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# THE NGO-IFICATION OF THE ANTI-TRAFFICKING MOVEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES: A CASE STUDY OF THE COALITION TO ABOLISH SLAVERY AND TRAFFICKING

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### Introduction

The ideas for this paper have emerged over the course of the past two years, in which I have sought to combine my academic research on trafficking and sex work with participatory action research and human rights activism. The latter has brought me into contact with a spate of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), both in the Netherlands<sup>1</sup> and the United States,<sup>2</sup> that provide advocacy and social services to sex workers and trafficked persons, most of whom are women.

Scholars who are interested in conducting research on trafficking in the United States that focuses on the perspectives of individuals who have been trafficked are inevitably required to work closely, and at times, exclusively, with social service agencies (Brennan, 2005, p. 39). As a gatekeeper between trafficked persons and researchers, social service providers create and disseminate particularized definitions and ideologies of trafficking. Far from benign, social service agencies, or what are oft-referred to as “NGOs,” have led the “anti-trafficking movement” in the United States by advising policymakers, training law enforcement, and drafting anti-trafficking legislation, in addition to providing a wide range of services to individuals who have been trafficked. Yet despite innumerable reports, scholarly papers, conferences, and media coverage dedicated to the subject of human trafficking, the voices of trafficked women, men, and children are seldom, if ever, heard. Doezema observes that in the absence, or what might be the strategic exclusion of trafficked persons’ voices; an image of a trafficked person emerges; one that is innocent, naïve, and unable to exercise agency over his or her life. “The picture of the ‘duped innocent’ is a pervasive and tenacious cultural myth. High profile campaigns by NGOs and in the media, with their continued focus on the victim adds more potency to the myths...in reports on trafficking it is often stressed that the women did not choose to be prostitutes” (Doezema, 1998, p. 45).

It is important to note that not all sex workers are trafficked, nor are all trafficked persons forcibly and coercively moved between and within borders

for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation. Although feminists have been at the fore of discussions surrounding sex work and trafficking, not all NGOs that work with trafficked persons identify as feminists, or work from a perspective in which survivors are at the center of their social service and advocacy efforts. Indeed, NGOs whose work addresses human trafficking identify with one or more theoretical perspectives that range from abolitionist and neoabolitionist perspectives<sup>3</sup> to those that view trafficking on a continuum of migration,<sup>4</sup> as a human rights issue,<sup>5</sup> within a pro-sex work/labor framework,<sup>6</sup> and as an extension of religious/faith-based beliefs (Soderlund, 2005, p.70).

Through NGOs pro-offer valuable services to trafficked persons, this paper will explore how increased professionalization, or what may be more aptly deemed the “NGO-ification” of the anti-trafficking movement in the U.S. has curtailed trafficked persons efforts to organize a movement that speaks to their experiences and needs. In her article, “Methodological Challenges in Research with Trafficked Persons: Tales from the Field,” Denise Brennan notes that “the sustainability of an anti-trafficking movement in the U.S. hinges not only on ex-captives telling their own stories, but also on taking their own active leadership role in its direction, agenda-setting, and policy making” (2005, p. 38). While I embrace Brennan’s contention that a vibrant anti-trafficking movement must include the voices of trafficked persons, I argue that within the current anti-trafficking milieu in which NGOs remain overwhelmingly if not exclusively dependent on federal funding, an emergent anti-trafficking movement lead by trafficked persons seems highly unlikely if not altogether impossible.

In order to highlight the limitations of the current anti-trafficking movement as it emerged vis-à-vis U.S. NGOs, I will provide an overview of U.S. government’s position on trafficking in an effort to chart how explicit policies on trafficking and the implicit ideologies they evoke influence NGOs’ relationship to the federal government. From there I will explore how such policies contribute to the professionalization of the anti-trafficking movement that has contributed to asymmetrical power relations between NGO staff and the clients they “serve,” while restraining an anti-trafficking movement in the United States led by those who have firsthand experience in the process of irregular movement and exploitation.

### **Ideological Blind Spots**

Against the backdrop of highly contested international debates over how to define trafficking<sup>7</sup> and what, if any, linkages exist between prostitution and trafficking,<sup>8</sup> NGOs are given little choice but to “take sides” in discerning where they stand. For U.S. and international NGOs receiving U.S. government funding, however, divergent views on this issue have, at least publicly, been stifled following a December 2002 National Security Presidential Directive. The directive charges that, “as a result of the prostitution-trafficking

link, the U.S. government concludes that no U.S. grant funds should be awarded to foreign non-governmental organizations that support legal state-regulated prostitution” (United States Department of State, 2004). Though specific to foreign NGOs, the Gag Rule extends to domestic agencies and is based on claims that trafficking thrives in areas where prostitution has been legalized and/or decriminalized.<sup>9</sup> As such, organizations that promote and/or accept sex work as a legitimate profession and argue against the conflation of voluntary prostitution with trafficking run the risk of losing their funding.<sup>10</sup> By suggesting that all forms of prostitution are exploitative, akin to “sexual slavery,”<sup>11</sup> and a “gateway”<sup>12</sup> to trafficking, NGOs that receive U.S. government funding are bound to narrow interpretations and definitions of trafficking, and, as a result, typically interface with only those trafficked persons who fit proscriptive profiles.

Anderson and O’Connell Davidson find that governmental and inter-governmental organizations are keen to position trafficking within a framework of crime control and prevention. From this vantage point, harms inflicted upon “legitimate” trafficked persons, juxtaposed to those who are deemed “voluntary” economic migrants, concurrently represent a threat to the state. “The beauty of trafficking, constructed as a problem of organized transnational crime, is that it apparently represents a form of forced migration that simultaneously involves the violation of the human rights of the ‘trafficked’ person and a threat to national sovereignty and security” (Anderson and O’Connell Davidson, 2002). As a result, only those individuals whose situations align with current scholarship, policy, law enforcement and NGO conceptualizations of what trafficking is and who trafficked people are, will be identified as trafficked juxtaposed to labeled as voluntary migrants.<sup>13</sup>

To this point, Tyldum and Brunovskis observe that “the ratio of cases identified by law enforcement or nongovernmental organizations to the total number of trafficking cases in an area is seldom known, it is difficult to determine to what extent the identified cases are representative of the universe of trafficking cases, and which biases they introduce” (2005, p. 24). Tyldum and Brunovskis’s observations are noteworthy in that they draw attention to personal and institutional biases that may in practice perpetuate tendentious assessments of the “trafficking universe.” What else might explain the vast discrepancy that exists between the estimated numbers of people trafficked into the United States each year and the actual number of individuals that are identified and certified<sup>14</sup> as victims of trafficking? Though improved methods of detection are touted as the main reason the numbers have “gone from 45,000 to 50,000 in 1999, to 18,000 to 20,000 victims reported in 2003 to 14,500 to 17,500 quoted in the 2004 TIP report,” ideological biases against immigrants in general, and prostituting immigrants in particular, also appear to attribute to difficulties in identifying trafficked persons<sup>15</sup> (Gozdziak and Collett, 2005, p. 10). In the absence of research that systematically assesses the extent to which law enforcement and NGO biases influence identification

practices, it seems reasonable to assume that NGOs, like the governments that fund them, perpetuate ideological blind spots in negotiating a trafficking terrain where moralizing discourse stands in for conclusive empirical data.<sup>16</sup>

### **Awkward Alliances: Brief Contextualization of the Division of Labor Between the U.S. Government and NGOs**

Aside from the ways in which selective seeing delimits understanding about trafficking, what seems additionally perplexing is the degree to which NGOs are capable of maintaining critical distance from government policies. William Fisher notes that although “NGOs are purely voluntary groups with no governmental affiliation or support, some groups so designated are created and maintained by governments...while the moniker ‘nongovernmental organization’ assumes autonomy from governments, NGOs are often intimately connected with their governments” (2005, p. 451). Though an in-depth exploration of the ways in which NGOs reproduce, re-entrench, and resist governmental practices remains outside the scope of this paper, it seems important to point out the obvious: not all NGOs are “good,” progressive, nor inherently invested in struggling toward social justice with the individuals for whom they work. Moreover, since NGOs in the United States increasingly function as an extension or dislocated arm of state sponsored policies, it behooves scholars, policy makers, and community stakeholders alike to critically interrogate the role that they play in ameliorating trafficking on the one hand, and whether they help, hinder, complicate, and/or facilitate trafficked persons’ empowerment on the other.

As a “hot topic,” that has captured the public imaginary, policy makers, researchers, and activists press for greater resources to curtail trafficking. Regardless of their ideological position regarding prostitution or immigration, a consistent thread throughout the scholarly, intergovernmental, and NGO literature is that more attention and funds are needed to assist trafficked persons (Zarembka, 2003; Bump and Duncan, 2003; Chuang, 2005). The Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000 and its Reauthorization in 2003 draw upon a three-pronged approach, or what is known as the three “P’s”: to prevent trafficking, prosecute traffickers, and protect trafficked persons (Bump and Duncan, 2003).

Despite its rhetorical catchiness, the U.S. government has focused more of its energies on prosecution than on prevention and protection. Chuang notes, “efforts to combat trafficking have proceeded from a narrow view of trafficking as a criminal justice problem, with a clear focus of targeting the traffickers and, to a lesser extent, protecting their victims” (2005, p. 148). As a result of the U.S. government’s prioritization of prosecution over protection, by default, NGOs have been delegated the responsibility of protecting victims. Rerouting the responsibility of victim protection from the state to NGOs is evidenced by Ambassador John Miller’s recent comments:

“There is no question about it...carrying out the “three P’s” of dealing with human trafficking—prosecution, protection and prevention—requires a great role for NGOs, protection particularly. Our policy is to reach out to local NGOs and especially get to the smaller NGOs that are on the ground doing the work” (Alta, 2006).

Though Ambassador Miller deems NGOs to be the ideal protectors of trafficked persons, the question remains as to what kind of trafficked woman, man, or child is “worthy” of protection. Furthermore, there is no evidence to confirm that the vast resources dedicated to the three P’s have worked. Despite the annual availability of 5,000 T-Visas, earmarked specifically for persons trafficked into the United States, approximately 800 have been granted since the passing of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (Hayes, 2004; Meyer, 2006). Herein, Wendy Chapkis’s observations are instructive. She writes, “the Trafficking Victims Protection Act helps to define compassionate conservatism: a willingness to provide assistance and protection for a few while reinforcing barriers to help for the many. The law insists that victims deserve support because they differ from economic migrants who have unfairly benefited from facilitated migration” (2005, p. 59, emphasis mine).

Thus, in order to play the “great role” that Ambassador Miller has in mind, NGOs must align their internal policies and philosophies with the views of their funders, namely, the U.S. government. In doing so, they must implicitly distinguish between voluntary economic migrants and involuntary trafficked persons (read women trafficked for sexual exploitation) where the latter are given shelter and protection and the former are arrested and deported. Though the topic of immigration does not arouse the same kind of voyeuristic “sexiness” as sexual slavery, forced prostitution, organ removal and the like, I would wager that given the current backlash against immigration in general, and illegal “economic” immigrants living in the United States in particular, trafficking NGOs might one day face yet another Gag Rule in which only those organizations that support the “regular” movement of individuals across borders will be granted federal funding.

Although seemingly far-fetched, this example is intended to illustrate the effect that funding can have in suppressing legislative dissent. At best, the outsourcing of victim protection from the state to NGOs can provide trafficked persons with greater security and comfort, particularly since their role appears to be more ameliorative than punitive. At worst, however, this division of labor can lead to satellite state building in which only those NGOs who tow the “compassionate conservative” line are able to survive. Needless to say, dependency on governmental funding, particularly U.S. federal funding, has the potential to blunt NGOs’ willingness to challenge the policies of the government that funds them (Clark, 1998).

### **Enter CAST**

Thus far, I have endeavored to present points of interest and contention by highlighting how ideological blind spots and state-sponsored outsourcing of victim protection to NGOs creates a confusing and all too often contradictory environment for trafficked persons to navigate. I would now like to turn my attention away from overarching structural issues and refocus my energies on the Los Angeles based NGO, the Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST). By exploring their history, organizational structure, funding streams, and program offerings, I hope to gauge if CAST's "client-centered" model proves effective in encouraging trafficked persons' participation in the U.S. based anti-trafficking movement.

### **History and Structure**

The formation of CAST came on the heels of an August 1995 immigration raid in which approximately 80 migrants from Thailand were found to be working in slave-like conditions within a compound in El Monte, California. What distinguished the El Monte situation from previous cases involving illegal immigrants working in the manufacturing, agriculture, construction, domestic service, and hotel and restaurant industries was the scope and scale of coercion involved in confining the workers in the armed compound. When the Thai workers were discovered, "75 women and 5 men had been working for 17 hours a day for seven years, sleeping eight to ten people in a room" (Taylor and Jamieson, 1999, p. 262). The case proved additionally perplexing for law enforcement and social service providers who struggled to determine their legal status. Were the Thai workers illegal immigrants and therefore subject to deportation or rather were they exploited victims entitled to visas, legal recourse, and compensation?<sup>17</sup> The El Monte case gave rise to an ongoing discussion amongst social service providers, law enforcement, and community leaders about how to best address the exploitation of illegal immigrants while exploring the various factors that contribute to the forced movement of people into Los Angeles County.

In an effort to attend to the specific and nuanced needs of such exploited immigrants in Los Angeles County, CAST was formed in 1998 by a small group of community activists, many of whom were directly and indirectly involved with the El Monte case. With a central mission aimed at "assisting persons trafficked for the purpose of forced labor and slavery-like practices, and to work toward ending all instances of such human rights violations" CAST offers a range of social services to trafficked persons, including providing training to law enforcement and community stakeholders, and participating in policy advocacy (Kim, 2006, p. 11). Organizationally, CAST doubles as a provider of social services on the one hand, and as a center for advocacy on the other.

As the first organization in the United States dedicated to working exclusively with survivors of trafficking, CAST was also one of the first in the U.S. to frame trafficking as a labor and human rights abuse rather than an issue implicitly related to prostitution and commercial sexual exploitation (CAST, 2007). Though the positioning of trafficking as a human rights violation juxtaposed to a form of gender based violence is perhaps related to CAST's formative experiences with the El Monte case, it has arguably proven to be one of its most strategic moves in sidestepping debates about the merits of sex work as a legitimate form of labor. Sally Engle Merry describes a successful NGO as one that "builds an issue that has a name, evokes sympathy, defines a villain, and compels a form of action. Such issues are fundamental to attracting media attention and donor support. In a sense, these issues become commodities" (2005, p. 251). Through that lens, CAST is a successful NGO par excellence; they denounce exploitative slave-like labor practices, deem traffickers to be the main culprit in perpetuating abuses, assist trafficked persons in obtaining housing, legal, health and mental health services, and draw upon their organizational capital by successfully securing U.S. government funding.

### **Funding**

In addition to funding the vast majority of research on trafficking in the United States, (Gozdziak and Collett, 2005), the U.S. government has also been a major funder of NGOs that work with trafficked persons, particularly since the advent of the TVPA in 2000 and its corollary funding streams (Spangenberg, 2003). As a result of increased federal funding, CAST has organizationally expanded. In 2004, thanks to a \$1 million grant from the Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime, CAST opened the first shelter for trafficked persons in the United States. It is worth noting that excluding a small amount of private donations, the overwhelming bulk of CAST operational funding comes from the Office of Victims of Crime (OVC), a federal agency within the Department of Justice, and the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), which is housed within the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Though difficult to precisely chart the ways in which government funding streams are translated into CAST's programs, the available data suggests that federal funding, namely funds from the OVC and ORR, is used to sponsor programs for victim support that include, but are not limited to: housing, physical and mental health care services, intensive case management, job training, and education. With additional OVC funding, CAST has developed programs to train local government, as well as Federal FBI and ICE agents, and Department of Justice employees based in Los Angeles in better identifying victims of trafficking (Kim, 2006, p. 11; U.S. Department of Justice, 2006).

The infusion of funding to an organization that trains government employees and law enforcement questions the ability of CAST to retain critical

distance from its funders, and to challenge current trafficking policies. To elucidate this point, the DOJ Law Enforcement Task Force and Services for Human Trafficking Victims grant, from which CAST has received funding, states in no uncertain terms that, “U.S. nongovernmental organizations cannot use U.S. government funds to lobby for, promote, or advocate the legalization or regulation of prostitution as a legitimate form of work...the U.S. government is opposed to prostitution and related activities, which are inherently harmful and dehumanizing” (Department of Justice, 2006).

Such staunch opposition to any form of sex work certainly delimits opportunities for dialogue and the development of programs with CAST clients who may have worked, forcibly or voluntarily, in the sex trade industries. Within such a funding culture of fear, CAST staff must buttress U.S. opposition to all forms of sex work at the expense of clients who may, of their own volition, choose sex work as a viable economic option. How, for example, might a CAST case manager respond to a client’s interest in working in the sex trade, particularly if the client sees sex work as her most economically advantageous option? Though hypothetical, this example is intended to draw attention to the bind that service providers face in attempting to balance their client-centered services with funding guidelines that strictly prohibit the mere mention of sex work. Sufficient to say that CAST social service providers and advocates are in the difficult position of balancing the needs of clients with those of their funders, where the former are inextricably bound to the mainstream mores and guidelines of the latter. Equally symbolic are the ways in which such a “top-down” approach stifles trafficked persons from articulating what an anti-trafficking movement might look like to them. How do trafficked persons understand survivorship, empowerment, and social justice and how does CAST address their clients’ needs through their current program offerings? In the absence of programs, and research for that matter, that bring trafficked persons into the fold of organizational decision making and program development, CAST clients are left to “survive” on the sidelines of the anti-trafficking movement.

In discussing the state’s role in creating funding guidelines for domestic violence shelters, Abraham finds that, “shelters that use state resources have to work within the confines of bureaucratic structures and must therefore conform to state-defined specifications” (Abraham, 2000, p. 160). U.S. based trafficking organizations that receive federal grant money are similarly compelled to direct money towards services, campaigns, and prevention efforts that meet federally mandated guidelines. While state-defined specifications and outcomes are not unique to NGOs working with trafficked persons, specific to the issue of trafficking is the overwhelming energy dedicated to separating “deserving” trafficked victims from “undeserving” economic migrants. Such distinctions are tenuous at best, leaving NGOs like CAST with little option but to limit their services to individuals who fit prevailing definitions of who a trafficked person is and what programs staff, along with their fed-

eral funders, deem to be most efficacious in cultivating a successful survivor. So despite, or perhaps in light of, the invaluable services that CAST provides individuals who are officially identified as trafficked, funder's guidelines nevertheless prove significant in narrowing the scope in which the organization constructs the U.S. based anti-trafficking movement.

### **Professionalization and Programs**

While the professionalization of trafficking NGOs has expanded their role in producing knowledge about trafficking, it has concurrently solidified their position as gatekeepers and "experience managers" of trafficked persons. Due to the criminal nature of trafficking and the very real safety risks that trafficked persons face once they escape their traffickers, NGO staff are called to stand-in for their clients by representing their experiences to law enforcement, DHHS, and the media. However, what remains unclear are the ways in which staff balance and synthesize the organization's interests with those of the clients they represent, and their own. Like funding constraints, a professionalized environment has the potential to exclude trafficked persons from participating in a larger anti-trafficking movement, particularly where staff are hired and paid for their professional competence and expertise in the field of trafficking, not necessarily for their activist commitments. This is not to say that CAST staff are not fully committed human right activists on their own, yet in organizationally dividing their efforts between social service and advocacy work, both of which are inextricably bound to government policies and funding outcomes, their ability to build an anti-trafficking movement inclusive to trafficked persons is markedly hindered.

Denise Brennan observes that trafficked persons have not been active in promoting anti-trafficking legislation, nor have they helped to shape the direction of the anti-trafficking movement. She further notes that, "the anti-trafficking movement is still so new in the United States that most often non-ex-captives must 'speak for' most ex-captives, if their story is to be told at this time. The movement activists, at this early stage of the fight against trafficking, are generally elites, often human rights attorneys" (Brennan, 2005, p. 43). Brennan attributes the lack of participation of trafficked persons in the anti-trafficking to the issue's relative "newness." Additional reasons have been offered to explain why survivors have not been active in speaking on their own behalf that include, "fear of reprisals from their traffickers, their [trafficked persons] stage in the recovery process, and concern that their community of co-ethnics will stigmatize them" (Brennan, 2005, p. 43).

While Brennan's points are well founded, I would add that in the context of CAST, trafficked persons are compelled to interface with staff on two conflicting levels: on the one hand, clients are "served" by staff, and on the other, they are asked to communicate with staff as dialogue partners in the anti-trafficking movement. Here it seems that in trafficked persons' roles as

“client,” however partial and fluid that identity may be, their ability to communicate on a level-playing field with staff is restricted, since CAST employees have greater access to power and decision making. Moreover, as clients, trafficked persons are compelled to participate in programs in which they have little, if any, input. For example, during the 2005-06, CAST entered into collaboration with the University of California, Los Angeles through the UCLA in LA program.<sup>18</sup> The grant aimed to connect UCLA students with CAST clients in developing art workshops and classes as creative methods of departure in rethinking the anti-trafficking movement. As a student participant in the UCLA/CAST activities, I was stunned to discover that the clients had not been asked if they wanted to participate (new shelter residents must participate in all activities), and that they had not been consulted in the planning process. My concerns came to a fore when one workshop participant poignantly asked me, “What are you doing here? What do you get out of this?” While I assumed that the project’s aims were made clear to CAST clients and staff alike, the workshop participant’s sharp questioning exposed a lack of communication between staff and clients, and raised doubt about clients’ willingness to participate in programs, much less the organization’s anti-trafficking efforts, in the absence of full disclosure and participation in decision making processes.

Since the anti-trafficking movement in the US is overwhelmingly led by a group of educated female professionals who have the ability to legally work in the United States, questions abound as to whether such a professionalized environment is capable of creating an inclusive space in which trafficked persons can voice their needs, concerns and visions of what an anti-trafficking movement looks like based on their experiences and perspectives. Because CAST staff come from such disparate racial, gender, ethnic, educational and class backgrounds than the clients they work with, more in-depth research is needed to better understand how power and privilege operate in determining who gets to speak on behalf of trafficked persons and on what terms. Such reflections on asymmetrical power relations might also serve as an opportunity to reconceptualize what a survivor-centered environment might look like.

Despite funding pressures and professionalization, CAST has encouraged two programs that appear to foster more inclusive client participation in the anti-trafficking movement. The first, Rays of Hope, is a collection of artists based in Los Angeles who make and sell handicrafts in an effort to achieve economic independence. Rays of Hope was spearheaded by current and former CAST clients invested in gaining financial autonomy while promoting public education about trafficking. Although CAST provided the social space for Rays of Hope participants to meet one another, their activities are separate from the larger organization. While Rays of Hope participants have not, to date, articulated how their organizing efforts fit within the larger U.S. based anti-trafficking movement, and what, if any coalitions they are interested in building with trafficking NGOs, they are nevertheless one of the

few survivor-centered spaces in which trafficked women and men can organize themselves independent from organizations run exclusively by non-trafficked persons. Future research might further interrogate if survivor-centered activities and organizing are more effective than professionally defined victim/client-centered models in fostering trafficked persons' healing and political mobilization.

The Survivor Advisory Caucus, which is part of CAST's Advocacy and Training Program, also appears to actively promote client participation in the organization's anti-trafficking efforts. Developed as a forum for clients to discuss their insights about trafficking policies, the Survivor Advisory Caucus has proffered clients with opportunities to express their ideas and concerns for future programs that might be meaningful to them. The Survivor Advisory Caucus remains committed to ensuring that "public policies are victim-centered," and invites client feedback on new trafficking research and legislation (CAST, 2007). The meetings are semi-structured and facilitated by the CAST Advocacy Coordinator. Clients that participate in the Survivor Advisory Caucus have also been invited to speak at law enforcement trainings and to share their stories with the media.

Without undermining the value of both Rays of Hope and the Survivor Advisory Caucus, my concern is nevertheless on the fact that these programs' participatory structure is more the exception than the rule. It remains to be seen whether CAST can extend such participatory practices to broader organizational participation, which may include hiring former clients as case managers and peer educators, involving clients in fundraising, offering organizational support for programs developed by and for clients, sponsoring law enforcement trainings and educational curricula designed by trafficked persons, and providing clients with tools that will allow them to organize their own conferences and anti-trafficking activities. Only by carving out literal and symbolic space within CAST's organizational structure and program offerings, will trafficked persons be better equipped to sustain and lead the U.S. anti-trafficking movement.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

Current funding pressures and professionalization mute, if not altogether curtail, the participation of trafficked persons in the U.S. anti-trafficking movement. CAST must negotiate a highly professionalized environment informed by policy and funder demands while advocating for trafficked persons in ways that do not further deny their agency and ability to fully participate in the anti-trafficking movement. Yet the cultivation of a survivor-centered anti-trafficking movement in the U.S. requires the willingness of NGOs to share leadership and control over anti-trafficking activities. Programs like Rays of Hope, and the Survivor Leadership Caucus demonstrate that more participatory frameworks are possible within, and outside, professionalized settings,

though they require NGO professionals' concerted dedication to addressing divisions of power and privilege that exist between trafficked and non-trafficked persons. By deconstructing the ways in which governmental and organizational demands silence trafficked persons' voices, CAST can begin to rethink strategies and tactics that build upon trafficked persons' experiences and expertise, not merely in preventing trafficking in the future, but in working with individuals who have already left their trafficking situation.

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### Notes Chapter One

- <sup>1</sup> De Rode Draad (Red Thread), Stichting Tegen Vrouwenhandel (STV), and TAM-PEP are NGOs with whom I have formed relations in the Netherlands.
- <sup>2</sup> The Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST) and the Young Women's Empowerment Project are organizations at which I have volunteered in the United States.
- <sup>3</sup> NGOs that fit within abolitionist frameworks include the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW), The Salvation Army, the European Women's Lobby, Equality Now, and Captive Daughters to name but a few. See Barry (1979) and Raymond and Hughes (2001).
- <sup>4</sup> The Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women (GAATW) is well known for its critique of abolitionist perspectives that see all form of prostitution as exploitative. See Wijers and Lap-Chew (1997), Kempadoo and Doezema (1998), and Kampur (2003).
- <sup>5</sup> The International Organization of Migration situates trafficking in relation to movement but additionally focuses on human rights. The Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking similarly draws upon human rights perspectives.
- <sup>6</sup> The Network of Sex Work Projects and De Rode Draad propose that trafficking thrives as a result of criminalizing sex workers and their clients and they argue that decriminalizing and/or legalizing sex work can decrease incidents of trafficking since clients and sex workers are not discouraged from reporting exploitative labor practices to law enforcement.
- <sup>7</sup> See U.S. Department of State *Trafficking in Persons Report*, <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006/>, and United Nations (2000) *The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime*, [http://www.odccp.org/crime\\_cicp\\_signatures.html](http://www.odccp.org/crime_cicp_signatures.html) and Laczko (2002).
- <sup>8</sup> See Outshoorn (2005) and Jo Doezema (1998) for deconstructive analyses of the conflation between prostitution and trafficking.
- <sup>9</sup> See U.S. Department of State report, *The Link Between Prostitution and Trafficking*, (2004).
- <sup>10</sup> NGOs based in the United States that advocate a pro-sex work/harms reductionist approach must look for nonfederal funding sources. For example, the Young Women's Empowerment Project, a harms-reductionist NGO based in Chicago

works with young women that engage in commercial sex work. The YWEP does not attempt to “rehabilitate” the young women nor do they force them to seek alternative work. Instead, the YWEP holds workshops and classes co-facilitated by the young women in an effort to share knowledge and build skills. As a consequence of its more progressive positionality, the YWEP has minimal funding; they currently receive money from the City of Chicago’s Mayor’s Office and private donors. For more information, see <http://www.youarepriceless.org>. For an interesting comparison, see [www.sageprojectinc.org](http://www.sageprojectinc.org)

- <sup>11</sup> See Kathleen Barry (1979) and Donna Hughes (2000).
- <sup>12</sup> Gail Kligman noted that arguments touting prostitution to be a “gateway” to trafficking resemble rhetorical claims in which marijuana is seen as a gateway drug to “harder” illegal substances like heroin.
- <sup>13</sup> See Anne Gallagher (2001), Alexis Aronowitz (2001), and Kyle and Dale (2001).
- <sup>14</sup> As a result of the passage of the 2000 TVPA, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services was named the agency responsible for providing trafficked women, men and children with services and benefits. In order to receive DHHS certification, however, trafficked persons must have the support of the law enforcement officers that identified them. This speaks to my earlier point regarding the ways in which law enforcement and NGO biases may prevent *actual* trafficked persons from being identified as such. For more information on DHHS’s Rescue and Restore Program, see: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking/index.html>
- <sup>15</sup> In August 2005, federal ICE agents “busted” an Asian spa in Dallas. ICE agent Coonen said this of the Korean women he interviewed: “The single biggest reason in this particular case is, I think, because the lion’s share of the girls had the ability to move from one facility to another... they were not completely restricted. Many of them ... knew that they voluntarily came to engage in this business with at least a bit of an understanding of the circumstances that you’ll find when you get here” (Meyer, 2006).
- <sup>16</sup> For a useful discussion of the challenges to conducting research on trafficking, see Kligman and Limoncelli (2005), Kelly (2005) and Tyldum and Brunovksis (2005).
- <sup>17</sup> In July 1999, a court awarded \$4 million to the Thai El Monte workers. For more information, see Sweatshop Watch. Available at: <http://www.sweatshopwatch.org/newsletters>.
- <sup>18</sup> For more information about UCLA sponsored community partnerships, see <http://la.ucla.edu/Master.cfm?Page=Directory.cfm>.