they, um, are being forced to do it. And the number of girls, um, I mean, um, babies under 18 that are being arrested and charged with prostitution really makes me sick. I've tried to change their mindset, I've tried to educate them that under the Federal law, anyone under 18 involved in prostitution will automatically be treated as a trafficking victim but they just don't get it. . . um, I just, um, I don't know how to change the system.

She talked about changing the system and how to effectively train police officers and she offered that, "It has to start in the very beginning of their training. They have to learn the laws for human trafficking just like they have to learn the laws for murder, burglary, assault, all that." She continued,

Sometimes I feel like trafficking victims are an afterthought thought of the whole criminal process, like, um, they aren't really given much attention. It's like they don't really take sex trafficking or sex work seriously enough. It's, um, just this whole mindset. I guess, um, it doesn't help that most of the cops out there are male, why would they understand or take it seriously? I mean, um, in my experience, they're the ones buying it.

And, um, another thing I don't understand is how these women don't have any rights like, at all. If they are beaten up by their pimp or trafficker or a john they're treated like they deserved it or something. . . there's a term for that, what is it?

Me: Victim blaming?

Yeah, yeah that's it, they blame the victim. What's that about? I mean, you're being forced into prostitution or you don't have a choice 'cause you can't find any

other job so it's your fault you got beat to a bloody pulp. It's sickening. And the pimp or the john walks away like nothing happened. . . It makes me want to punch somebody but then I'd be arrested and what good would that do anybody? (laughing)

When Participants One and Six were trafficked they were never taken out of their state of origin, they weren't transported across state or national borders and both were arrested on prostitution charges because of a breakdown in the criminal justice system and what constitutes human trafficking and prostitution. Mary shared,

When I was arrested, they just automatically charged me with prostitution, no questions asked. I guess it took about 10 days before I even got to talk to a lawyer and then I was scared to tell them what happened because at first, you know, I thought they would say it was my fault because I answered that job ad and all. But, as luck would have it, they gave me a woman lawyer and a social worker came in to talk to me so it kinda made it a little easier for me to start telling them what really happened. I think it took like another four or five days to get me out of jail and let me just tell you, jail ain't no place you ever want to go, trust me (laughing).

Star is one of the few survivors who stayed under the radar of law enforcement. Her captors fled to escape drug smuggling and trafficking charges and she never went to the police to press charges. She has never been arrested, never been in jail and did not have to testify in court against her captors. Star shared,

You know, um, my own personal experience didn't have any involvement with the law, um, my experience has come, um, you know, now that I have my own organization and I'm, um, I'm out there on the streets trying to help these girls. . . Every week sometimes every day, I see these girls, you know, I um, I see these girls who are getting arrested for prostituting knowing they are being forced to do it I try, you know, um, I really try to fight the system but it's tough when you're fighting something that's invisible. The police don't, um, the police don't even know that they don't know. You know, they see a woman on the street trying to get business or they put together these undercover stings and automatically assume she's there because, you know, because she wants to be.

Nobody wants to be there. They're either being forced to do it or it's for survival. Either way, the cops never assume they are trafficking victims they automatically assume they are prostitutes out there turning a trick.

Participants Three, Four and Five were brought to the United States from other countries.

Participants Three and Four had passports and visas when they were brought it but were confiscated as soon as they got here and had no identification when they escaped. Rose was smuggled in and had no identification. Alice shared,

We were all very scared to go to the police because we had no papers but we didn't know what to do or where to go and we were even more scared the people would find us and take us back we knew that might be our only opportunity to get out. . . At first, the police didn't know what to do, there was a lot of confusion. They thought we were illegal aliens that had been smuggled into the country and not being able to communicate was a big problem. It took them a while to figure out that we weren't smuggled and that we were the victims. Once they figured that out the process got much easier.

Alice feels that education should begin at home in the small communities where there isn't a lot of opportunity. She knows that her parents only let her come to the United States because they thought that was her best chance for an education and to have a chance at a better life.

My parents couldn't have known what was going to happen. The people that came to our town offering jobs and schools had papers and cards and were dressed so nice and had nice cars. It all seemed very legal and real. I don't have kids but I can understand wanting them to have a better life than digging in the fields working 12 hours a day in a factory. I don't blame them, they couldn't have known but I think people need to be taught, especially the poor that these things are happening and it's very real.

I talk to girls every week in group therapy and I really can't remember even one of them knowing what human trafficking was before it happened to them. That's very sad for something to be happening so much but still no one knows about it.

Lyn shared,

It was very scary not knowing if we were going to be arrested and then deported because that's what they were threatening us with at first. Not that I don't want to see my family again but I don't want to live there again and to be arrested and sent back would have been very shameful, even in our circumstance.

I really think there needs to be some sort of better line between a trafficking victim and someone who has been smuggled illegally just for a better life here. I mean, I get it, back home is bad and I know why people do it and it's very hard to do it legally. But there's a big difference between that person and what we went through.

Rose stated,

Now that I can look back on everything that happened and everything I have learned and I see and read almost daily about women being wrongly arrested I know I was very lucky, I mean, I was taken to the police station but the people who would become my aftercare providers were there with me the whole time. I was still very scared and wouldn't talk to anyone but there was some comfort having people there who weren't cops. . . Even though I got lucky, there is still a big gap in what police know about human trafficking. I mean, I see it every time we give presentations to police officers, especially in small towns, they really have no idea.

No one knows which set of laws to follow they'll ask, "Do we follow local or state laws or federal? What applies to which situation? How do we know it's trafficking or smuggling or just plain prostitution?" It's all still very confusing especially when you're dealing with foreign victims who have been brought into the country with no documentation or they had documentation but it was taken by their traffickers and now lost, sold on the black market, whatever.

All six Participants seem to have some degree of distrust for law enforcement, in general, and they all agree that there is a lack of knowledge and a large gap within the definition distinction between trafficking, smuggling and prostitution that feeds this distrust. With the general lack of research about the pervasiveness of the problem and what definitions

will actually be beneficial to the prosecution of traffickers and the protection of the survivors is still a question of uncertainty.

### *Education as an Intervention*

Each of the six Participants had strong opinions and ideas about education about trafficking. I purposefully attempted to avoid the topic of ‘what if you knew about trafficking beforehand’ because this lends to victim blaming and the erroneous idea that they could have had some control over their fate. However, upon sharing their ideas about education they, indeed, had varying opinions about the possibility of avoiding being trafficked had they known what it was beforehand. One of the most prevalent themes that emerged from all six of the Participant interviews was the idea that education is very important when trying to raise awareness and really disrupt the pattern of slavery. Out of the six Participants, none of them were of the opinion that the demand side of the sex trade was going to decrease unless much harsher penalties were handed down to offenders on a regular basis. They each felt that cutting off the supply would be where to start and that could only happen through education programs that included mass movements by coalitions, organizations, and churches. In addition, Bales and Soodalter (2009) recognize the disparity among states regarding trafficking laws and victim services and offer this:

Local, state, and federal government have a number of things to fix, none of which is difficult or expensive. For starters, local and state police need training about slavery and human trafficking. The good news is that this training, in the form of educators, films, manuals, workbooks, handbooks, pamphlets, and posters, already exists; it just needs to be delivered to the right people. It is actually pretty easy to ask others in your community the following questions, perhaps in a letter to the local newspaper: How can we ensure that everyone who

is most likely to come into contact with a person in slavery – police, firefighters, health inspectors, nurses, doctors – learns to spot the warning signs? How can we help neighborhood groups to learn these warning signs as well? (p. 205)

Rose, who travels regularly, helping give presentations on human trafficking to different organizations shared,

It's all about getting out there and telling people about it and not just telling them what it is but telling them how it starts, where the victims come from, who the victims are, how it affects the community and the victim. People today are very desensitized. You know, we were talking before about how amazed I was at how out of touch Americans seem to be especially for having so much money and so many things. So, I feel like they need to be woken up, shaken up a little to get their attention.

I really think that if people take a stand against trafficking then the law enforcement and legislators will have no choice but to take notice and make some changes.

Alice added,

Women and girls all over the world need to be taught about what's happening. My parents didn't know, I couldn't have known, I was too young but the ones who are the most likely to fall into the trap, the poor, the ones who have been abused at home, those are the ones that need to know that these people are out there to hurt them.

I think, somehow, and I have no idea how to do this, but I think it would help if women and girls from places like my home had better opportunities like more education better jobs and training so they could make money.

Lyn shared,

I think this is such a huge problem and it surprises me that more people don't know what human trafficking is, I mean, maybe it's because I still help with group therapy and art classes at the house but I hear about people being arrested for trafficking and read about girls being trafficked pretty regularly now but it still seems like the public doesn't know what it is or that it's happening here. Are

people just not paying attention? Because I know just in our group, people are going out and teaching others about it especially the churches, churches are doing a lot to try to educate people.

When asked what she thought was the most important thing to do to stop trafficking she answered,

I don't know if this will solve it completely but I think girls need to be taught what trafficking it and that it's happening and this is how it happens and this is what will happen to you if you get caught up in it.

Sue shared,

You know, I really think it's going to take a huge national movement. Local movements are great because that's where it all starts but this has to move beyond the small local groups, it has to be a nationwide movement that will get people's attention. We have to teach people what trafficking is and that it's happening here not just in foreign countries, which right now, is still what the majority of Americans still believe. And just like I said before, we really have to put more pressure on the johns, we really have to, you know, we really have to start making examples of them by increasing sentences and really just nailing them to the wall.

Mary shared,

I know this sounds extreme and it's probably just because I get frustrated but honestly, I feel that as a whole, nobody in the U.S. knows anything about human trafficking. I mean, seriously, I can't tell you the number of people I talk to that have zero idea about it. One man actually said to me, "Oh, you mean like prostitution and stuff?" I am not a violent person, but really, I just wanted to throttle him. (She took a very deep breath and sighed, shaking her head). In my head, I know that people just need to be taught what it is but it's not like we don't do a good job of getting the word out there. You know what I mean? It's not like nobody is talking about it. CNN does an entire series on it pretty regularly for Christ's sake.

Star suggested,

Well, um, I definitely think the public needs to learn more about it but, um, honestly, you know, I really think the education needs to start without police and politicians, the ones who make and enforce the laws. And we need to, um, what did you call it? Um, oh yeah, we need to stop, you know victim blaming. Stop arresting the victims and making them feel like they've done something wrong. Um, I really think if we put away more traffickers and pimps and johns then we've, you know, then I think maybe we've got something there.

Mary advocates the ending of all forms of trafficking and has recently started a program within her bakery to make sure her supply chains are free from trafficking, slavery and debt bondage. Mary shares,

I changed my degree from culinary arts to business because I knew I wanted to open my own bakery and really needed to learn the business side of it. . . So, of course, I had to take all kinds of classes on management and supply chains and it occurred to me, not while I was in school but after, that I really need to be aware of where my supplies come from like, you know, my chocolate, for instance. . . And then, I started thinking about all the classes I took and honestly, not one time was it ever mentioned in my classes about supply chains being corrupt with trafficking, you know, slave labor and debt bondage. That seems to me like a wasted teaching opportunity, you know?

It's very clear that business is business and it's all about the mighty dollar and the bottom line, trust me, I understand as well as anybody else who owns a business but it's also really important to teach students that supply chains run very deep you know, you buy something from a supplier but where did that supplier get it? There can be four or five links, sometimes even more in that supply chain. It's not easy to make sure you're chain is clean. I mean, you can check out the original, you know, the original producer of the product, I'll use chocolate as an example because that's been in the news recently. I can make sure that the chocolate I get come from cacao farms that pay living wages and don't use slaves or debt bondage but then you have to check the factory that makes it into actual chocolate and then the packaging and then the entire chain process that gets it here. It's exhausting really but I have to stand behind my products, I can't contribute to any company that is involved in human rights abuses. . . So, anyways, I just think business school is a great opportunity to start bringing awareness to people about

the problem you know, teach them before they get out there in the business world and they may think twice about where their products come from.

Star felt that teachers should begin earlier than the college years to start teaching kids about human trafficking. When asked what she thought was an appropriate age and how teachers could incorporate it into the curriculum she stated,

Um, this day and time, I don't think middle school is too young because, um, you know, the girls that get caught up in this are getting younger and younger. I had a girl that was 12 just a couple of weeks ago, a friggin' twelve year old, living on the streets, being pimped out. I'm really trying to get her some help, but you know, um, it's just not as easy as it sounds because they can disappear so quick, you know, um, one day they're there but if you get too pushy they're gone the very next day. I'm still trying to figure out if it's a forced thing or not. It doesn't matter though, she's 12, she's got to get off the streets. . . Could this have been prevented if she had been taught about this kind of stuff in school? You know, um, I can't answer that honestly 'cause I just don't, um, I just don't know, but I have to believe, you know, um, I have to believe that somehow it would've made some kind of difference.

She suggested that she thought learning about trafficking and the danger and risks of living on the streets would not have changed her decision to leave home at such an early age but she felt that she might have been more cautious about who she trusted,

Good point, um, probably not but only because in my mind, um, I was going to move to Hollywood and become a big time model or movie star. The only thing I can say about that is maybe if somebody had taken the time to talk to me, um, maybe get me to wait until after high school, maybe, um, maybe things would've been different for me. Yeah, I don't know. The problem with me was that my home life was just, just very abusive, um, you know, um, the only time anybody talked to me was to hit me, shove me, scream at me and, um, you know, I just kinda disappeared at school. I'm not really sure my teachers even knew I existed. . . so, you know, I move out there to try to make something of myself and it just, you know, it just went downhill from there. I mean, I know we can't save every kid that's just not even possible but hey, if we keep just one kid off the street by teaching them early then, um, maybe we've done something right.

You know, um, I often wonder if I had known about trafficking, I mean, um, if I had at least heard of it if it would have caught my attention. I mean, seriously, would I have been more selective in the people I hung out with on the street? But then again, when you're on the street, you're pretty desperate, especially when you're a kid. . . but, um, I have to believe that educating people can work, it just has to.

Rose shared,

I've been to several schools, high schools and colleges, to give presentations. The high schools are easy but it seems, usually, it's like a required thing in the gym or auditorium and the whole school is present but at colleges I think some fliers are sent around, handed out maybe hung up on some boards, so we don't always have the best turnout there. . . I've also been to classrooms and those are the best because you pretty much have their undivided attention and then they can ask questions one on one. I'd like to see the teachers take that and continue that conversation after the presentation.

None of the six Participants felt that there is enough being done to educate people and all believe that Americans, generally, have no idea that the women and children being trafficked are: 1. Americans being trafficked inside this country; 2. Being hidden in every state in this country; 3. Quite possibly your next door neighbor, your waitress at a restaurant, the woman dancing at the strip club in your neighborhood and, 4. The prostitute standing on the corner or walking the street.

I asked Mary if her arrest was the first time she had ever heard of human trafficking, she replied,

Yep, very first time, I had no clue what it was before that but they explained to me what it was and I don't know for sure but I think it was the social worker who hooked me up with the safe house and got me help. . . I started asking a lot of questions, you know, like, was I the only one this happened to? How many others was this happening to? . . . I found out that it was a new thing they were looking into and it was looking like there were a lot more victims than they ever knew about.

At first, I was furious because first, I didn't do anything wrong, I was tricked by a job ad, second, I was held against my will, third, I was raped and beaten and fourth, I was forced into prostitution. And then you arrest ME and keep me in jail for prostitution? Something is definitely wrong with the system (emphasis added). . . After they talked to me and I thought about it I was like, "C'mon, you can't tell the difference between this trafficking thing and prostitution?" . . . That's where the changes need to start, they need to figure out what they're doing before they do it.

Sue is currently working on her Master's Degree in Religious Counselling and offers this perspective about education,

It would be nice to see classes, especially in the psychology, sociology and counselling departments that specifically address the needs of human trafficking victims. Our needs are so much different that the needs of, say, domestic abuse victims or rape victims. I'm not saying that to minimize their trauma in any way, please don't take it that way. I just, coming from that situation, I know first-hand and I've worked with many other trafficking victims and we have different needs.

If I wasn't a victim myself, I probably would have never known about human trafficking. . . As a matter of fact, I didn't even hear that phrase used about me until, hmmm, I'd say, six months maybe after I escaped.

I get that human trafficking is getting more publicity here lately but it's not effective, it's not getting the word out there. This problem is going away and traffickers have no fear of getting caught. It's really going to take a massive effort with law enforcement and anti-trafficking organizations to come together to really make a difference and maybe even politicians, but, maybe not them, I think sometimes, they can do more harm than good.

I asked her what she would like the public to know, what would she tell them and she responded by opening her arms widely and in a mock shout,

IT'S HAPPENING, IT'S HAPPENING RIGHT HERE! KEEP YOUR BABIES CLOSE! (laughing) Really, I would just like them to know how very close to them it really is occurring. I mean, to look at me, out there on that street back then, you wouldn't have known I was being forced to do it. When my own father was pimping me out no one knew it. It's very hidden, very elusive.

Mary shared,

As happy as I am about opening this safe house it hasn't been without struggle and frustration. . . Do you know it took me 7 months to find a local mental health therapist that was not just willing to donate time but that even knew about or was willing to get training on human trafficking, really sex trafficking, but we help all trafficking victims. Off the top of my head, I really can't even tell you how many I contacted and actually met with. It felt like hundreds (laughing) but it was probably close to 50. . . The medical doctors and nurses weren't as hard but I still ran into some resistance when it came to training. Some of them just didn't see the point, they just, I guess, assumed it would be like treating any other abuse or trauma patient. . . After the training one of the nurses said, "I had no idea. I'm almost speechless because I honestly had no idea." I think it was a real eye opener for some of them.

On educating and training service providers, Mary offered,

Let me tell you what I did, and I don't know if it's right or wrong but honestly, it worked. . . I went into the gory, not pretty details of what happens when women are trafficked for sex. I just laid it all out there. . . Maybe I was going for the shock effect (laughing) but I think it worked and so far we have been very successful with the few survivors that have come to live with us. . . I'm not saying we will be able to keep every single one of them off the streets, that's just naïve but I can sure hope for the best and try to provide them with every opportunity that was given to me when I got out.

I asked Mary if she thought there was sufficient education about human trafficking and what she thought would be an appropriate way to effectively educate and train service providers on a broader scale, she answered,

There is absolutely not enough education happening about human trafficking. . . When I call, let's say, 30 licensed therapists and maybe 10 of them have even heard of human trafficking, that's a problem, that's a huge problem. . . I'm not asking anyone to be an expert on the subject, let's face it, it's a hard, you know, people don't like to talk about that stuff and they definitely don't want to know that it could be happening right down the street. . . My point is, if professional medical and mental health care people don't know about it then how is the rest of the general public supposed to know about it?

Rose travels to different churches, schools and organizations helping educate people about human trafficking and is often still amazed how little people know about it. She doesn't believe the word is getting out and people aren't taking notice of this growing problem. As an Asian woman who was trafficked into the United States, she is appalled by the affluence in this country and yet so little knowledge on the crimes being committed every day.

Where I come from there is nothing but poverty, there are not many people who have money and the ones who did were never part of our, you know, um, villages or towns, we never saw those people. Selling young girls is very common over there, by the time you're 13 you pretty much know what your fate will be, it's just how things are done. Here, there is money everywhere, even the people who aren't rich have money and cell phones (laughing) I don't understand the cell phones but nevermind that. I go to all these different places to help tell people about trafficking and I can't believe how many of them have never even heard the words human trafficking together in the same sentence. I'm thinking "really? it's 2014, are you living under a rock? You have access to the internet and news and all this social media and you've never heard of human trafficking." (shaking her head in disbelief). . .

I asked her what would help educate the public about human trafficking and she responded,

Hmmmm, that's the million dollar question. I can't say that what we are doing isn't right because anytime you talk to people and educate them even if one person walks away with something new then it helps but a larger movement is missing, there still isn't enough information getting out there to really make a difference.

Out of all the stories the Participants shared, intervention, behind building trusting relationships, was the common theme in the interviews. They discussed at length how the intervention of law enforcement and advocacy workers saved them from the horror of

trafficking and thanks to the help they received they each have jobs, homes and support systems. Participants Three, Four and Five were enrolled in ESL (English as a Second Language) classes and all six Participants were provided health and dental care and mental health therapy. Sue was also provided care for her daughter, which she admits, “made all the difference in the world to my accepting help.” Participants One and Six enrolled in college and graduated with Mary now enrolled in a graduate program. Star was the only one to discuss any substance abuse issues and credits the intervention of the Mormon missionaries for aiding her in getting the help she needed to “get clean and stay clean” for several years now.

All six Participants have hearts for advocacy work and are extraordinarily passionate about helping survivors and educating the public about the pervasiveness of human trafficking. In Chapter 5, I share and discuss the opinions of the Participants relating to interventions through the argument of legalizing prostitution as a way to eliminate sex trafficking and the need for a legislative overhaul that includes cohesive definitions of trafficking and harsher penalties for traffickers and the johns and janes.

### **Recovery**

The idea of recovery and success were somewhat bifurcated among the six Participants. The struggle to recover was directly related to their aftercare experience. Some of the participants did not view the term “recovery” as something that applied to them and as Sue stated the word sounded like,

Some ailment you get over instead of learning to live a full life. I wasn't sick, I couldn't take a magic pill and 'recover' it was a process I had to go through while learning to deal with my past and make my way through every day while trying to

make a future for my daughter and myself. . . Maybe that comes from what I've learned in school in my counselling program, I'm not sure, but I don't think you recover from something like that, I think you learn to live with it and move on. . . To me, recovery means that I'm over it, that it no longer affects me but I think that is naïve to say because I live with it every day and use it to help others.

When asked what term she would use, she reflected thoughtfully for a moment and her face and eyes lit up in a moment of recognition, "Reclaim and revive, I didn't recover, I reclaimed and revived my life." "Touché," I thought to myself. Mary also had a hard time with the term "recovery" sharing that she felt that it is "subjective",

I don't think you can use the word "recovery" objectively it's a very subjective matter especially when you are talking about people who have been through what I have. I mean, you don't wake up one day and say "Oh, I'm recovered." No, it doesn't work like that. I mean, wouldn't it be nice if it did?

The results of a 2004 Florida State University study on victim centered approaches indicate that survivors need physical and emotional security and basic needs met before they can be expected to share any detailed information about their experiences (Coonan). Herman, M.D. (1992) offered that

establishing a safe environment requires not only the mobilization of caring people but also the development of a plan for future protection. In the aftermath of the trauma, the survivor must assess the degree of continued threat and decide what sort of precautions are necessary. She must also decide what actions she wishes to take against her attacker. Since the best course of action is rarely obvious, decision-making in these matters may be particularly stressful for the survivor and those who care for her. . . This is an area where the cardinal principle of empowering the survivor is frequently violated as other people attempt to dictate the survivor's choices or take action without her consent. (Herman, M.D., 1992)

Further, Banyard and Williams (2007) suggest that resilience has been directly linked to the ability of the survivor to find their voice and utilize it in a way that is beneficial to their recovery, whether it be public or private, only the survivor can decide.

Relative to Coonan (2004), Herman, M.D (1992), and Banyard and Williams (2007) conclusions, my findings indicate that survivors of human trafficking need safe spaces, both physically and emotionally, before they are able or willing to discuss their experiences that can lead to recovery. All six Participants shared the need for that safe space and trusting relationships and all agreed it was the most important aspect of the aftercare process. Four of the six Participants agreed that the help they received and the safe spaces that were created during their aftercare process was the only reason they were able to develop their own voice and utilize it for their current employment and their ongoing work against human trafficking. They also shared that it wasn't necessarily the mental health counselling that helped the most, although it certainly helped, but it was the relationships they built, the friendships they made and the support they received that helped them develop a sense of security and self-confidence.

When talking about current successes two of the Participants felt that it wasn't a measure of success but rather a measure of survival. I thought this sounded like a fight or flight response and possibly some lingering fear but during the second interview I asked them both about their responses and Mary shared, "I don't think so, maybe, I don't know. Really I think I was talking more about being a female business owner in a man's world. I had no idea how hard it is. I mean, I'm, we're, doing great, no worries there but people listen and respect men way more than women." This lends weight to Epstein's (2007)

claim that gender, male versus female, determines an individual's quality of life, location in social hierarchy, chances of survival and determines privilege instead of their intelligence, aptitude and desires and that it is this sexual divide and male superiority that creates patriarchal male systems of dominance. Mary added, "But, I mean, I do kinda agree that I don't view this, what I have, as success, but as surviving. I'm not struggling by any means but, like I said before, you do what you have to do to survive. I guess I look at it differently." Star felt her success comes every day that she doesn't drink, do drugs and stays off the streets and feels that success is something you work towards every day.

Star, the only one who shared her battle with drug and alcohol addiction related this,

I try not to think about it in terms of recovery because, um, I mean, um, that means I had a problem and now I don't, um, I mean, um, I'll always be an alcoholic and drug addict, um, I just don't do those things any more. Do you know what I mean? I mean, um, it's a daily struggle, some days are better than others and for the most part, um, I'm good. As I sit here right now, um, with you, I can tell you I'll never go back to that. But as far as recovery, um, I don't know that you ever fully recover.

Although Participants Three and Four escaped their trafficking situation nearly three years ago, they continued to live on the streets and continued to work as prostitutes for an additional two years. It's been a year since they accepted help from a church group but Alice feels that she is well on her way to recovery but still has a ways to go.

I think I'm doing pretty good. I still go to group meetings. I'm on anti-depressants but I think that's kinda normal, maybe, I'm not real sure, but I don't think I'm the only one on them. . . I'm living on my own, well, almost on my own, I mean, I

have a roommate and we split everything but really, I'm okay. Physically, once I got under a doctor's care, I recovered pretty quickly. There are some issues I'll always have. . . Mentally, who's sane anyways, right? (laughing). Mentally, I guess I'm a work in progress, so to speak. I sometimes have nightmares but it's not all the time.

Lyn shared,

I'm not all the way recovered yet. I'm not sure how long it will take or even if I ever will recover all the way. I still have lots of physical and emotional problems but at least I can work and do my art with not a lot of problems. I think a big problem of mine is I haven't seen my family in about 8 years and I really miss them. I don't know when I'll have enough money to go home but one day I will.

When asked if she thought going home would help her she very adamantly denied

wanting to ever live there again stating,

Ohhhhhhh, I don't ever want to live there again, no, no, no! That would definitely not help me. There are too many people with no jobs, they are very poor and too much violence and too many drugs. No, I just want to visit my family, make sure they are okay and hug my mama and papa again. I think that might help me some. I wish I could bring them here to live but they will never leave.

Rose had an interesting perspective on recovery,

I feel like I improve my recovery and healing every time I stand up in front of a group or church to talk about trafficking and the sex trade. Every time I say the words I make a little more progress and when I talk to girls who have just escaped or been rescued or however they got out, I feel like I get a little piece of myself back. I hope when I talk to these different people that I am helping them as much as they are helping me.

Experiencing the trauma associated with physical, emotional and sexual violence creates layers of damage that results in the pervasive mistrust of others, anger and depression that become chronic and debilitating. As I learned, from some the participants, the elementary

implications of the term “recovery” can seem simplified and lacks the significant, complicated aftercare process that one must go through to succeed. Even after the considerable strides these women have made, they each still struggle daily with the damage that was inflicted upon them. How they view themselves, the world and successes and failures have required a complete change in consciousness.

### **Changes in Consciousness**

Moving from the role of victim and into one of survivor requires a change in consciousness that goes beyond a simple flip of an emotional switch. This change requires consideration of the previously discussed physical and emotional dimensions of identity, building and maintaining trust, recovery and reparation, positive interventions and emancipation and empowerment. Participant’s One, Two, Five and Six have all utilized their prior victim status to empower themselves and demand justice not just for themselves but for other women who have been affected by human trafficking.

Participants Three and Four have developed a company that designs, makes and sells fair trade jewelry, attend and often lead group therapy sessions for trafficking survivors and maintain a presence within the anti-trafficking movement by attending conferences.

Sue’s experience began when she was 12 when her drug addict father started selling her for sex for drug money to support his habit. That went on for three years until she ran away. She ran away to the closest big city within the same state and was lured in the sex trade by a man who she thought loved her. She was also raped and beaten and was forced to have sex with as many as 6 men a night. Out of the hundreds of dollars she made for each encounter she was allowed to keep \$5 and on very rare occasions she

could hide an extra \$20. She admits that she could have easily let herself go and ended up in a reckless downhill spiral and she quite frequently wonders how, after everything she has been through, she is still alive. She shared this,

I don't know how I got through my teen years, I mean, honestly, I don't and how did I not become some alcoholic drug addicted junkie? I've never really considered myself a strong person but I look back and think that I survived all of that somehow. . . It really took some time for me to make that transition from being forced to have sex since I was like 12 to realizing that I made the decisions now.

Everything changed when I had my daughter. I couldn't imagine raising a child in that situation and I was honestly terrified that what happened to me as a kid would happen to her and I just couldn't handle that. . . After I escaped, I actually had to go on anti-anxiety pills because I was still paralyzed with fear that something like that would happen to her.

I knew when I had her that things had to change and it took about a year but I made it happen. Now my biggest concern is making sure I don't project my anxiety and fear onto her. Yes, that's my psychology classes talking now (laughing).

Star also shared, "I don't feel "empowered" or successful. I really feel like I struggle every day just 'cause it's an effort just to keep going. I don't make a lot of money but I feel like I'm doing the right thing." I commented that I considered her successful and incredibly empowered because, in my opinion, "it takes an incredible amount of courage and strength to walk the streets alone looking for these women." She thoughtfully added, "I was one of those women, I don't have anything to be scared of." Incredibly poignant and eye opening.

The terms 'victim' and 'recovery' should be used with extreme care and insight and require a change and evolution in the way we work with women who have suffered

trauma, such as sex trafficking. The Participants who had the strongest negative reaction to the term ‘victim’ are the ones who identify themselves and ‘survivors’ suggesting, as Mary shares, “I am no one’s victim, I make my own choices now.” The term ‘recovery’ was deemed insufficient as a few of the Participants offered that it sounded like an “illness to recover from” or “something you just get over.” If survivors are to truly have a chance at success these negative connotations need to be transformed into phrases of survival, faith and hope. On being successful Mary offered,

I measure success one day at a time. I wake up, I bake. If I can make just one person happy or help one person each day, that to me is success. I won’t lie and tell you it isn’t comforting making money because when I started, that’s all I wanted, just to make money. But that’s not what life’s about, not any more.

Star shared her thoughts on success,

Every day I stay off the streets, um, you know, and don’t give in to the drug and alcohol scene is a success for me. I mean, um, I’m out there every single night, beating the pavement, looking for girls, pimps, um, you know, whoever will listen. . . They try to get me, um, try to tempt me, it’s never easy. . . My organization operates solely on donations and you know, in this economy, people can’t give a whole lot. I don’t just work here, in this area, I have people in major cities across the U.S. helping me get out there, pass out blankets, bags, business cards. We’ve had to slow down recently because we were getting low on funds but, um, I’m not giving up. Maybe that’s success, not giving up.

Lyn would like to go to school to become an art teacher and art therapist and feels that art therapy as an intervention should be a part of every victim’s aftercare process.

I think art really helps people express things that they can’t or won’t say out loud. I would like to see all therapists learn how to offer this type of help and you don’t have to be some crazy good artist, it’s not about how good your drawing or painting or scrapbook is, it’s about how it makes you feel. Sometimes, when I

first started, my stuff was horrible but I was drawing or painting emotions that I don't think I even knew I had.

It would be good to know that anybody that is in school to be a therapist or psychiatrist has to go through some class or training for trafficking victims. That just makes sense to me.

Changes in consciousness begins at the law enforcement and aftercare levels with how human trafficking and human trafficking survivors are viewed and aided then flows through the survivors themselves through their transition from a 'victim' to a 'survivor' and what it means to 'recover.' This shift in attitude is important for advocacy workers being able to recognize, "the potential and active identity of a person beyond the institutional label as 'victim', as this constitutes an important step in respecting that person's human dignity" (Meredith, 2009, pgs. 259–260).

### **Final Thoughts From the Participants**

While listening to these survivors of sex trafficking it was made abundantly clear that the proper aftercare process is difficult, terrifying at times but necessary for a successful recovery and future. When talking about survivors of sex trafficking and what they would like to pass on to other, possibly new survivors in the aftercare process they each had this to say,

Mary: You can do it. You've come this far. You've survived one of the most horrific events that could possibly happen to you but you've got this. We'll all in this fight together.

Star: Stand strong be proud of who you are and who you will become. Stay in contact with your aftercare people, they'll be your strength when you don't think you have any left. There is strength in numbers.

Alice: It's hard, it's very hard, believe me, I went back to the streets after my first safe house stay but you have to believe that you can overcome it. Get involved in some activity like school or art or sports, something that will help you to not think about it all the time.

Lyn: I tell women almost every week in group sessions who are thinking about going back to the street because they don't know how they will make money to live that it's not worth it to think about where they came from, do you really want to go back to the street, the abuse? I tell them to stay where they are to take advantage of everything they are being offered the therapy, the food, the medical appointments, the clothes and use that time to heal and then they won't want to go back.

Rose: Don't ever give up hope. Trust that God will take of you. Pray and pray some more. Talk and talk some more to your therapist, group, doctor, teacher, whoever you can get to help you. Don't be afraid to ask for help, there is strength in numbers.

Sue: Wow, there are so many things of encouragement that I tell survivors on a daily basis. I guess it would be to keep fighting, don't let a bad day or a bad week or even a bad month discourage you and the healing process you're going through. It does get better eventually, slowly, but eventually.

## **Overall Conclusions**

This chapter presented the findings, analysis and conclusions from the study's three research questions and identified the major themes that emerged from the data. All six Participants varied in age, only Participants Three and Four shared similar backgrounds from Mexico that involved the same geographical location, similar socio-economic upbringing, and the same traffickers. In terms of ethnicity, one participant was African American, one Participant was Asian, two Participants were Caucasian, and two Participants were Hispanic/Latina. The ages of the Participants varied with the youngest being currently 19 and the oldest 32. Alice was the youngest and the youngest to be trafficked at the age of 11. Sue was 12 when she was first trafficked. Lyn was 13 years

old when she was trafficked. Rose was also 13 when she was first trafficked. Star was 17 and Mary was 18 when they were first trafficked.

The findings from these narratives show that for trafficking survivors, building trusting and lasting relationships is the key. It is often a very long and very difficult road that takes time, patience on the part of aftercare providers and the creation of safe spaces. The first theme to emerge was identity and how these Participants categorized themselves and acknowledged their circumstances at different stages of their lives. They each shared their identity progression starting before they were trafficked, through their enslavement and beyond their aftercare experiences, each addressing the importance of who they were (voiceless, disempowered) to who they are today (empowered with a strong voice, making their own decisions). They were each brave enough to share with me what it felt like to be trafficked, powerless and at the mercy of someone else. These women were imprisoned, stripped of their identities, beaten, raped and forced to perform sexual acts that are beyond comprehension. It says something of their resiliency and strength to agree to talk about their experiences and share their language that described their own unique situations. Language, as it describes or labels a person or event is important when identifying a person as a ‘victim’, ‘survivor’, ‘helpless’, ‘empowered’, ‘responsible’, etc. As we know from previous research, the term ‘victim’ should not be used frivolously and depending on the context can be a direct association to a “person’s human dignity” (Meredith, 2009, p. 260). Meredith (2009) continues,

The attributes linked to the term ‘victim’ when it refers to a state of vulnerability may remain present when it is claimed or attributed as a status, though sometimes not so evidently. The negative connotation of those attributes may, however,

affect the people they are meant to describe, by devaluing them. This impact is not always taken into consideration. On the contrary, the term ‘victims’ is often used and understood in a straightforward way as referring to the state of victimhood, when in fact its impact is more that of labelling a group of individuals. The enunciator might not always be aware of the underlying devaluing connotations mentioned above and their effect on the people concerned. (p. 261)

Four of the narratives from these Participants also revealed that they did not want to be identified as a victim but rather empowered women who are free to make their own choices. Listening to these Participants stories is to understand and apply the term ‘victim’ less liberally.

The injury experienced and the vulnerability these Participants suffered at the hands of their traffickers led to physical, mental, psychosocial, and financial harm and left them with the total inability to meet her own needs. The ultimate recipients of any intervention should be the victims and survivors of human trafficking and should be directed by a single question: How will the intervention maximize the benefit and minimize the damage to the victims and survivors? Intervention i.e., getting the proper care, both physically and mentally and education is mandatory. It was evident through the narratives that all six participants felt that without the critical elements of intervention they received in the aftercare process, it’s very unlikely that they would have sought out help on their own nor spoken out about what happened to them. The majority of the Participants felt that fear stops a lot of victims from getting help or speaking out and believe that it’s the fear that controls their decisions. In addition, all six Participants participated in individual therapy and group therapy and three of the Participants (1, 3 and 4) were introduced to art therapy, which not only helped in their aftercare process but

was also a catalyst for their current business endeavours. All six Participants felt they have had a successful aftercare experience and strive to live as fully as they can with the ongoing support of their aftercare organization and continuing work they do in their fight against human trafficking and sex work.

Much to my surprise, religious organizations play a very large role in the aftercare process of sex trafficking survivors. Historically, religion has been touted as the motive for conflict but recent research has concluded that,

Religion is a perennial and perhaps inevitable factor in both conflict and conflict resolution. Religion, after all, is a powerful constituent of cultural norms and values, and because it addresses the most profound existential issues of human life (e.g., freedom and inevitability, fear and faith, security and insecurity, right and wrong, sacred and profane), religion is deeply implicated in individual and social conceptions of peace. (Said and Funk, 2001, p. 1)

Participants 2, 5 and 6 work through their church organization and have developed their own ministry by helping survivors of trafficking or speaking out and educating the public about the problem. None of the five Participants who received aftercare services through a religious organization felt pressured to subscribe to any particular religion except for Star who joined the Mormon Church. These five Participants feel strongly that it was the church/religious atmosphere that helped them connect to an inner peace and created such a compassionate loving setting that was instrumental in their aftercare success.

Each of the six Participants had very strong and passionate opinions about law enforcement and the lack of knowledge about human trafficking, specifically sex trafficking, that is prevalent throughout the system. They each had deep convictions and made compelling arguments against legalizing prostitution and the prosecution of the

johns which, both will be discussed further in Chapter Five. It was clear that the each felt there is a significant lack of education about human trafficking among law enforcers and the bifurcated definitions that are being applied to legitimate prostitutes versus sex trafficking victims is creating a considerable gap in victim identification and rescue. It is inappropriate and inexcusable for sex trafficking victims to be treated as criminals while their rights as humans have been stripped from them and they are at their most vulnerable and are completely defenseless. After hearing these Participants stories it is clear that we need a change in the way we view trafficking survivors and how we categorize and label them so that we can help them build new empowered identities. It is these changes that can enable them to move beyond a vulnerable state and validate their status of empowered, survivor, woman or whatever attribute is significant to them personally.

Each of these women currently participate in some form of aftercare work for sex trafficking survivors and quite possibly one of the most important messages that each of them wanted to convey through their story is the importance of education about human trafficking. Education is quite simply knowledge and knowledge is power. All of the participants had similar opinions on the significance of educating the public, law enforcement, medical and mental health care providers, and aftercare service providers about the prevalence of human trafficking and that this crime is not something that is only occurring overseas but rather right here in our own backyards.

This chapter presented the findings and conclusions from the data and analysis collected for this study based on the narrative interviews of the six Participants. The following chapter will discuss the findings and conclusions, provide implications for

policy and practice on human trafficking, and will offer recommendations for policy, practice and future research.

CHAPTER V  
CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND FINAL REFLECTIONS

I still see before me a life of toil and trials. . . I will not be silent.

—Frederick Douglas

**Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to address the main goals of the research: 1) to help survivors, who so desire, break the silence and give voice to their stories of trafficking; 2) to help increase awareness and education of human trafficking; and 3) to help legislators and service providers improve the current legislation and advocacy/assistance programs available to human trafficking survivors. To address these goals three questions were used to inform this research:

1. How can we make heard the invisible voices of those survivors who want to speak out against trafficking and from this perspective, how can we improve education about trafficking?
2. How do we disrupt the pattern of slavery?
3. How can we, particularly in the conflict and education fields, bring more weight and direct action to the resolution of these issues in the U.S., as well as internationally?

This chapter discusses the findings collected from six interview Participants that relate to the three interview questions and to the literature that was reviewed and presented in Chapter Two. Implications of this research project for policy and practice on human trafficking as well as recommendations for future research are also presented along with news that is currently making headlines. This chapter concludes with some final reflections from the researcher.

This research project utilized the qualitative approach utilizing a narrative study and an advocacy/participatory worldview by conducting a holistic interview process with six research participants (Creswell, 2007) and focused on their stories that described how they first became victims of trafficking, how they got out of trafficking, their aftercare process, and current success. While not every survivor will have the same story (clearly, I encountered six very different women with very different experiences) some aspects of the aftercare process seem to follow the same or similar paths with successful outcomes.

I began this research project after spending 6 years training and learning about human trafficking. I have travelled to California, Florida, Louisiana, New York, Texas, North Carolina and Russia to research, present my early research findings and to understand the gaps where new research needs to be conducted. Some of these gaps include globalization, migration patterns, economics/poverty, aftercare processes and their effectiveness and oppressive systems that stem from a 'neoliberal masculine violent global culture' that dehumanize and objectify women through media, economics, politics, religion and war/terror. The women I interviewed are exceptional because they are

survivors of one of the most heinous crimes against humanity and have overcome that experience to create thriving successful lives.

From the three research questions, the following conclusions were identified:

1. Developing trust with service providers/counsellors and providing a safe space was absolutely critical for participants to share their experiences and develop their own voice;
2. The aftercare each participant received was crucial in her recovery process and continued success;
3. Counselling, both private and group therapy, was very important; Art therapy, in particular, was the most prevalent form of therapy among these participants and led to jobs/career/business opportunities;
4. Participants continue to rely on support systems through their aftercare services;
5. Religion/Spirituality and Religious organizations played a significant role in the aftercare process;
6. Education and training about human trafficking is vital for all service providers; it should be standard training in all emergency services, social services, counsellors, educators.
7. Cohesive definitions of trafficking, smuggling and prostitution, are needed to effectively protect the victims of sex trafficking.

8. Prostitution should not be legalized because it would only increase sex trafficking. More focus should be placed on the johns and janes and their convictions.
9. National and global cohesive legislation about human trafficking is critical before any forward strides can be made to eliminate the problem.
10. Teachers/educators have the capacity to educate and make changes within the field of human trafficking. A 360° education process that includes mass movements by the public and comprehensive education of the service providers and the politicians is needed which includes the use of social media to affect these changes.

All of these findings relate to the three research questions and goals of this research project and correspond to the main themes within the data.

### **Discussions**

*Research Question One: How Can We Make Heard the Invisible Voices of Those Survivors Who Want to Speak Out Against Trafficking and From This Perspective, How Can We Improve Education About Trafficking?*

Aftercare for a sex trafficking survivor is a long and arduous process and 89% of women who leave aftercare early return to the commercial sex industry at least once (Mark, 2014). Identifying themselves as ‘survivors’ versus ‘victims’ and owning what that means was a very personal and conscious resolution many of the participants had made about themselves. When I asked the question “how can we make heard the invisible voices of survivors” I didn’t understand what it meant for someone to adopt a particular

language in an effort to own their situation. Labeling, compartmentalizing and unpacking certain events, traumatic or not, is crucial in the empowerment of one's own life and circumstance. Four of these six Participants have been successful in identifying themselves as survivors and use that personal empowerment to educate others. Two of the Participants (Three and Four) are still navigating the terrain of survivorship and were less confident in their ability to differentiate themselves between victim and survivor. Not surprisingly, although they continue to work in small group therapy sessions, Participants Three and Four were the only women out of the six who are not actively involved in broad scale advocacy work with the public. In reading and re-reading the narratives of all six Participants, it was those who are more comfortable telling their stories and speaking in public who exhibited the most confidence, were more opinionated about legislation and education and had concrete ideas and plans about the future. These women have been recognized for their potential and not just as 'victims' which encourages, "giving a voice, space and particular attention to suffering individuals" which is sign of respect and gives attention to their human dignity (Meridith, 2009, p. 273). Because of this, the participants in this study have had successful aftercare processes that lead to vibrant and full lives for all of them.

The aftercare of these six Participants involved five church organizations and one privately run non-profit organization. Surprisingly, what I was not expecting from this research was the religious community's involvement in rescuing victims and providing such successful aftercare programs for the survivors. In addition, the counter-narrative is

supported that those religious beliefs often provide comfort and hope to survivors of violence. Said and Funk (2001) suggest that,

Religion may be defined as a path of ultimate transformation, comprised of interconnected systems of symbols and guidelines. These shape the individual and group subconscious from which social practices and interactions are all given meaning (Galtung). This common frame of reference underpins the very fabric of group and individual identity, providing the shared normative foundation that makes harmonious social interaction possible as well as meaningful. Social and political norms manifest the virtues, priorities and ideals of their religious culture. (p. 1)

While there has been an abundance of research conducted that supports the argument that religion can be oppressive, patriarchal and sexist, these new findings are supported by Bales and Soodalter (2009) who suggest that many survivors of violence often find solace from religious organizations that offer aftercare service in the form of safe-houses, monetary aid, and often provide access to health care and mental health care not available through other sources, including the government.

My findings also concluded that education is absolutely the most important factor in creating public awareness about human trafficking and that training should be implemented to all service providers who could possibly come into contact with survivors of human trafficking. This training must be predicated on proper cohesive definitions, an overhaul of legislation and a much broader focus on the demand side of trafficking. It was also clear that survivors of human trafficking have different requirements that need to be addressed than survivors of other abusive crimes. The findings showed a clear pattern of success when the proper aftercare processes are in place. All six Participants believed that obtaining proper aftercare services that encourage healthy self-identification, create safe spaces for survivors to heal and allow them to move through the process on their own terms will foster the voices of survivors who want to speak out and share their experiences. Most of the Participants agreed that it is through the voices of the survivors that much of the future advocacy work, legislative changes and education will occur. Additionally, the Participants were eager to work with other survivors to help bridge the gap between survivor and advocacy.

The findings from Research Question One show that creating trusting relationships and building safe spaces is the absolute first step in helping those survivors who want to speak out. Improving education about trafficking will take a mass movement within the United States that includes educators, service providers, politicians, religious organizations and the public. All six Participants truly believe that this will raise awareness and help abolish the problem.

*Research Question Two: How Do We Disrupt the Pattern of Slavery?*

The theme “changes in consciousness” flowed throughout all six Participant narratives with two distinct changes occurring starting with the Participants themselves being change agents in their own identity and the way they viewed the world. The second change that still needs to occur is a global view of human trafficking, what it actually means and how we identify and treat the victims. The findings from Research Question Two suggest that there is a definite need for cohesive definitions of trafficking, smuggling and prostitution as well as legislation that is nationally recognized with all states collaborating together on these issues. Until this occurs, there will never be consistency about who is actually considered a trafficking victim and how they should be protected. This will require national unified education, training and legislation before any forward strides can be made to eliminate the problem.

There were a few ideas that emerged early and after the analysis was complete and there was a distinct answer among the Participants that absolutely more focus had to be put on the johns and the demand side of trafficking. While none of the Participants felt that you can change the way a person thinks, morally or ethically, you can make an

example out of anyone who purchases a human, whether it be for sex or labor to help discourage others from purchasing. In addition, none of the participants believed prostitution should be legalized. Some of the participants believe that by legalizing prostitution, trafficking crimes will be even more prevalent. With prostitution legalization, traffickers are able to make even more money without fear of their victims or themselves being arrested.

Research question two asked: How do we disrupt the pattern of slavery? The opinions provided by the Participants were:

1. Definitions
2. Prostitution
3. Legislation

**Definitions.** The definitions for human trafficking that the United Nations adopted are universally accepted throughout the global community however, many states within the United States have adopted their own definitions and laws that can cloud the way criminal charges are made against traffickers and do not always criminalize all manifestations of trafficking nor do the appropriately protect the survivors.

Debates regarding the definition of sex trafficking were supposedly settled in 2000, with the adoption of the United Nations (“UN”) Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (“Palermo Protocol”) and its subsequent ratification by more than 146 state parties. Article 3 of the Palermo Protocol sets out a clear definition of trafficking, and, pursuant to Article 5, state parties are obligated to criminalize trafficking as it is defined in Article 3. Given these obligations, one would expect to find widespread uniformity in the definitions of trafficking found in the domestic criminal laws of state parties to

the Palermo Protocol. Yet, as this article demonstrates, significant discrepancies persist between trafficking definitions in international law and definitions adopted in the domestic criminal codes of many state parties. These differences undermine any claim to international agreement regarding the nature of trafficking and destabilize efforts to create a coordinated response to this criminal offense. (Dempsey, Hoyle, Bosworth, 2012)

Without uniform definitions it is impossible to find, charge and convict traffickers.

Currently, states that do not have anti-trafficking legislation use existing criminal statutes to prosecute traffickers but these laws are grossly insufficient (U.S. Department of State, 2013). It is important to note that although the term “trafficking” is used consistently throughout the definitions and implies movement, a victim of human trafficking may never cross state or international borders. Victims can be recruited and trafficked within the boundaries of states or countries.

**Prostitution.** There are two opposing arguments regarding the legalization and regulation of prostitution, both by feminist groups and both with valid positions. One argument revolves around legalizing and regulating prostitution for those women who want to utilize autonomy over their own body and legally engage in the business of prostitution. This, they argue, will produce tax revenue, increase protection of the women and decrease sex trafficking. The opposing view argues that any and all sex work, including pornography, strip clubs and prostitution keeps women subjugated to men and it continues to feed the culture of normalizing sexual assault. They also argue that the only way to effectively target human trafficking is to completely eliminate all forms of prostitution and pornography.

All six Participants have very strong views against legalizing prostitution.

Mary shared,

I absolutely do not want to see prostitution legalized. I understand that there are possibly a handful of women who do it willingly however, for the most part, in my opinion, women do it because they are either forced into or economically they quite literally have no choice. If it's legalized, don't they understand that increased the risk of women being forced into it. If there's no possibility of pimps or traffickers being caught and the women are at risk of being arrested, there going to get as many women as they can out there on the streets, in massage parlors, in strip clubs as they can. The more women, the more money. Honestly, legalizing it is just pure stupidity, that's just my opinion and I'm sticking to it (laughing).

Star stated,

This is such a touchy subject, I mean, you know, um, I wouldn't want it legalized, no, no, I wouldn't want that. You know, I'm out there on the streets pretty much, um, pretty much every night and um, I see these girls, I talk to these girls, yeah, it might keep them from getting arrested but right now, that's one of the only ways to get them out of trafficking situations. They can't leave on their own or they won't leave 'cause they are way too scared they'll find them and either beat them or kill them. It's kinda rare, you know, I mean, it's rare that they escape unharmed or their pimp or trafficker just lets them go, that just doesn't happen. Honestly, they'd rather see the girls dead and who's going to miss her? I mean there's really no reason for them to be scared of that as long as they know how to properly dispose of her. . . Sorry, I don't mean to be so graphic but, you know, um, you know it's just brutal out there. I see it every day.

Alice shared her views on legalizing prostitution,

I hope it's never legalized. I know it's legal in some countries but I don't think it's a good idea here. I honestly don't know much about the laws about it except it's illegal. I wanted to die every single day I was being forced to do it and then when I was living on the streets and it was the only thing I knew I could do to make money I thought about killing myself every day. I got beat up really bad one time and I actually started thinking that maybe he would kill me and it would be over so I can't imagine any woman wanting to live like that.

I think if it's legalized, there will be a bunch of women who think it will be quick and easy money, but trust me, it's not, it's not worth it. There will be a bunch of beat up or dead women.

Lyn didn't have much to say about it but shared,

That doesn't make any sense legalizing it. No, no way should it be legalized. I don't understand why they would want to do that. First, why would any woman want to do that for a living and second, it just seems to me that would make it easier for women to be forced into prostitution.

Rose shared,

We recently had a round table discussion about this at work. For obvious reasons, being a church, we would never support legalizing prostitution for the morality issue alone but just think about the danger they'd be putting women in. You think trafficking is hard to uncover now, just go ahead and legalize prostitution, you'll never be able to find victims then, I mean, and the numbers would skyrocket.

We spent a fair amount of time at work updating our presentations to include the argument about prostitution and why it shouldn't be legalized. I know there are women out there who want it to be legal so they can work without being arrested but really, I don't think there are that many.

Sue shared,

In one of my classes we had a debate on this issue and someone dug up some research and I'm not sure where it came from or who did it but it said that almost every woman, in that particular study, who was working as a prostitute came from an abuse past like all types of abuse you know physical, emotional or sexual. That makes sense to me. I would have to go back and look through the records of all the girls that have come through my ministry and the safe house but I would bet that every one of them has a abusive past. So, to me, legalizing prostitution is just perpetuating that cycle of abuse. I don't want it to be legal for men, or women for that matter, to be able to out on the street or in some back alley massage parlor and buy sex. It's dangerous for both parties.

When asked if she thought that by not legalizing prostitution we were helping drive trafficking further underground she offered, “No, not at all. Right now we at least have access to some of the victims, I hate that they have to be arrested but it gives us access. If it’s legalized, that cuts off our access.”

After discussing the legal issue of prostitution I asked the Participants how they felt about the prosecution rate of the traffickers and the johns and janes. It was no surprise that none of them felt that the traffickers who were convicted of human trafficking got nearly enough time in prison. They believe the laws aren’t strong enough and don’t punish the traffickers appropriately. The mention of the prosecution of the johns and janes lead to very lengthy discussions with Participants One, Two and Six who all felt the criminal justice system completely fails on this subject. The need for more stringent legislation will be discussed further later in this section. This subject, in particular angered Mary, throughout the entire interview she was soft spoken until she started speaking about the lack of arrests of the johns. Mary offered,

No one I have ever spoke to about the lack of john prosecution understands it either. Why? Why aren’t the scumbags who are out there paying for sex arrested and charged? I really can’t wrap my brain around it. What the hell is wrong with people? I mean, this asshole goes out there and pays to have sex with some 14 year old girl but it’s okay. Or these idiots who are booking these sex tour packages over to Thailand or Cambodia, seriously? Arrest their asses, put them in prison, splash their pictures all over social media and the front page of news paper, make sure their family knows what they were doing. . . I’m sorry, I get a little upset about this subject. . . They arrest the girl for selling it but not the man for buying it? Now what kind of damn sense does that make?

Star was equally upset by this subject,

The idea that women are, um, regularly arrested for prostitution but, you know, um, the johns walk away with not so much as a slap on the wrist just infuriates me. It seriously you know, it seriously makes me want to hunt every one of them down and, um, maybe I shouldn't say this but, um, commit a Lorena Bobbit on them. Every single one of them should go to jail.

Sue added,

This matter is actually being addressed in our state legislature right now. There was a local coalition that took it to their representative who felt it deserved attention. I'm not familiar with the specifics, although, I really should be, but they are pushing for much harsher sentences for anyone found buying sex.

When asked if she thought this was a good idea she offered,

Oh yea, I definitely think it's a good idea. I mean, I said before, I think prostitution should remain illegal. You can't regulate the dehumanization of women.

All six Participants voiced concern that police tend to automatically victim blame and pursue the supply side of trafficking versus pursuing the demand side. As conflict workers, it is important that we explore ways to encourage law enforcement and legislators to take a much harder look and stance on the criminal penalties for those involved in the demand side of trafficking, particularly, sex trafficking. Bales and Soodalter (2009) suggest,

Yet only a small fraction of America's law enforcement officers have been trained to recognize and stop this serious crime. As our survey makes clear, most state and local police either have no idea that human trafficking actually occurs or don't believe it happens within their jurisdiction. Yet these are people who are most directly responsible for uncovering slavery in America. If the police are to be

more effective, an intense and comprehensive nationwide training program must be given, as soon. (p. 265)

Social media was another area that was threaded throughout the interviews and was mentioned when discussing education of the public and also as an access point for traffickers to target young girls. Alice, who has recently entered the world of social media shared this,

I, just in the last couple of months, joined Facebook. I have a Twitter account but I just read what's out there, I don't, you know, tweet or anything. . . After seeing some of the stuff that is out there and reading some articles on how they [traffickers] are using the internet and Facebook to get girls to, I guess, target them and get them into trafficking, I can see how it happens and how dangerous it can be. Kids really need to be taught about these things. . . but, on the other hand, I can see how it could be used for good like getting information out to a whole bunch of people at one time. So, I can see the good and the bad with social media.

Lyn feels that social media can be positive if used to “teach people and help spread information about different topics.” Star, who utilizes both Facebook and Twitter to communicate with members of her organization and to inform the public about upcoming events shared,

I use Facebook on a daily basis, um, it's useful, you know, to get the info out there without me having to call a million people, or, um, type up a newsletter or what have you and mail it out. I couldn't afford that. So, with that it really helps me and I can see how it helps gather people up for different events and things. I hear from people all the time, um, at, um, different things, people I don't know that, um, that, you know, said, “Hey, I saw your posting about this thing and we showed up to help.” So, yeah, really, it's very helpful to me. I don't know what I would do without it.

Sue added,

You know, when you look at other countries and what they've done with social media, the political movements and such, the United States really has such a better network that isn't being utilized and I'm not really sure why that is. How is it that an entire country, like Egypt, can come together through Twitter and Facebook and overthrow an entire government but we can't even get our people to acknowledge that trafficking even exists. . . We had a very heated discussion in one of my classes about why they were able to do it and we aren't. A lot of the people, the students, said it was because Americans are just too lazy or too wrapped up in their own personal lives to take notice. I really don't know if I agree with that 100% but it seemed to be the general opinion that day.

As discovered in Chapter Two through the literature, it is through globalization and the increased use of social media that has made it possible for thousands of people to come together to support a cause and incite change. Perhaps it is through the social media medium that we, as educators and conflict workers, can create change.

**Legislation.** Legislation throughout the United States is a crude patchwork of laws and statutes that vary from state to state. The United States has statutes that deal directly with human trafficking, involuntary servitude, forced labor, sex trafficking, slavery and peonage. Consistently enforcing them is another matter (U.S. Department of Justice, 2012).

The United States has laws and regulations that forbid the importation of any slave-made goods, including those made in prison factories. These laws date back more than one hundred years, and they have been tested and ruled on by the Supreme Court. But somehow, as slavery slipped into the darkness and Americans came to believe it was finished forever, these laws fell into disuse and were virtually forgotten (Bales, 2009, p. 23).

The laws themselves will have to be rewritten to extend responsibility and culpability. New or changed laws should address *conspiracy* to enslave or *profiting* from slavery, in the same way as laws against homicide punish

*conspiracy* to murder and don't restrict guilt to the person who pulls the trigger. (Bales, 2000, p. 25)

Sue stated,

I haven't taken many classes on politics but we did touch on laws and legislation in one of my psychology classes and, of course, I brought up the topic of human trafficking. So, we got into this discussion, you know, after we defined what it was because some of the other students had never heard of it, but any ways, we got into this discussion about how there weren't enough laws on the books to convict traffickers in all the states or to protect the victims.

We definitely need legislation that is the same across all states because this isn't just an issue that affects certain states it's nationwide coast to coast. You can't have one trafficker being sentenced two years in one state and 25 in the next state over. And, legislation that protects victims also has to be the same all over, we have to be protected the same way in every single state, there's just no way to compromise on that.

Mary stated,

I just think the laws suck in general, there's no consistency. The Federal laws say one thing but the state laws say another and nobody knows which ones apply to what situations. It's not good and that's just about arresting and convicting the traffickers. The laws that even attempt to protect the victims are just as confusing, believe me, I know. I can't tell you how many battles we've fought for women in the house because of inconsistent laws.

I haven't even mentioned the lack of legislation for the johns, I swear, I don't think there is any out there. If there is, its surely not being enforced.

Star shared,

I don't even know what else I can say about the laws that are on the books, I mean, um, I kinda feel like they're useless, you know, um, just coming from my back ground and all. I don't know where the government gets all their numbers from about trafficking, especially sex traffic and I don't know how all these different states come up with different laws for the same exact crime. And why,

you know, um, like I said before, why are we arresting the victims and not the ones who are buying?

Participants Three and Four didn't have much to say about the legislation, but Alice shared,

I think the laws need to change about the girls who are arrested but it's not their fault. I wasn't arrested but was taken into protective custody but it was still very scary because I didn't know what was going on. At the time, I thought I was being sent to jail.

I talk to girls every week who have been arrested for and spent a lot of time in jail when really they were trafficking victims. It's not fair to them. It's the people who buy and sell them that should be arrested.

Lyn replied,

I don't really think the government is really keeping track of what's going on. . . I mean, other than the people at the safe house, I don't really think anybody cared what happened to me. I know that the police went and arrested the people who brought us here and did this to us but they will only be in jail for like less than 10 years and other than getting me the right paperwork to stay and work here, I haven't talked to anyone, you know, in the government.

Rose shared,

I've learned a lot by traveling with my church and attending the roundtable discussions that they have and it's fairly well known that the term trafficking didn't become popular until the late 1990s or early 2000s. So, really, this is new, you know, 14 or 15 years old, at the most. And I know the TVPA has been instrumental in helping identify trafficking victims but there's still a lot to be done.

Sue shared,

President Clinton really did a lot for bringing trafficking into the forefront of political attention but that was a long time ago and the issue seems to have stalled. I mean providing a legal avenue for prosecuting traffickers is one thing but enforcing it is a completely different story not to mention laws that prosecute the johns and laws that protect the victims.

Even though I'm not a traditional student, being a full-time student right now, I can see such a huge educational opportunity on campus. I would like to see a anti-human trafficking coalition started on campus. From what I understand, it's sort of a long complicated process to set one up but I would love to see that happen.

I really think the teachers or professors have the obligation to raise awareness, I mean, not in every class, obviously, that's just not appropriate, but in the proper classes, raise awareness about human trafficking. We are taught about the slave trade from the 1800s they need to be talking about the current slave trade as well.

Sue also suggested that instructors should support students who want to start on campus organizations that raise awareness of, not just trafficking, but all human rights abuses.

She felt that on the campus she attends, students didn't get the support they needed when it came to organizing public rallies, membership drives or even public viewing of documentaries in campus facilities.

Mary felt that in addition to educating students on human trafficking greater weight should be put on the fact that trafficking is not just an international crime that it is happening here in the United States and that there are victims here locally who need help. She shared this about the safe house she has recently opened,

You know I don't get any government funding for my program, I rely solely on donations and volunteers and by the way, the students you sent down last week were a tremendous help, I can't thank you enough but, it's things like that that teachers need to encourage. Teach students what trafficking is, you know, teach students that it's happening here, right here in this city. I was really impressed by

your students because I never know with volunteers what I'm going to get. Not just their work product but their knowledge base. I've found that if some people are not prepared ahead of time they don't do well with trafficking victims and I suspect abuse victims in general. Your students knew exactly what they were getting into, what to expect and they interacted beautifully with the house guests.

It's been a little while since I graduated from college but when I was there, there wasn't a lot of encouragement to get involved in your community maybe it's different at other schools. . . I think we really need to be encouraging students to get involved, take a stand either for or against something. I really try to impress that upon the ladies who come through this house, you know, you've had this really terrible thing happen to you, life altering and you can do one of two things, let it consume you and continue being a victim or stand up and use what you've learned to fight it, stop it, you know? . . . We really just need more teachers to take a stand and make a difference, students will follow your lead if you make it part of the way you teach, at least that's my opinion.

The sad reality is most people, including law enforcement and service providers, do not know what human trafficking is and this presents a significant obstacle in the identification of trafficking victims. Proper education/training and general awareness, comprehensive legislation and addressing the demand side of trafficking were common opinions throughout these Participant narratives and aligned with findings from the literature that was reviewed.

*Research Question Three: How Can We, Particularly in the Conflict and Education Fields, Bring More Weight and Direct Action to the Resolution of These Issues in the U.S., As Well As Internationally?*

The self-reported awareness among the Participants of what human trafficking actually meant *before* their trafficking experience was zero. None of the Participants had ever heard of human trafficking and for a few the term remained non-existent for several months into their aftercare. All six Participants perceive the actual current public

awareness of human trafficking is still very low. Two of the six Participants have completed college degrees and believe more can be done on the college campuses to not only educate students about trafficking but raise public awareness about the prevalence of the issue. The remaining four Participants shared the desire to eventually pursue degrees with all six expressing the desire to use their education and/or training in an advocacy capacity helping survivors of human trafficking and educating the public about the complexities of the issue. All six feel that educators have the ability and position to educate and generate knowledge about human trafficking and this could have two significant outcomes, 1) It helps students recognize that human trafficking not only exists but is here in the United States, and 2) It might help deter young people from looking to the streets to live and make them aware that there are predators on the internet. In correlation with the literature, the findings show that education, the use of social media, and mass movements can help drive social transformative change. Tudoroiu (2014) explained that new waves of political change are being revolutionized by utilizing social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram. Markham (2014) echoed these findings suggesting that social media has had a powerful effect on activism and the ability to motivate protest movements and harnessing political and social movements throughout the world. Additionally, we have learned from the literature that when democratic seeking people rise up and stand bravely against oppressive forces radical change becomes a real possibility. Sue suggested,

It's going to take radical political and education changes that really involve, you know, some creative and inventive people who are willing to stand up and speak

out but it's really going to take a lot of people coming to together to make a difference.

They each shared their eagerness to exercise their voices in both anti-human trafficking campaigns and aftercare services for other survivors.

Another result analogous to the literature is the idea that gender and economic oppression is the most prevalent cause of sex trafficking both domestically and internationally. Each of these Participants suffered some type of oppression and vulnerability due to their gender and economic position. As the literature pointed out systems such as patriarchy, neoliberalism, capitalism, religion and media can encourage a misogynistic hegemony that promotes female oppression through gender degradation and economic subjugation and normalizes the objectification of women as possessions for sexual exploitation. All six Participants believe that considerable education and a total change in perception are needed to help alleviate these oppressive forces that leave women vulnerable to trafficking. These findings mirror the literature which indicates that educators and advocacy workers have high visibility with the public and are in an excellent position to effect change.

### **Implications and Recommendations**

Meeting, interviewing and getting to know these six Participants has been an overwhelming and sobering experience. Their stories have left me with more questions than when I started this dissertation. There is still much research to do on human trafficking, in general, and even more to conduct with the survivors themselves who are willing. First, it is a delicate balancing act working with and interviewing survivors of sex

trafficking but for those survivors who wish to speak out, it is important to hear their stories, listen to their opinions and apply what we learn from them because their voice provides important implications for our advocacy work. The stories from these six Participants deliver insight based on real life experiences and the information that can be gathered from these stories and the stories of other survivors can be utilized to improve services and processes that greatly increase the retention rates of survivors in aftercare programs thus decreasing the probability of returning to the sex industry. These narratives revealed that creating safe spaces for survivors and building trusting relationships is vital for them to find their voice and share their experiences. The implication here is that service providers should implement as a best practice appropriate treatment modalities that reflect the unique traumatic events trafficking victims have incurred that would prevent them from speaking openly and honestly. It is paramount that service providers build trust, create safe spaces, develop effective practice skills by encouraging survivors to tell their stories at their own pace to support and assist in a full and healthy recovery.

Second, there is further work to be done on the domestic front and the issue of young American girls being lured into sex trafficking, some through social media outlets, others through relatives or people they thought were friends. It is important to note that Participants One, Two and Six were United States citizens who were trafficked domestically which demonstrates that young American girls are equally at risk as the young women from foreign lands suffering from war or political and economic oppression. Comprehensive research that includes quantitative and qualitative methods

needs to be conducted to investigate how and why so many young women are falling prey to domestic trafficking. Literature suggests that traffickers often prey on young women who have a history of being subjected to violence and sexual abuse, runaways and at-risk youth who have problems at home and/or school because these women are already vulnerable and are desperate for love and attention. Educational programs need to be implemented throughout the school systems to include initiatives that teach what trafficking is, how social media creates a ripe environment for traffickers to lure young women, and how to identify situations that could lead to trafficking and open communication paths between students and teachers/administrators that will help detect trafficking or the possibility of trafficking.

Third, there is currently an extensive gap between state, federal and international definitions and policies that are often left open to interpretation and leave victims grossly unprotected. Comprehensive definitions and policies need to be established that align domestically and internationally that will combat and prevent human trafficking while protecting the victims. Domestically, law enforcement, human and health services and education need systems in place to correctly and efficiently identify trafficking victims in order to respond to their specific needs appropriately. As educators and advocacy workers, it is our responsibility to create action plans that address the economic and social policies that tackle the root causes of social and cultural violence through awareness-raising measures and legislative measures (OSCE, 2014). By fostering social, economic and political stability, improving access to educational and vocational opportunities and enhancing job opportunities for marginalized groups, especially

women, vulnerability to oppression and violence will be greatly reduced. It will require extensive work, in the form of education and training, to help lessen the oppressive systems that leave women vulnerable to trafficking.

My final suggestion for future research involves the demand side of trafficking. Currently, there is the perception that the johns and janes (the buyers of sex) are very rarely prosecuted and those who are convicted walk away with fines or probation. Human trafficking will continue as long as we fail to address the demand side of the equation. It is unlikely that we can change the way people think or their nefarious desires however we can put greater weight and implement harsher punishment on those who seek out sexual services and engage in business with sex traffickers, with more severe penalties for those involving children. Research has revealed that there are many sex clients who prefer children under the age of 15 and still others who prefer children under the age of 10. Law enforcement officials are in need of training that promotes the arrest and prosecution of these individuals to the fullest extent of the law.

### **In the News Today**

Since these Participant interviews took place there have been several local, national and global movements for the education of human trafficking. The United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) through the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime launched a new global initiative in support of survivors of human trafficking called the Blue Heart Campaign and urges those in power who can effect change to do so. An ad agency in Tampa, Florida, Ad2, launched a competition for the best advertisement in their pro-bono ad campaign to raise awareness

of trafficking in the Tampa area, the results were staggering. Polaris Project noted a 40% increase in calls from the Tampa Bay area after the campaign was launched (Hendricks, 2014). This is promising and shows that people are listening and taking a stand. There is power in numbers and every mass movement requires the solidarity of a community, local, national, global or otherwise.

However, for every good and positive action in the fight against human trafficking there seems to be a step backwards. On September 18, 2014, President Barrack Obama failed to impose sanctions against Malaysia and Thailand for failing to meet minimum standards in combatting human trafficking. If we, as the supposed leader in the fight against human trafficking can't develop comprehensive definitions, education and legislation in order to combat the problem, we don't stand a chance fighting it globally.

### **Summary**

This chapter discussed the findings from this study's three research questions and three goals that were collected from the six research Participants and in relation to the literature concerning the oppression of women and sex trafficking. Implications for policy and practice as it relates to human trafficking as well as recommendations for future research that is needed were also presented. This research project concludes with the final reflections of the writer.

### **Final Reflections**

As a social justice advocate who researches and teaches about human trafficking I began questioning the larger systems that lead to vulnerability and trafficking and what

aftercare process were working. I wanted to find out how race, class and gender implicate humans in this war on inequality and how it complicates any forward progress towards equality. My goal was to find women with powerful stories and voices who could enlighten others about the larger oppressive systems in place that lead to trafficking and what helped them move forward from such devastating traumatic events. I wanted to hear the voices of survivors who might lend critical answers to some of these questions. The voices of these women who participated in this study speak to the larger context of human trafficking and how social structures are generating vulnerabilities. It is through these oppressive systems that women find themselves in vulnerable situations and victims of trafficking. We must evaluate our own mindfulness and awareness and recognize that it is the larger macro systems such as neoliberalism, globalization, patriarchy and unchecked capitalism that are broken and not the victims. This research involved candid discussions with sex trafficking survivors that provide honest and straightforward answers about the growing subject of human trafficking.

These six Women shed light on and helped answer the three research questions presented here in this research project. In addition, they also shared interesting information that requires further investigation, such as, the prevalence of religious institutions within the aftercare process and on a global scale, how religion can be utilized as a peace process rather than an oppressive system that often initiates conflict. These Women's stories also illustrate just how globalization, economy, culture and privilege can foster the pervasiveness of human trafficking and how easy it is to fall victim to this crime.

Globalization has in many ways had profound positive effects on the world with the ease of knowledge transfer, the technological advances and the abundance of knowledge at our fingertips. However, the current globalization of the workforce has created vulnerable, desperate and powerless victims who, like the Women in this study, fall prey to human traffickers who are willing to exploit and dehumanize others in order to make money. The sad truth is, women's bodies have become "a global battlefield" (Clark, Florey, January 5, 2013). We have seen, in this research, that human trafficking, sex trafficking in particular, is domestic and international problem with three of the Participants trafficked *into* the United States and three Participants trafficked *within* the United States. Because human trafficking is such a global problem we can benefit from understanding how trafficking works economically and culturally on both a domestic and international sphere and developing innovative practices and solutions through shared processes that only global interconnectedness can facilitate. As van Wormer (2005) suggests, "Globalization has the potential to transport traditional social policy analysis into an ever-widening international arena, even to the extent, through information technology, of helping people to influence their own governments to consider human rights issues in foreign relations" (p. 2).

Media and the internet grossly contribute to the popularity of pornography that objectifies and dehumanizes women and incites this rape culture by sexualizing violence against women. There is strong evidence that media is not the sole cause of objectification and dehumanization however, the violence streaming through our television and computers screens from movies, news, video games, advertising and even

music, reinforces the myths, beliefs and attitudes of a misogynistic culture and society rapt with aggression and hostility towards each other, particularly women. It is through this bombardment of images and song lyrics that we have become desensitized and tolerant of it and while it is impossible to radically change the way people think or completely eliminate violence from the world, we can encourage others to challenge the notion that violence is something we must accept as a standard way of living. I am a firm believer that education may not be able to “change” society but it can powerfully impact the way we view the world and all that is in it. As indicated by the Participants in this study, education is key to change and as educators and/or activists there is much we can do in the way of educating students and our communities about democracy, equity and reform. Presently, there is a continuing need for education on issues of race, gender, class, ethnicity, inequality, conflict and peace and there is no one solution to these inequalities that pervade society but collective knowledge can bring about widespread change and lead to what Baird (2011) called “critical mass” or that minimum amount of people needed to start or sustain a movement, rebellion or revolution.

The research presented here has identified bifurcated findings on the role religion plays as an oppressive system that can dehumanize women but also as a catalyst for hope, trust building, safety and stability. As seen in much of the literature on religion, despite the advances for equality struggles still remain for women particularly for immigrants and women of color and many fundamental religious institutions are leading the way to quash any forward progress by attempting to return women back to a more subordinate station in society (Levine, 2009). However, as discovered through the interviews with the

Women participating in this study, religious organizations and the spirituality they have developed played a critical role not only in their immediate aftercare process but also in their continuing life choices and success.

The experiences of these Women reinforce the research that our current neoliberal, global, patriarchal, and economic systems continue to create oppressive conditions that lead to trafficking. These macro issues require mass social change for long term effects versus solely focusing on the micro issues of victim aftercare services, interventions and aftercare services. Intrinsic values for humanity within our society are being disregarded by capitalists who work to create goods and provide services cheaper than their competitor and they make this happen by enslaving those who are vulnerable to economic hardship. The question is; can policy changes alter our value system or do we need to transform our value system before we can implement effective policy? Katherine van Wormer suggests that

policies and values are intertwined. As the tides of political change come and go, and as the public mood shifts, so do the social policies. And just as values play into the creation of policies, so do policies into values. Change the policies and they soon become part of the status quo (p. 1)

We are stratified by gender, class, ethnicity, religion, economy, politics, etc. and for women the current neoliberal masculine structure that embeds these labels into society serves as a form of “subordination, domination and oppression,” (Fraser, et al., 1994, p. 211) that further inflames human rights abuses such as human trafficking. We have been banned to our proverbial corners based on these labels only to come out furiously swinging in an attempt to fight the weighted burden that keeps us underneath the

traditional thumb of ‘systems’ that we had no part in constructing and although we have made strides in gender equality it has been localized as a western ideology and bifurcated by class and race status. How we address and attend to the deeper cultural changes that are needed is essential for successful, “awareness, resistance, solidarity, and revolutionary transformation” that will lend space for dialogue (Hatch, 2002, p. 17) and “promote greater involvement of women in prevention and resolution of conflicts and, in particular, in activities promoting a culture of peace” (unesco.org, 1995). Beyond the interventions already discussed in Chapter 5, we need to move forward towards, “gender equity and equality” to develop a new culture of peace that utilizes creative knowledge and dialogue between women and men that allows focus on the prevention of violence and builds positive alternatives (unesco.org, 1997):

Equality, development and peace are inextricably linked. There can be no lasting peace without development and no sustainable development without full equality between men and women. (UNESCO Statement on Women’s Contribution to a Culture of Peace, 1995)

As a long term intervention, there must be women’s peace initiatives developed and implemented that progress from mere ink on paper to full engagement that puts these ideas into action. We must help empower women to fully participate in democratic political processes that will increase their capacity and impact in economic, social, political and security issues. These Participant interviews have reinforced, in me, the idea that women who are empowered by their own voice and identity can create great change in this world.

As indicated by the lack of research and narratives conveyed by the Participants there is still much work to be done in the way of research, education and advocacy and how neoliberalism, globalization, patriarchy, masculine identity, gender in/equality, economics all intersect and impact our social and cultural values that lead to human rights violations. Education is needed for public awareness, collaboration is needed for comprehensive definitions of trafficking and change is needed in policies and practice for the protection of the victims, charging and sentencing of the traffickers and johns if we are going to eliminate this thriving global industry. The supply and demand sides must be pursued equally in order to send hard and fast messages to traffickers and purchasers that when caught, they will be punished to the fullest extent of the law. It is my hope that by listening to these survivor's voices and their experiences we can put into practice more education and advocacy work by increasing awareness so we can live in a world free of slavery.

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APPENDIX A  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL



THE UNIVERSITY of NORTH CAROLINA  
**GREENSBORO**

**OFFICE OF RESEARCH INTEGRITY**  
2718 Beverly Cooper Moore and Irene Mitchell Moore  
Humanities and Research Administration Bldg.  
PO Box 26170  
Greensboro, NC 27402-6170  
336.256.0253  
Web site: [www.uncg.edu/orc](http://www.uncg.edu/orc)  
Federalwide Assurance (FWA) #216

**To:** Michelle McCrory  
Ed Ldrship and Cultural Found  
1003-03 Foxcroft Lane, Statesville, NC 28677

**From:** UNCG IRB

Authorized signature on behalf of IRB

**Approval Date:** 12/17/2013  
**Expiration Date of Approval:** 12/16/2014

**RE:** Notice of IRB Approval by Expedited Review (under 45 CFR 46.110)  
**Submission Type:** Initial  
**Expedited Category:** 7.Surveys/interviews/focus groups,6.Voice/image research recordings  
**Study #:** 13-0485  
**Study Title:** Trafficking in Women: When Survivors Find Their Voice

This submission has been approved by the IRB for the period indicated. It has been determined that the risk involved in this research is no more than minimal.

**Study Description:**

There is a need for the creation of protected spaces for victims and survivors of human trafficking where those who choose to *break* the silence feel safe and for those who choose to *keep* silent to be nurtured. It is through these stories that we can identify some of the conditions that lead to trafficking, thereby, helping us to disrupt the pattern of slavery and combat the problem. In addition, hearing from survivors helps improve aftercare services based on their specific needs reducing the possibility of re-victimization and victim blaming which marginalize the victim/survivor making recovery even more difficult. The purpose of this study is to help survivors of human trafficking, who so desire, break the silence and give voice to their stories of trafficking and surviving in order to educate the public about trafficking, help service providers improve current advocacy/assistance programs available and help protect others who are at risk of being trafficked.

**Regulatory and other findings:**

This research meets criteria for waiver of a signed consent form according to 45 CFR 46.117(c)(1 and 2).

**Investigator's Responsibilities**

Federal regulations require that all research be reviewed at least annually. It is the Principal Investigator's responsibility to submit for renewal and obtain approval before the expiration date. You may not continue any research activity beyond the expiration date without IRB approval. Failure to receive approval for continuation before the expiration date will result in automatic termination of the approval for this study on the expiration date.

Signed letters, along with stamped copies of consent forms and other recruitment materials will be scanned to you in a separate email. **Stamped consent forms must be used unless the IRB has given you approval to waive this requirement.** Please notify

the ORI office immediately if you have an issue with the stamped consents forms.

You are required to obtain IRB approval for any changes to any aspect of this study before they can be implemented (use the modification application available at <http://integrity.uncg.edu/institutional-review-board/>). Should any adverse event or unanticipated problem involving risks to subjects or others occur it must be reported immediately to the IRB using the "Unanticipated Problem-Adverse Event Form" at the same website.

Please be aware that valid human subjects training for all members of research team need to be kept on file with the lead investigator. Please note that you will also need to remain in compliance with the university "Access To and Retention of Research Data" Policy which can be found at [http://policy.uncg.edu/research\\_data/](http://policy.uncg.edu/research_data/).

CC:

Harvey Shapiro, Ed Ldrship and Cultural Found

APPENDIX B  
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Tell me how you became a victim of human trafficking.
2. How did you get out?
3. What have you done in the aftercare process that helped you?
4. What are your thoughts about aftercare?
5. Which organization, or advocate, played a significant role in your healing/empowerment process?
6. What are your thoughts about how to educate service providers, i.e., police, doctors, psychologists, and the public on human trafficking?
7. What are your thoughts about what policies should be enacted to punish traffickers and attempt to eliminate trafficking?
8. What are your thoughts about what policies should be enacted to protect victims?
9. What policies do you believe should be passed regarding the aftercare process?
10. What message would you like to pass on to other survivors of human trafficking?
11. What message, about human trafficking, do you most want to communicate to the public?

APPENDIX C  
RECRUITMENT SCRIPT

Because my recruitment procedure will be conversational the approximate communication will be: I am conducting a research project on human trafficking as a graduate student with the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. I am doing this study because I am interested in better understanding the unique experiences faced by women who have been trafficked based on gender, economics, politics and/or globalization. If you agree to be a part of this study, you will participate in an individual interview.

## APPENDIX D

## RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Good afternoon, My name is Michelle McCrory and I am a PhD Candidate at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro. I am conducting a research project for my dissertation about human trafficking. I am particularly interested in survivor's voices and how they can improve aftercare services and increase legislation. I am extremely interested in speaking with you and hearing your story and opinions. If it is possible to speak I will certainly come to you to meet when it is convenient for you.

## APPENDIX E

## PARTICIPANT CONSENT

## UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO

## CONSENT TO ACT AS A HUMAN PARTICIPANT

Project Title: Trafficking in Women: When Survivors Find Their Voice  
Michelle L. McCrory, PhD Candidate, Principal Investigator  
Dr. Svi Shapiro, Faculty Advisor

Participant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**What is the study about?**

This is a research project. Your participation is voluntary. I am doing this study because I am interested in better understanding the unique experiences faced by women who have experienced trafficking based on gender and economics.

**Why are you asking me?**

I invited you to be a part of this study because you identified yourself as a woman who has experienced human trafficking.

**What will you ask me to do if I agree to be in the study?**

If you agree to be a part of this study, you will participate in two (2) individual interviews. I will ask participants questions about their experiences with human trafficking. Each of the individual interviews will last approximately one (1) to two hours (2).

As your questions should be answered to your satisfaction before you agree to be in this study, I am happy to answer any questions or concerns you have. Feel free to ask questions now or contact me, Michelle L. McCrory, the Principal Investigator of this study.

**Is there any audio/video recording?**

The individual interviews will be audio recorded. After the interview I will transcribe the recording and only discuss the details with my faculty advisor at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro for the purposes of helping me with this study. All information collected will be kept confidential in accordance with all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations. Upon completion of this study all transcripts and recordings will be destroyed. Your name and identifying information will be carefully excluded from the final product.

Because your voice will be potentially identifiable by anyone who hears the tape, your confidentiality for things you say on the tape cannot be guaranteed although the researcher will try to limit access to the tape as described below.

**What are the risks to me?**

There are some risks to participating in this study. First, I will take rigorous measures to keep your identity and story confidential. Second, the questions that will be asked during interviews are not meant to make you uncomfortable. However, discussing your personal experiences may bring up some upsetting feelings. You will not be asked to share or discuss anything you do not want to. All participation during the interview is voluntary. At the end of the interview there will be a chance to write down some of your thoughts or ideas that you did not feel comfortable sharing. This information will be kept strictly confidential.

The Institutional Review Board at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro has determined that participation in this study poses minimal risk to participants

If you have questions, want more information or have suggestions, please contact Michelle L. McCrory, the Principal Investigator of this study. My phone number is 828-550-0314 and my e-mail address is [mlmccror@uncg.edu](mailto:mlmccror@uncg.edu). My faculty advisor is Dr. Svi Shapiro, 336-334-3466 and his email address is [hsshapir@uncg.edu](mailto:hsshapir@uncg.edu).

If you have any concerns about your rights, how you are being treated, concerns or complaints about this project or benefits or risks associated with being in this study please contact the Office of Research Integrity at UNCG toll-free at (855)-251-2351.

**Are there any benefits to society as a result of me taking part in this research?**

Society may benefit from this research, as the results will supplement literature on women who are the survivors of human trafficking and the perceptions of the associated risk factors for such trauma.

**Are there any benefits to *me* for taking part in this research study?**

There are no direct benefits to participants in this study.

**Will I get paid for being in the study? Will it cost me anything?**

There are no costs to you or payments made for participating in this study.

**How will you keep my information confidential?**

This study will be as confidential as possible. We will discuss confidentiality at the beginning and end of the individual interviews. Confidentiality means that the information shared between investigator and interviewee should not be talked about outside the interview, including names, identifying information, or any information disclosed by any participant. Pseudonyms will be used in place of names on data collection materials, including any transcripts, and will be cross referenced with consent forms being held separately in two different locked cabinets at the interviewers double locked, off campus, residence that only the interviewer has access to. The individual interviews will be audio recorded. Any recorded interviews that are transcribed will contain only pseudonyms and will be done on a computer that is password protected. The tapes will be kept separately from all transcripts and research data, in a double locked cabinet at the interviewers double locked, off campus, residence that only the interviewer has access to. Immediately after the interview I will transcribe the recording and only discuss the details with my supervisor at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro for the purposes of helping me with this study. All information collected will be kept confidential in accordance with all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations. All transcripts and research will be placed in a folder apart from the materials used to collect data from participants during the study. The tapes used for recording will be used only until fully transcribed and will then be destroyed so the voices of participants will no longer be able to be used to identify the individual. Upon completion of this study all transcripts will be deleted from computers and recording devices and any paper copies shredded and recordings will be destroyed by erasing all interviews and

discarding the tapes. Your name and identifying information will be carefully excluded from the final product.

All information obtained in this study is strictly confidential unless disclosure is required by law.

**What if I want to leave the study?**

You have the right to refuse to participate or to withdraw at any time, without penalty. If you do withdraw, it will not affect you in any way. If you choose to withdraw, you may request that any of your data which has been collected be destroyed unless it is in a de-identifiable state.

**What about new information/changes in the study?**

If significant new information relating to the study becomes available which may relate to your willingness to continue to participate, this information will be provided to you.

**Voluntary Consent by Participant:**

By completing this interview you are agreeing that you read, or it has been read to you, and you fully understand the contents of this document and are openly willing consent to take part in this study. All of your questions concerning this study have been answered. By completing this interview, you are agreeing that you are 18 years of age or older and are agreeing to participate, or have the individual specified above as a participant participate, in this study described to you by Michelle McCrory, Principal Investigator.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX F

## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE STATUTES

The United States has statutes that deal directly with human trafficking, involuntary servitude, forced labor, sex trafficking, slavery and peonage. Consistently enforcing them is another matter (U.S. Department of Justice, 2012).

The United States has laws and regulations that forbid the importation of any slave-made goods, including those made in prison factories. These laws date back more than one hundred years, and they have been tested and ruled on by the Supreme Court. But somehow, as slavery slipped into the darkness and Americans came to believe it was finished forever, these laws fell into disuse and were virtually forgotten (Bales, 2009).

The laws themselves will have to be rewritten to extend responsibility and culpability. New or changed laws should address *conspiracy* to enslave or *profiting* from slavery, in the same way as laws against homicide punish *conspiracy* to murder and don't restrict guilt to the person who pulls the trigger (Bales, 2000).

At the federal level the following statutes are currently in place:

**Peonage, 18 U.S.C. §1581** of Title 18 makes it unlawful to hold a person in “debt servitude,” or peonage, which is closely related to involuntary servitude. Section 1581 prohibits using force, the threat of force, or the threat of legal coercion to compel a person to work against his/her will. In addition, the victim’s involuntary servitude must be tied to payment of a debt.

**Involuntary Servitude, 18 U.S.C §1584.** Section 1584 of Title 18 makes it unlawful to hold a person in a condition of slavery, that is, a condition of compulsory service or labor against his/her will. A Section 1584 conviction requires that the victim be held against his/her will by actual force, threats of force, or threats of legal coercion. Section 1584 also prohibits compelling a person to work against his/her will by creating a “climate of fear” through the use of force, the threat of force, or the threat of legal coercion [i.e., If you don’t work, I’ll call the immigration officials.] which is sufficient to compel service against a person’s will.

**Forced Labor, 18. U.S.C. §1589.** Section 1589 of Title 18, which was passed as part of the TVPA, makes it unlawful to provide or obtain the labor or services of a person through one of three prohibited means. Congress enacted § 1589 in

response to the Supreme Court's decision in *United States v. Kozminski*, 487 U.S. 931 (1988), which interpreted § 1584 to require the use or threatened use of physical or legal coercion. Section 1589 broadens the definition of the kinds of coercion that might result in forced labor.

**Trafficking with Respect to Peonage, Slavery, Involuntary Servitude, or Forced Labor, 18 U.S.C. § 1590.** Section 1590 makes it unlawful to recruit, harbor, transport, or broker persons for labor or services under conditions which violate any of the offenses contained in Chapter 77 of Title 18.

**Sex Trafficking of Children or by Force, Fraud, or Coercion, 18 U.S.C. § 1591.** Section 1591 criminalizes sex trafficking, which is defined as causing a person to engage in a commercial sex act under certain statutorily enumerated conditions. A commercial sex act means any sex act, on account of which anything of value is given to or received by any person. The specific conditions are the use of force, fraud, or coercion, or conduct involving persons under the age of 18. The punishment for conduct that either involves a victim who is under the age of 14 or involves force, fraud, or coercion is any term of years or life. The punishment for conduct that involves a victim between the ages of 14 and 18 is 40 years.

**Unlawful Conduct with Respect to Documents in Furtherance of Trafficking, Peonage, Slavery, Involuntary Servitude, or Forced Labor, 18 U.S.C. § 1592.** Section 1592 makes it illegal to seize documents in order to force others to work. By expanding its coverage to false documents as well as official documents, § 1592 recognizes that victims are often immobilized by the withholding of whatever documents they possess, even if the documents are forged or fraudulent. Section 1592 expands the scope of federal trafficking statutes to reach those who prey on the vulnerabilities of immigrant victims by controlling their papers.