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Countering Human Trafficking: Introduction

Kamala Kempadoo

There is a lot one can say about human trafficking, or little. The most expansive discourse, which some scholars prefer to identify as rhetoric, dominates globally, producing gruesome descriptions of 'modern-day slavery' and 'sex trafficking' and calling for increased securitization of the nation-state, tighter border regulations and greater policing of sexuality as protection against such horrors. This discourse circulates in the Americas and captures the imagination easily, particularly because of its resonance with histories of African enslavement. Yet, as O'Connell Davidson notes in her commentary, the analogy of human trafficking with slavery in this region is a false one to make, as the conditions identified as 'trafficking' today are far more akin to the escape or liberation from slavery than they are to the historical experiences of the transatlantic slave trade. In this special issue, then, we focus on some of the difficulties with the globally-dominant discourse and offer a critique from research in the Caribbean and Latin America. In so doing, we also advance a counter discourse that moves the gaze away from the spectacle of modern slavery or sex trafficking to a focus on securing human, worker and migrant rights.

This issue of *Social and Economic Studies* features four articles that were first presented at the 2015 Caribbean Studies Association annual meeting on the panel "Human Trafficking: Rethinking Discourses, Policies and Rescue Missions", and two commentaries on the subject. The first article scans the Caribbean to discuss the politics of the US Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report and ramifications at the local level. Through tracing the TIP ranking of independent Caribbean countries since 2001, and discussing the problems with assessments, definitions and indices of 'trafficking,' it argues that Caribbean governments find themselves in a bind: rejecting the basis upon which the US assessments are made yet trying to comply with US standards. Moreover, the article makes the argument that despite the bind, Caribbean states and NGOs have for the most part accepted the globally-dominant discourse about human trafficking. It is shown on the basis of media reports that while this critical-uncritical stance produces an incoherent

discourse, in practice it invariably affects poor young women and migrants, especially migrant women, who are represented as in need of rescue yet are ultimately denied rights to migration, work, and security. The 'collateral damage' of anti-trafficking discourse is especially evidenced by an event in Guyana in 2015 when 27 so-called trafficked women were forcibly removed from their place of work, shamed publicly for their involvement in prostitution, detained by the police, and, in some cases, deported. Such findings are nuanced in the second article by Cabezas and Alcázar-Campos, about anti-trafficking discourses and women from the Dominican Republic—'dominicanas'—in Puerto Rico. From empirical research amongst dominicanas working as 'barmaids' in San Juan they demonstrate how stigmas and discriminations around race and sexualized labour combine to position the women outside the nation as well as outside dominant and local trafficking discourses. They show that although the women are in very vulnerable positions in Puerto Rico and warrant attention for the egregious working conditions and precarious status they encounter, they are not given any attention in the form either of 'rescue' under anti-trafficking initiatives, or of any other social services or protection. Being stereotyped as hyper-sexual, black, and illegal, the women are both invisible as citizens and hypervisible as racialized subjects, and are seen to conform to neither the image of the 'sex slave' or that of the 'trafficked victim.' Instead, they are despised and subjected to xenophobia and discrimination. Taken together with the first article, we see then that whether or not Caribbean governments and NGOs mobilize an anti-trafficking discourse, poor Caribbean women who move across the region for work to make better lives for themselves and families face dismissal, stigmatization, deportation, discrimination and violence. Anti-trafficking is shown by the authors to exacerbate, not alleviate their problems.

The third article by José Miguel Nieto Olivar traces the mobilization of human trafficking discourse in Brazil in the Amazonian town of Tabatinga that borders Colombia and Peru. Based on ethnographic research he describes how, starting with training by the Catholic church, anti-trafficking discourse was adopted by local health, social services, human rights, children's rights and women's rights agencies in Tabitinga, appearing first

under the banner of violence against women, in which sex work was conflated with trafficking. The article further analyses how the anti-trafficking discourse infantilized Indigenous women and produced an image of indigenous Amazonian culture as the cause of violence against the women, with cross-border movement, especially from Peru, being defined as the source of crime, threats, and young women's involvement in sex work in Brazil. The consequences of such a discourse, Olivar found, were greater border surveillance, spectacular raids on brothels, the rescue of 'ethnically-marked' adolescent girls, the denigration of indigeneity, and the discursive location of the Amazon region as a site of backwardness. The article thus presents a case where Catholic concerns about sexual morality combined with political efforts to secure the nation and eradicate violence against women, resulted in the construction of anti-trafficking ideas, policies and interventions that maintained an image of the Amazon region as uncivilized, and reinvigorated colonial and nationalistic practices and discourses. Anti-trafficking discourse in this article appears, as in the previous two articles, to work as a disciplining and regulatory device that disadvantages young, migrant and indigenous women, undermining emancipatory struggles and ideals.

In the article by Mzilikazi Koné we are offered an example of a complete alternative discourse to that of human trafficking/anti-trafficking. From analysis of writings and ideas of sex worker organizations in Costa Rica and Argentina, but especially those of the transnational Latin American and Caribbean network RedtraSex, Koné documents how spaces are created by sex workers in order that they can articulate their own needs rather than have these dictated and decided by outside actors and policy-makers. Speaking about themselves as workers with labour and other human rights, the sex workers refuse to accept the identification of victim, social contaminant, or as persons in need of rescue from trafficking practices. Instead, Koné presents a scenario where people who are often framed as powerless assert positions of power within their socio-political contexts and resist being framed in negative or debilitating ways, asserting their rights to narrate their own realities. Such sex worker empowerment, the article describes, occurs through labour unionizing, grassroots organizing, national and transnational conferencing, speaking out publicly, and

documenting their own experiences. This empowerment, Koné finds, also challenges policy-makers to address factors such as immigration laws and anti-prostitution regulations that strip sex workers of their rights and make the poorest and most unprotected migrant workers even more vulnerable. It further connects sex workers to the lives and struggles of other workers, creating possibilities for building solidarity within and across borders around human, especially labour, rights. Sex worker empowerment through transnational organizing is offered then by Koné as an antidote to anti-(sex) trafficking discourse.

Human trafficking and efforts to combat it are treated in these articles as a discourse that introduces more problems than relief from postcolonial conditions that are aggravated by neoliberal globalization, nationalism, xenophobia, and conservative sexual morality. Implicit or explicit proposals advanced by the authors for tackling the problems are also then discursive. Nixon adds to this in her commentary, by proposing that because the Caribbean's experience of development, under colonialism and today, the tourism industry, is based on "embodied encounters" and sexual-cultural availability, sex, work and trade are connected in particular ways, and this presents the region with possibilities for challenging the dominant anti-trafficking discourse. Thus she, along with other authors in this issue, suggests that the embrace of sex work and transactional sex, while supporting the rights to mobility, work, a decent livelihood, freedom of sexual expression, and a life free of violence, would also present us with a different framework and the possibility of leaving 'human trafficking' behind. Without the distraction of the spectacle of human trafficking, the authors are proposing, we can then perhaps get back to the urgent business of eradicating inequality and reshaping the region to the benefit of its people, including its most vulnerable.

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The War on Humans: Anti-trafficking in the Caribbean

Kamala Kempadoo

ABSTRACT

This article considers the attention paid to human trafficking in the Caribbean by governments of the region. It first examines how countries in the region have been positioned in the annual US Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report from 2001 to 2016, discussing the shortcomings of hegemonic discourses to trafficking such as problems with definitions, statistics and evidence, the political underpinnings of the TIP report, and contradictions in indices of 'development' in the region. It then turns to examine Caribbean government responses. It is argued that the tension, identified in earlier state responses, between an increase in anti-trafficking policies and a growing refusal to accept the definitions and information produced by the US State Department has intensified, and that the 'collateral damage' of anti-trafficking interventions continues to affect some of the most marginalized and vulnerable populations in the region. Building from counter hegemonic discourses, the article also suggests ways to address the subject that support human rights.

Keywords: anti-trafficking, Caribbean, migration, sex work, human rights

In "The War on Human Trafficking in the Caribbean" published almost a decade ago, I described what appeared to be a growing concern in the region about human trafficking, incited by the US State Department's annual review of governments' anti-trafficking efforts (Kempadoo 2007). I argued that this attention gave rise to uneven state discourses that embodied both compliance with, and resistance to, US dictates at the national and regional levels, and was translating into anti-migration and anti-sex work interventions that were particularly harmful to Indigenous/Amerindian women in Guyana and migrant sex workers throughout the region.

Here I take a closer look at what has taken place in the region and update my analysis, drawing from media and research reports and government documents. The article first examines how the countries in the region have been positioned in the US annual

Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report from its inception in 2001 to 2016, and discusses some of the shortcomings of the US-Caribbean approach, such as problems with definitions, statistics and evidence, contradictory indices of 'development' in the region, and the political underpinnings of the TIP. It then describes some of the responses in the region during that time. We see that the idea of human trafficking has gained greater attention among Caribbean governments over the past decade, but that not much has changed in focus. Notable, however, is that the tension in Caribbean state responses—between compliance and resistance to the US policies—has intensified, where we see an increase in anti-trafficking policies alongside a growing refusal to accept the definitions and information produced by the US State Department. Also apparent is that the 'collateral damage' of anti-trafficking machineries that was flagged earlier, and has been identified as well at the international level (GAATW 2007; Gallagher 2015a), continues to haunt the Caribbean, with migrant and young women in sex industries being the primary targets for intervention and rescue operations today. The article concludes with recommendations for ways that the region can go forward on the issue that would support, rather than harm human, especially migrant's and women's, rights.

THE CARIBBEAN AND THE POLITICS OF THE US TIP REPORT

More than 15 years have passed since the UN and the US government devised legislation and protocols to prevent human trafficking, namely the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (hereafter the UN Protocol) that supplements the Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, and the US Department of State's Trafficked Victims Protection Act (TVPA). These laws and agreements have had significant impact the world over, and have also created an ongoing debate about the conceptualization and definition of human trafficking, the effectiveness of anti-trafficking interventions based on the laws and agreements, and the quality of evidence of the problem.[1] The Caribbean, however, has not featured

1 See for example, the academic journal *Anti-Trafficking Review* by the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW): http://www.gaatw.org/resources/anti-trafficking-review, which "explores trafficking in its broader context including gender analyses and intersections with labour and migrant rights" and "offers an outlet and space for dialogue between academics, practitioners

prominently in these debates, even while the Bahamas, Barbados, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago were signatories to the UN Protocol in the early 2000s, and, today, 18 countries in the region, including Cuba, have either ratified or accessed it.[2] However, it is the international portion of the TVPA—the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report[3]—that has the most direct influence on the region because it has more 'teeth' than the UN Protocol, in that it imposes economic sanctions on countries considered to be not dealing well with trafficking. Also, the US State department's definition of human trafficking differs in certain aspects from that of the UN—a difference that carries consequences.

Trafficking was originally formulated at the UN level as the crossing of international borders for "purposes of exploitation", but in the US it was, from the outset, made equivalent to any type of forced labour—i.e. "modern-day slavery" (Introduction TIP 2001)—an equivalency that has been reiterated by the US government and its presidents over the past 15 years. A consequence of this conceptual confusion is that all forced labour can be counted, or defined, as human trafficking, irrespective of whether it involves border-crossing or not. Moreover, while the UN uses a notion of forced and voluntary prostitution, the US government's attention to human trafficking emerged directly from its earlier attention to "trafficking of women and girls for sexual purposes" (Introduction TIP 2001), which was firmly lodged in politics and actions against what, in the early 20th century, was termed 'white slavery.' This

and advocates seeking to communicate new ideas and findings to those working for and with trafficked persons." Open Democracy's "Beyond Trafficking and Slavery" "challenges the empty sensationalism of mainstream media accounts of exploitation and domination, and the hollow, technocratic policy responses promoted by businesses and politicians." https://www.opendemocracy.net/beyondslavery

2 These countries and dates of either Ratification or Accession of the UN Protocol are: Antigua—2010(R); Aruba—2007(R); Bahamas—2008 (R); Barbados—2014 (R); Belize—2003(A); Cuba—2013(A); Dominica—2013 (A); the Dominican Republic—2008 (R); Grenada—2004(A); Guyana—2004 (A); Haiti—2011 (R); Jamaica—2003 (R); Netherlands Antilles—2010 (R); St Kitts—2004 (A); St. Lucia—2013(A); St. Vincent—2010 (R); Suriname—2007(A); Trinidad and Tobago—2007 (R).

3 The TIP report is produced annually by the US Department of State's Office to Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. http://www.state.gov/j/tip/index.htm

earlier notion references the panic that occurred in North American and Western Europe about (white European) women who migrated independently and worked in brothels and sex industries around the world, rather than the history of the transatlantic slave trade and chattel slavery. The equation of human trafficking with 'white slavery' in contemporary US discourse is further underscored by radical feminist and Christian fundamentalist campaigns (Bernstein 2007), and shared by such feminist leaders as Hilary Clinton and Gloria Steinem, to have all prostitution counted as sexual slavery. The US anxieties about prostitution, then, amount to viewing all sexual labour as forced, as violence to women, or as 'sexual slavery.' In sum, in the US State Department's formulation, all forced labour, whether migration is involved or not, as well as most, if not all, prostitution, are counted as instances of human trafficking, thus differentiating it from the UN understanding.

To add to the definitional confusion, it is unclear who is believed to be affected by trafficking. For example, the 2016 TIP report identifies the groups in the US most vulnerable to trafficking as "children in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems; runaway and homeless youth; American Indians and Alaska Natives; migrant labourers, including participants in visa programs for temporary workers; foreign national domestic workers in diplomatic households; persons with limited English proficiency; persons with disabilities; and LGBTI individuals" (TIP 2016, 388). Beyond its borders, it also includes child soldiers, persons engaging in sex with tourists, child brides, and refugees (such as the Rohinga and Syrians). Sally Engle Merry (2015) points out that, not only are definitions of human trafficking vague, or contradictory, but that they change over time, and that not everyone includes the same populations as the US State Department; that "[s]ome count forced labourers, some sex workers, some cross-border labour migrants, and some a combination of these and other statuses such as involuntary domestic servitude and child marriage." Nevertheless, despite the definitional fluctuations and differences, the US Department of State devised a set of "minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking", on the basis of which, governments would be annually evaluated and ranked in a three tier system, according to how closely they complied with the US standards for the "Prevention of trafficking, the Prosecution of traffickers, and the Protection and assistance of victims" (the '3 Ps'). The tier placement

has since developed into five categories: Tier 1: "Countries whose governments fully comply with the TVPA minimum standards"; Tier 2: "Countries whose governments do not fully comply with the TVPA's minimum standards, but are making significant efforts to do so;" Tier 2 Watch List: Countries that fall into Tier 2 but where it is also believed that either the number of trafficked persons is increasing, the government's efforts aren't significant enough, or a government did not fulfil its promises from the previous year. Tier 3: "Countries whose governments do not fully comply with the minimum standards and are not making significant efforts to do so," and which carries with it the threat of economic sanctions (non-humanitarian, nontrade-related); and finally, the category "Special Cases," which refers to "countries where information is not available or is unreliable for a number of reasons." This last category carries no threat of economic sanctions with it (TIP 2012). From 2001 to 2005, only seven Caribbean countries—Belize, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, and Suriname—were taken up in the annual TIP reporting. By 2014, this number had increased to 16 and since then has remained stable (see Table 1). Only one independent Caribbean country in the entire period has been placed in Tier 1—the Bahamas (in 2015 and 2016). The majority of countries have teetered between Tier 2 and the Tier 2 Watch List, sometimes starting from or slipping (back) into Tier 3. Interestingly, Cuba until 2015 was consistently relegated to the lowest tier, 3, even while no data or evidence of human trafficking was available to the US government. It is the only country in the Caribbean region that has been so harshly evaluated. Regarding the Special Cases, the Bahamas was classified as such for three years, because it was believed to be a country with a "significant" number of trafficked persons (100 is considered the threshold), but where the situation was defined as "unmonitored and undocumented." Barbados was classified as a Special Case in the TIP reports of 2007 and 2008, on a hunch that women, particularly from Guyana and the Dominican Republic, were being trafficked into the country for the sex trade and domestic work, even while it was claimed there was a 'lack of reliable statistical information' available. Reasons for Haiti's inclusion in this category from 2006 and 2011 were "widespread violence and political instability", coupled with the social deregulation caused by the earthquake in 2010, along with the assumptions about, but no reliable data on, "trafficking" in the form

TABLE 1: PLACEMENT OF INDEPENDENT CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES IN THE US TIP REPORTS, 2001 – 2016

Country	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Antigua & Barbuda									2	2	2	2	2	2WL	2WL	2WL
Aruba														2	2	2
The Bahamas						SC	SC	SC	2	2	2WL	2WL	2	2	1	1
Barbados							SC	SC	2	2WL	2WL	2WL	2WL	2	2	2
Belize			3	2WL	2WL		2	2	2WL	2WL	2	2	2	2WL	3	
Cuba			3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2WL	2WL
Curacao												2	2	2	2	2
Dominican Republic	2	2	3	2WL	2WL	2	2WL	2WL	2WL	3	2WL	2	2	2	2	2
Guyana				3	2	2	2WL	2WL	2WL	2WL	2	2	2WL	2WL	2WL	2
Haiti	2	2	3		2WL	SC	SC	SC	SC	SC	SC	2WL	2WL	2WL	2WL	3
Jamaica			2	2WL		2WL	2	2	2	2	2	2WL	2	2WL	2WL	2
St. Lucia											2	2	2WL	2	2	2WL
St. Maarten													2	2	2	1
St. Vincent &																
the Grenadines									2WL	2WL	2WL	2	2	2WL	2WL	2WL
Suriname			3	2WL	2WL	2	2	2	2	2	2	2WL	2WL	2WL	2WL	3
Trinidad & Tobago									2	2WL	2	2	2WL	2	2WL	2WL

Tiers 1,2, 2 Watch List (2WL), 3, and Special Case (SC)

of poor children being given into custody to richer families (the "restavek" practice), and forced Haitian labour in the Dominican Republic (TIP 2001-16).

Territories in the region that are still dependencies, colonies or departments, such as French Guyana, Puerto Rico, Anguilla, Turks and Caicos, or Bonaire, may appear in debates and reports concerning France, the Netherlands, the US and the UK, but are generally classified under the status of the "mother country," and given scant attention. For example, Surinamese women and girls as "victims of sex trafficking in French Guyana" are mentioned very briefly in France's country narrative (TIP 2016, 172); in the report on the Netherlands, a short section is devoted exclusively to Bonaire, St. Eustatius, and Saba (the BES islands) that claims that they "are municipalities of the Netherlands and are a transit and destination area for men, women, and children subjected to sex trafficking and forced labour," while also noting that "(t)he mandate of the Netherlands' national rapporteur did not extend to the BES islands, so the office could not do local research" (TIP 2016, 284-5). In the UK country narrative, Bermuda and the Turks and Caicos are each given a short paragraph, noting that for Bermuda "[t]he government did not report investigations, prosecutions, or convictions of trafficking offenses in 2015" and for the Turks and Caicos similarly, "[t]he government did not report protection or prevention efforts undertaken during the reporting period" (TIP 2016, 387). Irrespective of the claims about evidence, alongside the lack of reporting on the issue, such Caribbean countries all fall automatically into Tier 1 due to their ties to Western Europe and the US—areas of the world that are assessed as superior at combatting human trafficking.

Despite the ranking of the Caribbean along with the rest of the world in the TIP tiers, it is unclear what is counted and how data and evidence are collected and interpreted (Chuang 2006, 2013; GAO 2006). As various social scientists have been pointing out for several years, the numbers and statistics that are presented to prove human trafficking/modern-day slavery are wild in a number of ways—wildly fluctuating, wildly inaccurate and/or wildly misleading. Merry (2015) shows that, in 2005, the public was fed estimates of trafficked/enslaved persons that ranged from those in the US TIP report of 600-800,000 a year, to the International Labour Organization's (ILO) 2.45 million, to Kevin Bale's number of 27

million. Currently the ILO's estimate of 'forced labour, human trafficking and slavery' stands at 20.9 million while the Global Slavery Index, with Kevin Bales' help, claims the number to be 45.8 million, a discrepancy of almost 25 million persons (ILO website; GSI website). To add to the confusion, the actual number of identified 'victims' is a fraction of these estimates. According to recent US figures, this is under 80,000 persons (i.e. 77,823) worldwide (TIP 2016, 48), which is substantially lower. The discrepancies between actual and estimated numbers are not small, and signal serious problems with data collection, research methods and claims about evidence.

Moreover, in most policy documents on human trafficking there is no reference to the source of the information or about how the data was gathered, and numbers are often repeated without any verification (Sanghera 2005). They are, then, often unfounded. Indeed, Bales' early claim of 27 million modern-day slaves was, as Ron Weitzer (2014) reveals, simply a guess. Joel Quirk and André Broome (2015) further point out, "This [number] was first published in the late 1990s, and then subsequently acquired the status of a timeless 'fact' via public repetition." The data problem is further exacerbated by "practical obstacles to finding people in the shadowy, secretive conditions in which such workers exist" (Merry 2015). The problems of quantification and reliable data continue to haunt the debate on human trafficking and trouble any attempt to produce strong, evidence-based claims. As was argued in 2006, in a report to the Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary and the Chairman, Committee on International Relations, US House of Representatives:

> The accuracy of the estimates is in doubt because of methodological weaknesses, gaps in data, and numerical discrepancies. For example, the U.S. government's estimate was developed by one person who did not document all his work, so the estimate may not be replicable, casting doubt on its reliability. Moreover, country data are not available, reliable, or comparable. There is also a considerable discrepancy between the numbers of observed and estimated victims of human trafficking (GAO 2006).

The persistence of discrepancies in reported and estimated numbers, a lack of reliable statistics, and inconsistencies in definition, suggests that the problems noted about the TIP in 2006

have not been addressed, and this continues to undermine the credibility of the annual reports.

The TIP ranking of the world's nations into 'the best' and 'the worst' has also been criticized in other ways. For example, it has been remarked repeatedly by critical anti-trafficking scholars, including this author, that countries that oppose or defy the US, and which are often defined as socialist, rogue or non-compliant states, such as Venezuela, Cuba, North Korea, Eritrea, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Zimbabwe are more likely than not placed in Tier 3, and threatened with economic sanctions (Kempadoo 2005; Chuang 2006; Gallagher 2015a). In 2015, a Reuters investigation into the making of the annual TIP found that "the government office set up to independently grade global efforts to fight human trafficking was repeatedly overruled by senior American diplomats and pressured into inflating assessments of 14 strategically important countries in this year's Trafficking in Persons report" (Szep and Spetalnick 2015). As a result of this diplomatic pressure, the investigation established, several countries were upgraded from Tier 3, but not because it was believed by the State Department that they had made improvements, but for diplomatic and trade-related reasons. For example, in the case of Malaysia it appeared that this was to smooth the way for the TransPacific Partnership (TPP) agreement, despite the reports of suspected mass migrant graves and continued forced labour in the palm oil, construction and electronics industries. For Cuba, it was directly related to the rapprochement between the US and Cuban governments in 2014 and the reopening of embassies in each other's country. And even though China, according to US State Department trafficking experts, deserved a Tier 3 ranking, because of "failing to follow through on a promise to abolish its 're-education through labour' system and to adequately protect trafficking victims from neighbouring countries such as North Korea," it was placed on the Tier 2 Watch list, thus escaping sanctions that would be politically and economically damaging to US-China relations (Szep and Spetalnick 2015).

What was thus claimed by the US State department to be an independent, impartial assessment of the state of affairs regarding human trafficking around the world, turns out to be a reflection of diplomatic and trade relations for over 15 years, leading Anne Gallagher, a prominent anti-trafficking expert, who, for the past two

decades, has closely followed the development of the UN and US anti-trafficking agreements, to remark that the 2015 TIP report was not only the biggest, but perhaps "the most overtly politicized" of the reports (Gallagher 2015b, 2015c). Moreover, she notes, "Many governments are deeply offended at the US taking on the role of global sheriff in relation to an issue as complex as human trafficking. For countries ranked at the very bottom, at stake is more than a sense of pride. A poor ranking automatically puts them under a black diplomatic cloud and renders them subject to a range of economic sanctions" (Gallagher 2015a).

CARIBBEAN RESPONSES TO THE US TIP

The 'offense' taken at US methods to police international efforts to combat human trafficking expresses itself in the Caribbean region directly after the release of the annual US TIP, especially if the ranking falls below Tier 2. So, for example, the governments of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Barbados, Guyana, Belize, Jamaica and Suriname have, in their own ways, and, at different times, rejected entirely or partially the US TIP narrative and the tier placement of their countries, claiming that the report was "unfounded," "utterly unfair," and "one-sided," or involved "misinterpretations" and inaccuracies; that the criteria used were not clear, or that there were considerable differences in how country information was represented (*Caribbean 360* 19 June 2009; *Stabroek News* 15 June 2010; *IWN* 26 June 2014; Jamaica Information Service July 28, 2015; *Starnieuws* 29 July 2015; *7 News Belize* 29 July 2015). Caribbean governments have also raised questions on where and how evidence is collected, as there appears to have been little or no contact with or input from their own anti-trafficking machinery. One year the Vincentian Prime Minister suggested that the TIP report was based on "hearsay, unreliable information and some mischief making possibly by some busy-bodies" (*Caribbean 360* 2009). Guyanese officials bluntly stated that the 2010 report was "based on sheer ignorance and eye pass", and that it was "manufactured" by the US government on the basis of "superficial," "unproven" and the "dirtiest kind of information collection and analysis" (*Stabroek News* 15 June 2010). In 2015, the Jamaican government protested the classification of the island in the TIP report, arguing, amongst other things, that claims about large

numbers of child victims of trafficking were "conjecture," that reports about "sex tourism" contradicted the Jamaican government's knowledge of what takes place in the tourism industry, and were anecdotal, and allegations of Jamaican police force involvement in human trafficking lacked any substantiation (Jamaican Information Service 2015). The Barbados Attorney General has likewise pointed out that the claims made in the TIP report about sex trafficking needed evidence to back them up, and, in 2015, expressed concern that "a lot of our cultural practices and norms have been misinterpreted" (*Caribbean News Now* 5 September 2015). Similarly, in the same year, the Suriname Minister of Labour declared he was unimpressed by the US assessment, detailing what he saw as a misinterpretation of "practical matters." In particular, he pointed out that it is common and accepted that children in the hinterland and rural areas are involved in economic activities (and thus should not be read as child labour/child slavery), and that Chinese workers had agreed to pay off their travel and other costs in order to move to Suriname for work, and allowed their passports to be held by their employer for safe-keeping (and thus should not be categorized as debt-bondage or slavery) (*Starnieuws* 29 July 2015). In such instances, the US State department was believed to have incorrectly read the local context and practices, wrongly classifying socially accepted labour arrangements—including some forms of sexual labour—as indications of human trafficking.

Caribbean state criticism of the US politics of human trafficking on the grounds of the lack of substantiation and misinterpretations, is coupled to the argument that local initiatives to combat trafficking are too often overlooked. Most governments in the region now have an anti-trafficking unit, and a plan, Guyana being the first to put something in place in 2004, with Barbados debating a new Trafficking Protection Act in 2016. At the regional level, CARICOM has its 2013 Crime and Security Strategy that includes "Strengthening mechanisms against human trafficking" as a 12th goal. Human trafficking is classified by the regional body as a "substantial threat," second to "immediate significant threats" such as transnational organized crime involving drugs and guns, gang related, cyber- or financial crimes and corruption (UNODC 2013). Caribbean NGO actors and government officials have been trained since 2003 by the US government, and international agencies such as IOM, UNICEF and the OAS, on how to detect,

prevent and assist 'victims of trafficking', and various Caribbean organizations—state and civil society—participate in disseminating and implementing the national anti-trafficking discourse. Most Caribbean citizens are also aware of something called 'human trafficking' (Eastern Caribbean Law August 26, 2014). Nevertheless, none of this seems to be enough for the US Department of State. The Vincentian, Surinamese, Guyanese and Jamaican governments have pointed out that their national and micro efforts to combat trafficking appear not to be counted by the US State Department. It remains then a question about whether, or how, the evidence and knowledge that the Caribbean has on the subject gets taken up in the TIP reports, and whether incidents deemed by local governments as 'trafficking' are taken seriously by the US Department of State. A striking example of this can be seen around the "Haitian Orphan Rescue Mission," where American Baptist missionaries smuggled 33 children out of Haiti after the earthquake, with the Haitian government labelling the actions as "child trafficking" and "kidnapping," as most of the children still had living parents in Haiti who had not consented to this "rescue" of their children (Roberts 2010). The incident was, however, not taken up in the US TIP report in the following year. Indeed, the only mention of specific cases in the TIP reports was about when "police stopped a truck with four men and seven children in a suspected trafficking situation" and when "(t)he government of Haiti worked with the Canadian government to deport a child rapist to Canada for prosecution" (TIP 2011, 394). Local definitions of 'trafficking' appear in this way to be overlooked.

CONTRADICTORY INDICES

The politicized character of the US TIP reports, and the distrust over the way in which evidence is marshalled and assessed by the US State Department, can also be brought into conversation with information produced by other bodies that evaluate aspects of international 'development.' For example, if, as the US State Department argues, the Caribbean region is in a sorry state of affairs regarding the prevalence, prevention and prosecution of, and protection against, human trafficking, how is it that the UN considers most of the region as 'high' in its Human Development Index (HDI)? Only two countries fell outside of this UN assessment

in 2015, namely Guyana (in the medium category) and Haiti (in the low category), with Cuba and Barbados amongst the top 37% of the world's countries (UNDP 2015). Likewise, the Bahamas, Cuba and Barbados score in the top half in the UN gender equality index in the HDI. In other words, countries that are commonly ranked in Tier 2W and Tier 3 for what are judged by the US Department of State to be highly exploitative, or forced, working conditions, (so-called modern day slavery), which especially affect women and girls (so-called sex trafficking), are being evaluated by the UN as in reasonable standing in terms of overall human development, gender equality and working conditions.

Or, compare the US TIP report assessment with the Global Slavery Index (GSI), which claims to measure the prevalence of 'modern-day slavery' in the world today. In 2015, Cuba was ranked in the top 20, as the country in the Caribbean region with the smallest incidence of slavery, estimated as affecting roughly 0.04% of the population, with Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and the Dominican Republic following not far behind with less than 0.2% prevalence, and Guyana, Suriname and Haiti being classified as the worst in the region with respectively 0.4%, 0.9% and 2.3%. Thus several countries, including Cuba and Barbados, which in the 2015 TIP report were ranked as the worst or near-worst (in Tier 3 or Tier 2WL) in terms of the 3Ps, were positioned in the GSI as having the lowest prevalence of forced labour and, one can conclude, the least amount of trafficking that needs to be combatted. The contradictory and conflicting indices raise again a number of questions about how data is compiled, as well as about the politics of assessing and evaluating the data.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE VERSUS HUMAN RIGHTS

It is apparent that, for the US State Department, the only real evidence of 'success' in combatting trafficking is the number of prosecutions and convictions of criminals. This is, perhaps, not surprising given that law enforcement is the key issue underpinning international and national laws on human trafficking. As Dotteridge notes, the UN Protocol on human trafficking is itself an offspring of the Convention on Transnational Organized Crime, and the only category of measures that are obligatory for all states to uphold are those that are linked to law

enforcement. The protection measures, in contrast, are weak and optional (Dotteridge 2007, 5). Likewise, the US TVPA emphasizes national security and crime control, resides in the State Department, and is constituted as part of the department's efforts "to prevent and counter threats to civilian security and effective governance, such as terrorism, violent extremism, conflict, mass atrocities, and transnational crime" (US State Department 2016). Thus, despite the 3Ps, a key indicator of the TIP report for assessing a government's efforts to combat trafficking is the number of prosecutions and convictions. As the Belizean CEO of the Human Development Sector explained on the downgrading of Belize to Tier 3*:* "What we have found and this year is no different is that what they focus on is convictions. It's abundantly clear in their report . . . What is disappointing however is that there seems to be a narrative constructed to support this idea of you did not do anything" (*7 News Belize* 29 July 2015). Similarly, the Vincentian Prime Minister, in his objection to the US TIP ranking of the country in the Tier 2 Watch List in 2014 was reported to have declared, "The fact that we have not prosecuted anyone in the last year does not mean that we have not identified potential trafficking victims", going on to point out that "we cannot prosecute an offender if there was no crime committed during the reporting period" *(IWN* 2014).

Human trafficking is then first and foremost defined as a crime, and criminal justice is the main framework through which most country-specific, regional, and international anti-trafficking policies and laws are created (Gallagher and Holmes 2008). And unless a country produces evidence of a crime, it has little chance of moving up the tiers or of reaching first place. This places the Caribbean countries in a conundrum for, if there are, as claimed by the GSI, low levels of 'modern-day slavery,' and if it is not possible each year to prosecute a trafficker because of the small size of the problem, one must wonder how Caribbean countries can make it into and stay in Tier 1.

THE CARIBBEAN SOLUTION: THE RESCUE OF 'SEX TRAFFICKED VICTIMS'

Despite the opposition to the external US assessment, and the resentment at the classification based on little evidence and a lack of prosecutions, governments around the region are still active on the

issue at home and most are trying to improve their record in combatting human trafficking. On closer examination, however, the identification of and campaigns against human trafficking in the Caribbean region have been from the start publicly, and most consistently, associated with the sex industry, especially when non-nationals are suspected of entering a country for sex work or are found to be working in a sex club, brothel or bar without the valid visas, passports, or entry permits. That is, human trafficking in the region is made virtually synonymous with 'sex trafficking.' Yet here too problems arise. In the Caribbean region sex work itself is widely tolerated, rarely policed, and generally believed to be something poor women do to 'to get by'. It is a part of wider transactional or tactical sexual relations that feature widely in the region, and which include 'boopsing,' 'jineterismo,' 'friends with benefits,' and other relationships that are grounded in a deliberate exchange of sexuality and sexual labour for material gain or benefit, which can range from a cell-phone 'top-up,' to rent-payments, to travel abroad or marriage to a person who is racially and/or economically privileged. The various transactional activities highlight that the exchange of sex for money, gifts or betterment, are not experienced, nor can they be read, as always-and-already sexual violence, or as distinct from economic interests or desires. Sexuality is commonly considered a resource, an asset or human capital that can be deployed for purposes of economic security, prosperity or freedom as well as enjoyment and pleasure, with an understanding that it has an exchange value. Moreover, the majority of sex workers—migrant or not - are self-employed or independent operators, often combining sex work with other income-generating activities during the year. Few are full-time or professionals, and few engage in sex work for the long term. For most, sexual work represents a temporary strategy to counter the existing social (dis)orders and hierarchies of gender, race/ethnicity and class that keep them disadvantaged.[4] The majority enter the sex sector with prior knowledge of the types of work they will be engaged in, and/or actively seek to sell sexual labour. The involvement of third parties in the sex industry is also often required for a sex worker to find and

4 There is a growing body of work that examines sexual labour, tactical sex and other sexual-affective-economic arrangements in the region, that started in earnest in the 1990s and includes studies as Kempadoo 2004; Cabezas 2009; Padilla 2007; and Nixon 2015.

maintain employment in the sex sector. (Kempadoo et al. 2010). Sex work, then, is not automatically defined or viewed as violence to women. However, because prostitution is an illegalized, criminalized activity in almost every Caribbean country, any intervention into the sex sector will reveal people who illegally organize the activities, work without permits, employ others to do the work without legal contracts, assist migration with false documents so that people can take up the jobs, offer work under false pretences, retain people in debt-bondage, provide housing, transportation, or food to undocumented migrants, perpetrate violence knowing that the victim cannot claim police or state protection, and on and on. In short, raids of the sex sector can deliver both 'traffickers' and 'trafficked victims' almost instantaneously and with few additional resources. For example, in 2013 and 2015 human trafficking in Barbados was related to raids on bars and adult entertainment clubs, through which women nationals of other Caribbean countries —Guyana, Jamaica, and the Dominican Republic especially—were believed to be forced into prostitution (*Nation News* 22 April 2013; *Kaiteur News* 23 April 2013; *Nation News* 6 March 2015). In Guyana, a spectacular anti-trafficking raid on the sex industry took place in June 2015, spearheaded by the then very recently elected Minister of Social Protection. Hotels in Bartica—a gateway town to the interior —where sex work was known to be taking place were raided, and 27 women from the Dominican Republic, Brazil, Columbia, and Venezuela, were identified and 'rescued' as 'trafficked victims' (*Caribbean 360* 8 June 2015; *Stabroek News* 8 June 2015). In Belize, it is claimed that human trafficking "disproportionately" affects women, mainly from the neighbouring countries of Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, who are being sexually exploited (*The Reporter* 3 January 2014). The Dominican Republic is seen as a country where trafficking takes place especially for the sex tourism industry, and in Trinidad and Tobago the common depiction is that human trafficking revolves mainly around "foreign" women in the sex trade (*Fox News* 2015, *Newsweek* 2015, *Stabroek News* 2015, TTCrime.com 2016). Such attention for the sex trade in the region is not new. Concern, in 2005 in Guyana, rested heavily on ideas about Amerindian women sexually servicing miners in the interior of the country (Marcus et al. 2004), and in Antigua, Belize, Barbados, Dominica and Surinam it was based on ideas about migrant women working in undocumented status in bars, hotels and night clubs as

prostitutes (Kempadoo et al. 2010). "The demand," as a review of OAS research on human trafficking in the Latin American and Caribbean region established in 2005, "is mainly for prostitution and pornography" (Langberg 2005, 134).

At other times, the conflation of sex trafficking and human trafficking occurs, such that even when a government official or international organization makes a public statement about human trafficking more generally, the media identifies it as 'sex trafficking' or links it to prostitution. A prime example of this appeared in a Barbados newspaper in 2015, with the Attorney General's report about the difficulty of producing evidence of human trafficking appearing under the heading, "Sex Victims Refuse to Talk" (*Nation News* 14 September 2012). Or, in the case where this author gave a public talk in Barbados about human trafficking discourses, the news headlines systematically took up the issue as synonymous with prostitution (*Caribbean 360* 31 March 2016; *Barbados Today* 1 April 2016). So, even while the region does not commonly hold the same position as the US TVPA that prostitution is sexual slavery, human trafficking is most commonly conflated with sex work. An (unintended) consequence of this conflation is that arrests in the sex sector can look good in the eyes of the US State Department as the Caribbean governments are tackling something that the US deems as 'violence against women,' while also producing much needed evidence for the TIP report.

One notable exception to the conflation of sex work and human trafficking in the Caribbean region is the case of Haiti and its citizens. Apart from reports about the trafficking of young people for sex tourism in the Dominican Republic, trafficking of Haitians is heavily linked to migrants struggling to flee the poor political, social and economic conditions at home, and hoping to find refuge and work in the Dominican Republic and the Bahamas (*Haiti Libre* 8 June 2015). But here too, as in almost all the other cases, attention for human trafficking is connected to migration in and around the Caribbean region. Thus, even though interregional movement for work has been a core feature of Caribbean life since emancipation, involving both licit and illicit channels and labour, and migration for sex work in the region has been recorded in countries since the early 20th century and documented as neither a new nor forced phenomenon (Kalm 1985), since the introduction of a trafficking discourse, migrants have been singled out as a

problem. Immigration officers routinely scrutinize and interrogate women entering a country as suspected 'prohibited persons,' and CARICOM migration policies, that are meant to encourage mobility, are seen to lend support to human trafficking. As an OAS official stated at an anti-trafficking training session for law enforcement officials, judges and prosecution in 2013, "the free movement that Caribbean nationals will enjoy as part of the Caribbean Community will result in an increase of human trafficking" (*Capitol News* 10 October 2010). The call for tighter immigration control to combat (sex) trafficking is the result, and can lead to strategies, such as in the Bahamas, where a new Immigration Act was introduced in 2014, specifically targeted at Haitians, requiring all immigrants living in the country to always have their home country passport with them (Nixon and Trotz 2015; *Haiti Libre* 8 June 2015).

COLLATERAL DAMAGE

Many studies of anti-trafficking interventions have revealed the harm that the policies and actions cause migrants, sex workers and young people the world over. In the first instance, the result of heightened scrutiny at the borders is not in 'rescue' of 'victims' but rather in their prosecution or deportation as illegal immigrants—the focus is not on human rights or protection. As Nandita Sharma writes:

> Anti-trafficking policies do a great disservice to migrating people, especially the most vulnerable. By diverting our attention away from the practices of nation-states and employers, they channel our energies to support a law-and-order agenda of 'getting tough' with 'traffickers.' . . . The reasons why it is increasingly difficult and dangerous for people to move safely or live securely in new places are brushed aside while nation states rush to criminalise 'traffickers' and (largely) deport 'victims' of trafficking (Sharma 2015).

In the rush to prosecute criminals, 'trafficked victims'—persons who are forced to circumvent laws in their struggle to stay alive and find security—are apprehended and treated as criminals, and often sent back to the same conditions they were trying escape.

In the region, people who violate immigration and labour laws, although at times identified as 'traffickers' and 'trafficked

victims,' are most commonly treated as criminals, and arrested, detained, and deported. In the Bahamas, for example, violations of the new Immigration Act lead to deportation. In Belize, it was found that "front-line responders carrying out brothel raids generally looked for immigration violations instead of trafficking indicators" *(CTV News* 29 July 2015). In Barbados the 2015 raids that led to the arrest of a trafficker and delivered "7 victims," took place just as amendments were being made to the Immigration Bill to tighten laws related to immigration violations (*Nation News* 6 March 2015). So, even though foreign sex workers were identified as 'trafficked victims,' they were detained and threatened with prosecutions for violating immigration laws. In Guyana, the raids in June 2015 that produced 27 'trafficked' women uncovered that several were without valid visas or entry permits, which led to their detention and deportation. The result is that, by and large, working people are caught up in anti-trafficking raids, while structural inequalities around capital, race, gender and culture that produce the conditions that disadvantage some and privilege others—that create greater gaps between the wealthy and the poor—are ignored.

Second, anti-trafficking in the region further stigmatizes and criminalizes the exchange of sexual labour for benefit. Iman Khan, staff writer for the *Stabroek News*, in reviewing the Guyana 2015 incident asks an important question in this regard: "Was this a war on trafficking or was this a way to criminalize and punish the women for their sex work?" (22 June 2015). The focus on the sex industry as a site of criminal activity and 'wrong' sex, plays into long-standing, religious-inspired, colonial bourgeois ideologies of respectability that surround Caribbean women's sexuality. The counterpart, 'slackness', is considered among other things low-class and disreputable, especially for women, or 'risky' in relation to sexually transmitted infections and reproductive health. Those who engage in sex work—the so-called whores, jamettes, dancers, working girls, entertainers, jinteras, skettels, sankies or rentals—face stigmas and discrimination for being 'loose' and are believed to be immoral and bad influences, dirty, and diseased. Messages about human trafficking, together with HIV and AIDS awareness campaigns, therefore exhort the public to refrain from 'promiscuity,' to abstain from sexual intercourse (ABC—Abstain, Be faithful, use a Condom—campaigns), and to look out for young women 'enslaved' in sex trade work. As in the case in Guyana, apart

from the arrests and deportations, the publication of the migrant women's names and photos in the national newspapers amounted to a public reprimand and shaming of sex workers. Anti-trafficking, shored up by the notion of 'sex trafficking,' in this way serves to demonize and criminalize women's sexual agency in the Caribbean.

A third aspect of anti-trafficking policies and interventions is that they can also create, what is known in critical anti-trafficking scholarship, as 'victims of anti-trafficking.' As Jyoti Sanghera, former Senior Advisor with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, writes, "the trafficked woman" might find herself literally going "from the frying pan into the fire":

> She discovers that in trying to remove her from harm, her well-meaning advocate, be it the government, an NGO or an individual, who has come forward to assist and protect her, has actually done further harm and removed her even farther away from her desired destination. She discovers that in the name of protection she can be confined to a shelter under conditions which are no different from detention, or packed off "home", back into the very same environment that she wished to leave behind, with its joblessness, poverty, conflict, abuse, or even a not-so-dire middling situation, which to her offered neither promise nor possibility of realising her life's full potential. She may find that some conditions have been attached to the assistance she is being offered. She is told that if she cooperates with the law to provide evidence against her trafficker, then she might be assisted and even allowed to stay on in the host country for a few weeks longer before being sent off home. She gets the clear message that "home" is where she needs to be for her own good and that she is incapable of deciding what is best for her, even though she may be well past the age of majority. At any event, it is clear to this trafficked woman that if she identifies herself as a "victim of trafficking", she will eventually be sent home to be reunited with her misery once again. So she chooses not to identify herself as a "victim of trafficking" in order not to become a *victim of anti-trafficking* (Sanghera 2007)

The 'trafficked victim' can easily become a victim of the very same policies that were meant to help her.

These unintended consequences or 'collateral damage' of anti-trafficking policies and interventions, such as the criminalization of undocumented persons, the deportation of migrant workers, the

stigmatization and discrimination of sex workers, 'retrafficking', or violence meted out by immigration officials at the border, do not always go unnoticed in the region. As Khan notes about the Guyana incident, the operations violate "global and national policies on the treatment of victims of human trafficking" (*Stabroek News* 22 June 2015). Of the latter, she points out that the privacy of those 'rescued' was not respected, as it should have been according to international anti-trafficking policy—their names and photographs were published in the media. Moreover, according to ILO guidelines, "Victims should also be exempted from criminal investigations should they have committed a crime under forced labour," and "victims who are foreign nationals should also be spared from immediate deportation." (*Stabroek News* 5 April 2014). In Belize, authorities have been chided by the UN Commission for Human Rights for indiscriminately enforcing immigration policies, which drive undocumented migrants underground, "as they fear reporting their abuse to the authorities, for fear of deportation and/or fines and incarceration." (*The Reporter* 3 January 2014). Or, as the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights noted back in 2002, a core principle for anti-trafficking measures is that they "shall not adversely affect the human rights and dignity of persons, in particular the rights of those who have been trafficked, and of migrants, internally-displaced persons, refugees and asylum-seekers" (cited in Dotteridge 2007).

In short, anti-trafficking in the Caribbean and beyond is becoming an industry in and of itself, that creates more unfreedoms than it does freedoms, draining money and attention away from tackling the causes of poverty and inequality. It also has not guaranteed any Caribbean country a place in Tier 1. For example, when Guyana was placed in Tier 3 in 2004, in order to get itself out of a predicament, the government rushed to demonstrate that it was taking steps to combat the problem, presenting young Amerindian women found working in the sex trade far from their home communities as 'victims,' and quickly putting anti-trafficking laws in place. The country was subsequently recognized by the US State Department as a 'deserving' nation and the following year was ranked in Tier 2. Since then however, despite continuing efforts to combat trafficking, led particularly by the Guyana Women's Miners Association whose founder was awarded US TIP Hero status in 2013, Guyana has been placed on the Tier 2 Watch List more years

than not. This 'damned if you do, damned if you don't' situation led the Guyana government in 2014 to publically declare that it would no longer report to the US State Department on the issue (*Stabroek News*, 5 April 2014). Whether it has been able to maintain that position is, however, another question.

CONCLUSION

The Caribbean region has adopted the international discourse on human trafficking over the past 15 years and has made it its own. More Caribbean countries today are taken up in the US TIP report and have signed onto the UN Protocol, and many more have established their own anti-trafficking legislation. What started as a US war on trafficking in the early 2000s has become 'indigenized.' However, many Caribbean nation states resist the US policing on the subject and, despite being threatened with economic sanctions for non-compliance, denounce the ways their countries are covered in the annual TIP report. Still, human trafficking is not considered the most pressing problem in the region, and when identified, is done so mainly in relation to migrant sex workers. The overall politics in the region has changed little over the past 15-odd years and seems to mirror what is taking place elsewhere in the world: human trafficking is defined as a crime, the sex industry is seen as a major site of trafficking, and it is poor migrant women and men, especially sex working migrant women, who are inevitably caught up in and harmed by efforts to stamp out the crime.

So to end this article, I return to what I wrote earlier as a way forward as, judging from where we were a decade ago, not much has changed. The politics of the US war on trafficking still deserves critical attention from Caribbean governments, scholars and activists. And, perhaps even more relevant than a decade ago, the region would also do well to resist international pressure to comply with anti-prostitution and anti-migration interests, as these run counter to many Caribbean histories, practices and realities. In addition, understanding forced labour and undocumented migration within the context of the global political economy and as a consequence of gross social, economic and political inequalities would allow us to better understand situations of 'trafficking' today. Especially, a recognition that Caribbean histories and nations are built around and depend upon the migration of its peoples—

internally, interregionally, and internationally—would enable us to see that fewer restrictions on immigration, and a loosening, rather than tightening, of migration regulations would be beneficial. Enabling freedom of movement within the region would undermine much of the undocumented and clandestine measures and routes people use to secure a better life for themselves and families, and would dramatically reduce the need for 'traffickers' or smugglers. Moreover, the equation of human trafficking with sex work, which permeates accounts of what is taking place in the Caribbean, requires ongoing interrogation. Prostitution cannot automatically be construed as violence to women and the undocumented migration of women around the region for sex work needs to be taken up as different from victimisation and enslavement. We need a more complex conceptualisation of sexual labour and of the ways in which women participate in sexual-economic relations, as well as a critical examination of ideologies about women's sexuality, in order to dispel the moral indignation and stigma that surrounds sexual-economic activities. Finally, the rhetoric and practice of anti-trafficking needs to be exposed for the violence it visits upon marginalised communities, particularly young and migrant women. In its place, as has been argued for almost two decades, reliance on already existing labour laws, health and safety regulations, and human rights legislation, as well as improvements in social services and empowerment support for women, youth and marginalized persons would have far greater and less harmful impact (Mellon 1999). Immobilising the hype around 'trafficking' remains a critical and necessary step towards charting viable alternatives in the Caribbean.

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Trafficking Discourses of Dominican Women in Puerto Rico

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ABSTRACT

We analyze the expansion of the anti-trafficking discourse in Puerto Rico and its application to Dominican immigrants. Based on interviews with social service providers, we argue that Dominican women are invisible in current discourses of human trafficking for several reasons: their racialization in a xenophobic context, their intimate labour trajectory, and the national and international frameworks for understanding human trafficking that exclude them from the category of "trafficking" victim and predetermine their classification as "illegal aliens." We contend that their racialization in conjunction with their omnipresence in intimate, frequently ill-regulated spaces of sexualized labour (bars, cafes, domestic and care-giving spaces) dominicanas are invisible subjects for social recognition, rendered unworthy of social protection and support.

Key Words: Human Trafficking, Dominicans, Puerto Rico, Caribbean, social work.

> *Eso aquí no pasa! ¿Qué pasa? Que esto es Estados Unidos, aquí no es como en Europa que cualquiera compra un pasaporte y entra . . .* [This does not happen here. What happens? That this is the United States, this is not like in Europe that anyone can buy a passport and enter]. (San Juan, May 2014).

In interviews about human trafficking in Puerto Rico, State department and other government, and non-government officials in Puerto Rico rejected completely the possibility that human trafficking might happen in Puerto Rico. As the official's response in the epigraph suggests, human trafficking happens elsewhere, while Puerto Rico is protected by the United States' impregnable rule of law. By the time we interviewed him, we had already received similar replies from other professionals to our queries. Was it possible that this official—and so many others we interviewed—had missed the near-hysteria over human trafficking invading global popular media?

The absence of a panic over human trafficking was, on the one hand, welcome. Certainly, scholars, sex workers, and activists have struggled against the global media and policy campaigns arising from moral imperatives connected to the idea of human trafficking. Among many controversies, scholars argue that there is slim evidence of concrete cases because of the conceptualization of the issues (Dewey 2008; Doezema 2010; Kempadoo 2015; O'Connell Davidson 2012. On the other hand, we were astounded by the little mention of migrant Dominicans as a population facing multiple vulnerabilities, given the glaring media attention to the perils of their travels across the sea and their high absorption in the lower socio-economic echelons and informal sectors of labour in Puerto Rican society. In the context of highly visible Dominican immigration to Puerto Rico, it is hard to comprehend how most people do not associate human trafficking, smuggling, and undocumented labour exploitation practices with Dominicans, the largest population of migrants to the island.

In this article, we examine the application of the *Trafficking Victims Protection Act* (TVPA) legislation in Puerto Rico. As Carole Vance affirms (2011, 934), "The research on state anti-trafficking interventions must go beyond text, to study the enactment of policy and law on the ground, which is more difficult and time consuming." Although academic researchers and newspaper and television journalists regularly discuss the perils of undocumented Dominican migration to the island (Associated Press 2008; Bishop 2015; Graziano 2013; Lee 2006; Martínez-San Miguel 1998; New York Times 2004; Ricourt 2007; Verbrigghe 2012), there appeared to be a general disengagement by the general public with identifying Dominicans as worthy of social attention. Indeed, we wondered if we had entered into a territory largely unpierced by the hegemonic anti-trafficking discourse. Therefore, we welcomed the opportunity to study what feminist anthropologist Adrianna Piscitelli calls the "expansion of anti-trafficking regimes."

This article analyzes the anti-trafficking discourse in the San Juan metropolitan area of Puerto Rico where the largest population of Dominicans resides. We argue that Dominican women (or *dominicanas*) are invisible and illegible to current discourses of human trafficking for several reasons: their racialization in a xenophobic context, their intimate labour trajectory, and the national and international frameworks for understanding human

trafficking that exclude them from the category of trafficking victim and predetermine their classification as "illegal aliens." We contend that, due to these dynamics, they are unlikely to receive any recognition other than as "illegal aliens." Our interest is not in producing new victims of human trafficking that conform to the kind of pre-existing categories currently in place; rather, we hope to illustrate how not all "vulnerable" subjects are equal. We contend that their racialization *in conjunction with* their omnipresence in intimate, frequently ill-regulated spaces of sexualized labour (bars, cafes, domestic, and care-giving spaces) *dominicanas* are invisible subjects for social recognition, rendered unworthy of social protection and support.

We begin by examining two key dynamics that together impact the mobility of Dominican women into Puerto Rico. The current history of Dominican migration into Puerto Rico means that they are regarded as lower class, undocumented, racialized, hyper sexual subjects, undeserving of protection from state and civil society authorities, while the ambiguities of *dominicana's* sexual labour puts them at risk of being women deserving of abuse. At the juncture of these two dynamics, the agents responsible for delivering social attention to Dominicans in Puerto Rico rely on misinformation or unawareness of the struggles faced by Dominicans. We present some preliminary findings about the human trafficking discourse, as is necessary in an ongoing project. We end with reflections and questions as we continue this investigation.

Racialized Migration and Xenophobia

The island of Puerto Rico—located between the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean, east of the Dominican Republic—along with the US Virgin Islands, enjoys a geopolitically privileged position in the Caribbean, due to its colonial connection to the United States. Since 1898, when the US invaded the island during the Spanish-Cuban-US War, Puerto Rico has been an "unincorporated territory belonging to but not part of the United States" (Duany 2011, 6). While Puerto Rican citizens do not have government representation at the level of the federal government—they do not possess all constitutional rights and obligations of other US citizens—in 1917 they received US citizenship for immigration purposes only (Duany

2011). Thus, Puerto Rico constitutes a maritime boundary that migrants use as a stepping stone toward entering the mainland US.

The Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico have long histories of reciprocal migration flows, and many people have mixed parentage and citizenship. Dominicans migrated to Puerto Rico in small numbers until migration increased in the 1960s, when the violence of the Trujillo political regime and the US invasion and occupation, compelled middle-class families to migrate in search of refuge. The steady stream of migrants fleeing political violence grew through the nineties, when the implementation of free trade zones and structural adjustment policies created permanent migration flows (Ricourt 2007). Currently, Dominicans comprise both the largest group of irregular migrants and the most visible population of immigrants to Puerto Rico.[1] In fact, Puerto Rico receives the second largest group of Dominican migrants, next to New York.[2] But Dominicans are also interregional migrants and laborers, traveling to places such as Saint Kitts and Nevis, Curaçao, Panama, Costa Rica, Trinidad, US Virgin Islands, and to international destinations such as Spain and Switzerland (IOM 2013; Kempadoo 2000; Koné 2014; Petree and Vargas 2005).

Since the early eighties, Dominicans have made the journey through the dangerous Mona Passage—approximately 80 miles or 129 kilometers—connecting the Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea to seek better life prospects. As unauthorized migrants, they undertake risky and terrifying voyages in makeshift fishing vessels known as *yolas*, encountering treacherous seas with 8-12 foot waves, as well as dehydration, knife fights, beatings, and drownings due to capsized ships or fights aboard the crowded vessels (*New York Times* 2004, 2006; Lee 2006). Reports reveal that the dangers of the journey include ships getting lost; cannibalism; and the routine rape of women before departure, in transit, and upon arrival. Upon resettlement in Puerto Rico, Dominicans face an unwelcoming reception from the larger Puerto Rican society and culture (Duany

1 We use *irregular migrants* and *undocumented migrants* interchangeably throughout this paper. See the United Nations' International Organization for Migration (IOM) Key Migration Terms (https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms).

2 According to the U.S. Census, of the 3.7 million Puerto Ricans on the island approximately 70,000 are Dominicans. Some political leaders put the number of undocumented migrants at over 100,000 (http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF)

2005; Duany 2011; Martínez-San Miguel 1998; Pacini Hernandez 2009; Reyes-Santos 2015).

In contrast to middle-class and educated migrants arriving in Puerto Rico during the sixties and seventies, the new emigrants represent a different demographic profile: predominantly working-class women and men with lower levels of educational and occupational attainment (Ricourt 2007). Even before Puerto Rico's current social and financial crisis, numerous scholars have described how new waves of poorer Dominican immigrants encounter sentiments of nativist hostility and how they are exposed to xenophobia and racial discrimination at all levels of society and culture (Duany 2011; Ferguson 2003; Reyes-Santos 2015; San Miguel 1998.

The racism, stigma, and violence against Dominicans has drawn the attention of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). In the Directory of Minorities and Indigenous People Report, the UNHCR states:

> Puerto Ricans tend to typecast Dominicans as being darker-skinned than themselves and emphasize their African-influenced facial features and hair texture. Hence Dominicans in Puerto Rico like the darker-skinned Haitians in their own country end up experiencing the intense stigmatization, stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, low social ranking and exclusion to which people of African origin have long been subjected to in that country and elsewhere (UNHCR 2008).

As in other situations where "illegal immigrants" are subjected to racial prejudice, hostility and exclusionary practices, Dominicans experience discrimination because they are associated with blackness, as Puerto Ricans erase African heritage from their national identity (Rodriguez-Silva 2012).

The racial ideology of Puerto Rico stems from the island's image of itself as not black, as historian Rodriguez-Silva (2012) demonstrates with her research on slavery, emancipation and colonialisms. Her scholarship, alongside that of other scholars, indicates how, since the late nineteenth century, "blackness is silenced in historical narrative and political, educational, and cultural policies" (Alegria and Rios 2005; Dávila 2001; Reyes-Santos 2015). Nationalist narratives continue to privilege *mestizaje*, or racial mixture, and white supremacy. In the dominant construction of the nation, Puerto Rico is "white" (Godreau 2015). Accordingly,

undocumented Dominicans are perceived by Puerto Ricans as black and not belonging to the nation.

The police regularly stop Afro-Puerto Ricans whom they suspect of being undocumented Dominicans. Reports by the American Civil Liberties Union and the US Department of Justice (DOJ) detail police brutality against people of African descent and note the "long history of allegations concerning systemic discriminatory treatment of Dominican individuals" (DOJ 2011, 57; Vicens 2012). Therefore, forms of state racialized violence associate being black with being Dominican (DOJ 2011).

The history of racialized gender in the Caribbean, where black women's bodies have been constructed as lascivious and hypersexual, also determines how Puerto Ricans perceive *dominicanas* (Suárez Findlay 1999). As Kempadoo (2004) and other Caribbean scholars have established, for black bodies, processes of racialization in the Caribbean are always sexualized (Alcázar-Campos 2010, 2011; Briggs 2002; Cabezas 2004, 2009; Kempadoo 2001; Kutzinski 1993; Suárez Findlay 1999). Thus, Kempadoo asserts, "the mulatto woman (*la mulata*) represented the erotic and sexually desirable yet was outcast and pathologized and emerged during slavery as the symbol of the prostitute—the sexually available yet socially despised body—the eroticized other, the trope of the exotic" (2003, 167). This consideration of the intersection of race and sex is important for our investigation because discourses naturalize *dominicanas* as hyper-sexual. Thus, within the Puerto Rican context darker skin signals both African heritage—Dominicanness—and hypersexualization, epitomized in the stereotype of the black Dominican prostitute connected to eroticization, disgust and criminality.

Trans-Caribbean irregular migration, racialization, socio-economic background and historical period establish how Dominican women are perceived in Puerto Rico. Their labour in intimate spaces, as we discuss below, and the fact that their laboring configurations are criminalized, means that they are illegible under the discursive paradigm of the TVPA.

Sexual Labour and the TVPA

While conducting ethnographic fieldwork with the Dominican sex worker organization *Movimiento de Mujeres Unidas* (MODEMU), in

the Dominican Republic, Cabezas was intrigued by their circular migrations to the neighboring island of Puerto Rico. During the first decade of the twenty-first century, Dominican sex workers journeyed to other Caribbean destinations and to Puerto Rico, particularly on the overnight ferry to purchase commodity goods and sell them back home for profit. Profitable commodity trading was one of many income-earning activities they used to augment their earnings. They discussed doing peer-to-peer safer-sex education with street-based sex workers, particularly transwomen who worked in public parks and in the streets of predominantly Dominican *barrios.* Recognizing the multiple vulnerabilities of sex workers, particularly in a context where sex work and sodomy is illegal, the women of MODEMU also talked about organizing sex workers by initiating a chapter in Puerto Rico. Eventually, a few of the women moved permanently to Puerto Rico. In fact, one of our key informants met a Puerto Rican man on an Internet website, subsequently married him, and relocated to the outskirts of the capital city of San Juan. Another moved there to be reunited with one of her daughters who was residing in Puerto Rico. Through their actions, the Dominican sex workers demonstrated that they were not devoid of agency, that they value mobility as an important method to be reunited with family and to get ahead, and that political solidarity around issues of sex workers' rights was paramount, even in the face of multiple constraints.

The other author (Alcázar-Campos) was troubled by the discourses associated with Afro-Cuban women and sex work. During her ethnographic fieldwork in Santiago, Cuba she heard white Cubans' constant talk about sex work in connection only to Afro-Cuban women. The how and why racialized women participated in this endeavor was a persistent topic of discussion, while the involvement of light-skin women was minimized or simply ignored (Alcázar-Campos 2010). Ideas about sex work were frequently connected to the hypersexualization of Afro-Cuban women, naturalizing these practices to a certain extent.

Based on our mutual research interests around race, sexuality, and women's migration, we decided to analyze the application of legislation related to human trafficking within the US. The conjunction of the well-established Caribbean expectation that darker skin signals both a more profound blackness (primitiveness) and hypersexualization, with our previous work problematizing

the supposed stability of sex work and sex workers' lack of agency, inspired us to analyze *dominicanas*' unique experience as *cantineras* (barmaids); one of the most predominant forms of labour for recent arrivals from the Dominican Republic in Puerto Rico.

In Puerto Rico, we centered our analysis on the application of the social, economic, and political construction of discourses and practices associated with human "trafficking." In particular, we examined how discourses are implemented with regards to *dominicanas*, or Dominican women, the largest group of immigrants to the island. Conducting interviews and participant-observations in 2013-2015, we enlisted the assistance of former sex workers living in, and traveling to, Puerto Rico. We identified an immigrant-receiving community with an extensive sex trade near San Juan.

We anticipated that *cantinas* [bars] would be a key site for our investigation, because bar work in Puerto Rico, and other locations of the Caribbean, is a form of sexualized entertainment, and *cantinas*, along with domestic work and child and elder care, provide entry-level employment for undocumented *dominicanas*. A number of investigations about immigrant women working in positions of sexualized entertainment in the US and in the transnational realm (Allison 1994; Cheng 2011; Parreñas 2013; Ragsdale, Anders, and Phillippakos 2007) shed light on "sexualized entertainment," which ranges from sex tourism (Kempadoo 2001; Piscitelli 2013) to strip clubs (Barton 2006; Frank 2002; Gagné 2010; Maia 2012). It encompasses modes of recreation that position women's sexuality as exploitable for men's leisure and recreation.

Sexualized entertainment is an ambiguous term and an ambiguous labour practice that incorporates forms and modes of sexualized labour that do not "count" as sex work, although they may involve occasional sex-for-money transactions. Such work combines intimacy and caring, but sexualized entertainment cannot be explicitly defined *against* "prostitution" or as "sex work." As such, the work of *cantineras* remains stigmatized and morally suspect. The ambiguity of *cantineras*' labour, the illegality of sex work in Puerto Rico, and unregulated racialized migration combine in powerful ways to articulate vulnerabilities for recent arrivals.

While some investigations indicate that *cantinas* are a niche for human smuggling and trafficking (Ayala, Carrier, and Magaña 1996; Risley 2010), no studies examine the conditions of migration under which *cantineras* labour: if there is force and intolerable forms

of mistreatment, the public nature of their labour, and their potential contact with agents of the state. Most research on *cantineras* examines issues pertaining to their occupational health, such as alcohol consumption, social stigma, and the risks of sexually transmitted diseases (Ayala, Carrier and Magaña 1996; Fernández-Esquer 2003; Fernández-Esquer and Agoff 2012). Little research has been done on job-related violence and exploitation by supervisors and patrons or about other health stressors, such as lack of immigration documents, debt, low wages, harassment and safety, and threats of violence.

The conditions of migration and the labour trajectory of immigrant women employed as barmaids in Puerto Rico lead us to investigate the application of the TVPA. However, we had serious misgivings about the application and efficacy of the TVPA. Activists and scholars have criticized the TVPA on many fronts: its failure to deliver restorative services to "victims of trafficking," the lack of federal prosecutions under the TVPA, the absence of state and local involvement in anti-trafficking measures, and insufficient focus on rehabilitating victims (Chacon 2006; Haynes 2006; Sheldon-Sherman 2012). Furthermore, one of the most problematic conditions of the TVPA is the requirement that victims cooperate with law enforcement in prosecuting trafficking cases, since T-Visas are available only to those who comply with law enforcement, are physically present in the United States as a result of trafficking, and can prove extreme hardship if deported. If victims do not cooperate in prosecuting their traffickers, they can be left without access to basic assistance (Rieger 2007, 250, cited in Sheldon-Sherman 2012, 463). Consequently, the TVPA is an ineffective law as "The cultural barriers present in the T-Visa system have led to erratic, inadequate implementation of the T-Visa, which in turn has several negative repercussions for international human trafficking victims and anti-trafficking efforts" (Cianciarulo 2007, 835). Indeed, as Brennan (2014) points out, the role of the state in every step of the process can "profoundly shape," in a negative manner, a trafficked person's life.

Another hesitation we had about the TVPA was the way it has sensationalized an anti-sex work and anti-migration standpoint via a moral panic. Numerous scholars have analyzed the re-emergence of a "moral panic" connected to migrant women who sell sex and human trafficking discourse (Bernstein 2007; Doezema 2010; Kapur

2012; Kempadoo 2005; Limoncelli 2010). Certain subsectors of trafficking debates rely on depictions of women as helpless victims in need of rescue. During the past fifteen years, a number of ideological disputes have surfaced—in the international arena as well as in the US—between activists, policy-makers, academics, and sex workers, to name just a few of the stakeholders. Anti-prostitution feminists, evangelicals, and the religious right depend on moralizing, anti-prostitution discourses and tend to be heteronormative and anti-sex work, while ignoring boys, men, and transsexuals as victims of trafficking. As Kamala Kempadoo states: "The panic over 'trafficking women' has conveniently helped to eclipse state-sponsored exploitation of migrant people, and puts a 'benevolent' and 'paternalistic' face on border guards who are notorious for their systematic abuse of migrants" (Kempadoo 2005, 22). It is necessary to separate trafficking from sex work because the lack of differentiation ignores and underestimates other situations of labour exploitation where migrant women work under duress and in conditions of sexual violence.

Despite our doubts about the legal protection and efficacy of the TVPA, we thought it important to establish that *dominicanas* should have recognized rights to migrate and to participate in multiple income earning activities, including sex. Even though we understood that, the difficulties and inconsistencies of the TVPA inform how service providers understand the issue of human trafficking and thus shape the experiences of Dominican barmaids working in Puerto Rico.

To understand how the law is implemented, we identified social service providers in charge of support services for migrant *dominicanas*. As Jennifer Lynne Musto indicates (2010, 23), "As a gatekeeper between researchers and trafficked persons, social service providers create and disseminate particularized definitions and ideologies of trafficking." In the next section, we examine our attempt to access the official forces that shape *dominicanas*' encounter with TVPA, by exploring some of the responses we received from social service professionals.

Social Services and Human Trafficking

In order to learn about the social services available to migrants subjected to egregious environments and abuse, we interviewed

social service providers serving immigrant Dominicans or those working in HIV/AIDS prevention with sex worker populations. We also investigated the network of shelters that provide services to women experiencing intimate partner violence. Despite finding several organizations that were described to us as supporting victims of human trafficking, or who described themselves as providing services to victims, we realized that the TVPA's discursive framework forecloses possibilities for justice. Furthermore, it became clear that there are no organizations that attend to the concerns *dominicanas, cantineras,* and sex workers encounter.

The most visible and vocal non-government organization that utilizes the discourse of human trafficking is the Ricky Martin Foundation (RMF), named after the singer, actor, and humanitarian. Indeed, the RMF is the only organization to specifically raise awareness about human trafficking. In the RMF's publications, Rey-Hernández and Hernández-Angueira (2010 and 2014) attempt to give an overview of human trafficking in Puerto Rico by conducting interviews with government agencies and representatives of various nongovernment organizations, or NGOs, working on behalf of children and women. They also reviewed print media, as well as existing relevant legislation. Their activities and publications seek to familiarize the general population and stake holders with the discourse of anti-human trafficking into the island, and to interpret multifarious conditions of abuse and exploitation as forms of slavery and human trafficking. Although the study collects some data about *dominicanas*, such as their connection with what they term "commercial sexual exploitation," their argument that all prostitution is forced, and the focus on domestic minors, decrease its utility for our research and for sex workers, transwomen and *cantineras*. However, the RMF's reports are useful for our investigation because they manifest two important issues: 1) the conflation of women's experiences with children's in the anti-trafficking discourse, and 2) the conflation of sex work with sexual exploitation and violence. Finally, their investigations confirm our findings about the lack of social services for women.

Following the precedent established by the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons (also known as the Palermo Protocol) and the TVPA, the reports of the RMF links women and minors, with several negative

consequences. The ideological framework of the Palermo Protocol's stress on "women and children," as numerous scholars have indicated, is a paternalistic discourse that infantilizes women and deprives them of agency, reinforcing the image of young, innocent victims deceived into prostitution. Furthermore, as Warren reminds us about this rhetorical strategy: "Coupling vulnerability with the female gender and dependent children is a very potent imagery for the construction of worthy victims" (2007, 247). While the Protocol and the TVPA struggle to achieve gender neutral language, both nevertheless equate the vulnerability of women with children in at least three instances, including in the title (Doezema 2010). The protocol's focus on "women and children" and "trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation" means that many states and individuals construe the protocol as dealing with "'sex slaves" who work in extremely abusive, degrading, and violent circumstances" (Warren 2007). In its practical application, these slippages relegate to the margins situations of egregious laboring conditions found in domestic and agricultural labour, and they discount sex workers and barmaids who do not conform to the stereotype of the helpless female sex victim. The language of "women and children" further silences sex workers who are male, or transgender, and those who confront violence and exploitation, but are not forced into prostitution. Consequently, people working in sexualized entertainment are, by definition of the law, omitted from the Palermo/TVPA considerations.

The Palermo Protocol's influence continues in the RMF's anti-sex work approach (Rey-Hernández and Hernández-Angueira 2014). In their publications, they explicitly argue that all prostitution is sexual violence and "exploitation of women and girls." Thus, Rey-Hernández and Hernández-Angueira (2014, 14) claim, "US criminal experts have acknowledged the impossibility of distinguishing between prostitution and sexual exploitation." This approach does not differentiate between different forms of sex work, sexual entertainment, for example, or adult migrants who travel to sell sex. The discussion of women conflates trafficking in women with trafficking in minors, and makes this interchangeable with the sexual abuse of minors in their biological and foster families (Rey-Hernández and Hernández-Angueira 2014). The RMF, therefore, uses the discourse of human trafficking by applying the concept to include runaway foster youth and child victims of

incest and sexual abuse. In fact, women's specific needs are not addressed at all in the current agenda of the RMF because, as of 2014, the organization established a social program to work with "at risk" youth in Puerto Rico. Nevertheless, the assumption behind the narratives Rey-Hernández and Hernández-Angueira employ is that sex workers can only be subjects of abuse. It assumes that women are not possessing of agency and that sex acts, where money is exchanged, are inherently damaging.

Besides the high-profile work of the RMF, many people told us to speak with an organization we will call Quisqueya. We were told that "they should tell you everything you need to know about Dominican trafficking." Quisqueya receives financial assistance from the US federal government for their mission to aid *dominicanas* in cases of violence against women. In our interviews, we learned that it had not received any cases related to human trafficking, and that its primary focus was on intimate (heterosexual) partner violence. Due to restrictions connected to funding by the federal government, Quisqueya's legal aid clinic did not process cases involving labour disputes, even though they acknowledged that Dominican domestic workers confront abusive work environments and are some of the most under-paid workers in Puerto Rico.

Quisqueya's work did not fit in with the referral characterizing it as an organization that knew "all about trafficking." It is unclear whether the source was conflating domestic violence with trafficking. This highlighted for us the dearth of agencies and social resources serving Dominicans and the muddled and generalized confusion as to what constitutes human trafficking.

We found, however, an organization providing services to marginal sexual communities with a deeper and more nuanced understanding about sexual minorities than Quisqueya and the RMF. Social workers employed by an NGO we will call ABC, were doing educational outreach on the prevention of sexually transmitted infections. We thought ABC social workers had a better understanding of the complex situations that *cantineras* face, because of their close working relationship and familiarity with various kinds of environments and businesses where Dominicans labour. One outreach worker suggested that it is not only Puerto Rican bar owners who employ undocumented women, but also Dominican bar owners and managers. For instance, one informant revealed:

> [Trafficking in Dominican women] is something that is already within the community, customers are mostly of the same Dominican community. About the women, look, you'll find two types of females within the business. You'll find the one in the bar, which tends to be, in many cases, allied with the business owner; because she is doing her part. Yes, she sells the drink, but she is monitoring the business, because, remember, when you're at the bar you have the whole view of the business. There are the girls that provide companionship, that when a man enters the business they are with them in the business. They accompany you, give you company, you share drinks, and, if desired, it becomes a type of sex work. (San Juan, May 2014)

This statement indicates, first, the conflation in this outreach worker's mind between sex work and trafficking, a common confusion in the dominant anti-trafficking discourse as we have pointed out. Secondly, that both "exploiters" and "victims" are embedded within the same racial-ethnic communities and could be of the same gender. As established in critical anti-trafficking studies, the reality is more complex than the prevailing media image of external traffickers linked to crime organizations (Feingold 2005; Jacobsen and Skilbrei 2010). In many cases, it is people from within immigrant communities, with whom women have some kind of pre-existing relationship (boyfriends, husbands, friends, lovers, relatives), who may facilitate forging of documents, smuggling, and who couple these activities with coercive and abusive practices (Sharma 2005; Wijers and Lap-Chew 1997). The person responsible for inducing or coercing someone into exploitative relations may be both a trafficker and a victim at the same time. A woman may also be a "collaborator"—working with a bar owner and not necessarily selling sex—and still experience forms of labour abuse. In short, it can be, and often is, people from within women's own networks—with whom they continue to interact—who form part of the webs and organizations of people, in both the receiving and sending countries, that facilitate crossing borders and attaining work. This research undermines notions of human trafficking as connected to outside despotic groups. Rather it suggests assorted relations, obligations, and roles constantly shifting for migrants that make it difficult for women to prosecute and testify against traffickers in

order to receive a T-Visa; this constitutes another ineffective provision of the TVPA, as we discussed above.

Finally, ABC outreach work to prevent sexually transmitted infections in places of sexualized entertainment attest to the problematic of *dominicanas* laboring in contexts where dangerous circumstances exist. Francisca, a social worker, identified the nexus between trafficking and other forms of exploitative labour performed by undocumented migrants:

> In the cafes, all the cafes here in Puerto Rico, almost all are Dominican workers! It may be that at the level of work, that human trafficking is not only in bars; human trafficking is also abuse in terms of labour. I imagine that also [women who are here] illegally to work in homes, they are abused too. (San Juan, 2014)

Francisca's reference to Dominican domestic workers, women working in private family homes, cafes, and bars, suggests that conditions of exploitation are widespread. Furthermore, she intimated that human trafficking is also about other kinds of labour, not just sex work. Francisca extends the scope of "human trafficking", even while she challenges the conflation of human trafficking with sex work. Legal scholar Ratna Kapur succinctly posits the conundrum: "The conflation of trafficking with various manifestations of migration and mobility on the one hand and with prostitution and sex work on the other lies at the very core of the confusion that underpins the contemporary discourse" (2012, 27). Indeed, private family homes are hazardous places for women to work because of the private nature of the work and the few opportunities to denounce situations of sexual abuse which are common in this occupation. However, unlike the over-emphasis on the sexual component of labour that the TVPA promotes, Francisca's statement reveals a broadening of the concept of trafficking to incorporate a variety of situations.

Finally, the structural invisibilization of *dominicanas* was further confirmed in one of our interviews. Asked about the lack of services for Dominican victims of human trafficking, a person working with community-based social programs exclaimed with outrage how she found it incomprehensible what little knowledge and concern most Puerto Ricans expressed about the Dominican population, given the familiar cultural, social and geographical

proximity. As she explained: "I can understand not knowing about Cuba by the fact of the US blockade, but living so close to the Dominican Republic the airplane is only about 30 minutes away, at most!" Confounded as to why there was a general silence about and obliviousness to the plight of Dominican transnational migrants, she could not explain the invisibility of the migrant community.

We did not find any NGOs in the San Juan metropolitan area claiming to deliver legal, health, or other types of social services to undocumented *dominicanas*. Furthermore, proving that any one individual is a victim of trafficking, combined with the requirement for that person to fit the profile of a victim, contributes to a barren landscape of awareness and social services. In other words, we were left with the impression that for undocumented women, *cantineras*, and sex workers, the potential to experience brutality is great and that, at the level of civil society, the ways to resolve ill-treatment and cruelty is non-existent.

At the onset of our research, we were not interested in identifying Dominicans as victims of trafficking so that they could be "rescued" by social services providers. The social construction of the category "victim of human trafficking" is problematic for many reasons, as we have already mentioned. Certainly, the common trope of the trafficking victim, which portrays a young innocent who ends up as a sex slave and is resold to mafia pimps, does not apply to the Dominican *cantineras* we interviewed (Lobasz 2009). Dominant frameworks and narratives of what constitute a "victim" cannot be applied to sex workers and *cantineras*, as the current global moral crusade produces a "colonial gaze" that reinforces racist, sexist, and heterosexist assumptions about migrant women's sexuality.

CONCLUSION

In the twenty-first century, "trafficking" continues to be an "umbrella term" encompassing fears about women's sexuality, irregular migration, and racial "others." The lack of an agreed upon and precise definition of trafficking and "sexual exploitation" continues to haunt current international policy instruments such as the United Nations Palermo Protocol and the TVPA. This ambiguity allows "trafficking" to stand in for disparate forms of sex work, migrant smuggling, and slavery-like practices. Unlike the

Dominican Republic, where a vibrant solidarity movement between Dominicans and Haitians challenge state violence toward Haitians, where there is the presence of international NGOs working in civil society (Reyes-Santos 2015), and where there is the presence of a sex worker movement since the mid-nineties (Cabezas 2009), Puerto Rico lacks all of these dynamics, making Dominican émigrés particularly fragile and invisible (Cabezas 2009; Reyes-Santos 2015).

Preliminary research findings reveal that the assumptions and categories producing a specific anti-trafficking narrative cannot be applied to remedy and redress the conditions of racialized women working in sexualized entertainment. Dominican women's invisibility is the product of the *intersection* of the elements traced in this article. The historical nexus of Dominican's raced and classed irregular migration to Puerto Rico, their sexualized labour trajectory, and the local implementation of discourses of human trafficking work to exclude *dominicanas* from the larger society and culture.

The failure to see and serve the vulnerability of migrant women is not the product of a single cause, nor a single bad actor (though there may be bad actors). The paradox we encountered rests on the invisibility of the Dominican population in Puerto Rico, combined with the xenophobic hostility toward Dominicans as hypervisible racialized subjects. We examined, not just the official refusal to provide social services for undocumented workers in dangerous and exploitative work environments, but we also established that, *in conjunction with dominicana's* omnipresence in intimate, frequently sexualized spaces for labour (such as *cantinas* and in domestic/care giving spaces), they are illegible as deserving of recognition, support and solidarity.

This article presents preliminary research findings for what is an ongoing research project. In future articles, we will build upon this analysis to examine the ways in which the political economy of sexualized entertainment, consumers, and nation-states profit from the dependence on an invisible, non-citizen racial "other"? How do racial and sexual others, such as transwomen, sex workers, and gender non-conforming people, confront abuse and exploitation? These are questions that will be pursued in this ongoing project.

We have highlighted a few of the problems associated with the discursive construction of human trafficking as it pertains to

Dominican women in Puerto Rico. Even though the conditions of labour exploitation under which most of them labour in Puerto Rico is worthy of concern, at the level of public policy and in the form of social services, these conditions are not decipherable. The social construction of Dominican women as "black" and as "illegal immigrants" does not conform to the image of the "sex slave" or the vulnerable victim deserving of assistance and recognition as worthy

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citizen subjects.

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Exploring Traffic and Exploitation on the Brazilian International Border in the Amazon[1]

José Miguel Nieto Olivar

ABSTRACT

In this article I present partial results of anthropological research conducted between 2010 and 2015 in Tabatinga, a city located on the triple border of Brazil with Colombia and Peru in the Amazon. I seek to understand how human trafficking discourses arrived, circulated and were produced in the region during this time period. I focus on the multiple relationships between local/transborder social, sexual and political dynamics, and their intimate relation-ship with "sexual exploitation" politics and discourses. I argue that the trafficking/exploitation model works as a means to reproduce governmentality and inequality. I suggest that the trafficking/ exploitation model is a useful device for constructing a mythical image of the region, thus, actualizing colonial and nationalist practices and discourses that are strongly marked by gender.

Keywords: Sexual exploitation, Peru, prostitution, transborder mobilities.

Tabatinga is a Brazilian city on the country's triple border with Peru and Colombia, located on the Solimões/Amazon River. Together with the city of Leticia, on the Colombian side, and the small island,

1 This article incorporates diverse readings, suggestions, criticisms and recommendations generated in a study group led by Adriana Piscitelli at the Centre for Gender Studies—PAGU at the State University of Campinas (Brazil). Drafts and ideas in construction were presented at the session, "Human Trafficking: Rethinking Discourses, Policies and Rescue Missions" convened by Kamala Kempadoo at the Caribbean Studies Association Conference in New Orleans in 2015 and on the panel, "Regímenes antitrata de personas en América Latina en una perspectiva comparada" coordinated by Adriana Piscitelli in XXXIII Congress of the Latin American Studies Association in San Juan (Puerto Rico) in 2015. A first version of this article is part of the final research report of the study, "Transit, crime and borders: gender, human trafficking and sex markets in Brazil" ("Trânsitos, crime e fronteiras: gênero, tráfico de pessoas e mercados do sexo no Brasil") (Piscitelli et al, 2015). I also thank Lindomar Albuquerque for the conversations, suggestions and reflections surrounding border studies, Kamala Kempadoo for the readings and comments, and Andy Taitt for the language reviews.

Santa Rosa, in Peru, it forms a transborder center of social urban activity. The three cities are sexually and economically linked together in daily life, with few restrictions on people and goods circulating across borders. It is estimated that the population of these three urban conglomerates together is above 60,000. The area has significant sexual, gender, ethnic, national, regional and racial diversity, and a sizeable participation of adolescents and young people in the cities' social and economic life.[2] This transborder city is marked by intense mobility both within, and extending out, from the city's/nation's limits in what could be considered as a transborder territory that communicates with larger cities like Iquitos (Peru) and Manaus (Brazil) along the Amazon river, as well as to Bogotá (Colombia), smaller cities in the three countries, and hundreds of indigenous and river communities.

One can circulate through the transborder city with ease, freely crossing borders and the river to encounter friends, love, family members, money, services, and/or to take advantage of each of the cities' best parts. Passports, travel documents and permission are not necessary to move within nearby areas, and it is hardly ever necessary to pass through police or fiscal control points. This situation changes when traveling to the larger cities in the region by plane or boat, or on special dates such as elections, large law enforcement operations, or certain soccer games.

"Processes of borderization"[3] are significantly different and quite unequal between the three countries. The Peruvian side has more precarious economies, institutional and state infrastructure, while the Brazilian side has the largest influx of money and urban growth. The Colombian side has the strongest structure of government presence, an important flow of tourists, and economic

2 Tabatinga's urban population in 2010: 36.356—Source: IBGE cities: http://www.ibge.gov.br/cidadesat/topwindow.htm?1 Urban population of Leticia 2010: 25.128 –Source: DANE: http://www.dane.gov.co/files/censo2005/PERFIL_PDFCG2005/91001T7T000.PDF Regarding the economic and social participation of young people, see also the wide base of the population pyramid and economic information on the IBGE website.

3 South American researchers such as Grimson (2003), Zárate (2008) and Albuquerque (2015) have pointed to the importance of understanding the international borders in the region as the transborder territory itself, and the long, complex and unfinished historical processes that constitute it. The border thus, is understood as a current historical, political and social process that produces a determinate territory, and a group of contrasting relationships relate to it and cross-cut diverse fields.

circuits of commerce and services. Far from creating effective official policies of border "harmonization" or "cooperation", widespread social practices have produced transborder spaces and relations.[4]

This article is the result of a long period of fieldwork—July and December 2011, August and December 2012, September and December 2013, January 2014 and August and November 2015. During these periods, I sought to understand the local/transborder prostitution and sex markets. I focused on the history of two big brothels in Leticia as well as on the life of one "house of prostitution" (a small and precarious brothel), and I followed a network of "gay" Brazilian youngsters who are very active in this market. I accompanied governmental agents in their work, visited all the brothels of the city, held several interviews and had conversations with a wide variety of people about sex markets. More specifically, the 2013 fieldwork period focused on the local production and operation of the sexual exploitation and human trafficking policies.

In Tabatinga, near the border with Leticia, there is a small brothel in precarious conditions that is widely recognized as being Colombian, in which I conducted ethnographic fieldwork between 2011 and 2015. It is managed by a Colombian woman and has primarily female Colombian workers. Tabatinga's police chief visited the house a few weeks after opening in 2010. The police inquiry had two primary foci: first, that no one working was younger than 18 and second, that there were no Brazilian women working at the brothel. After this visit, the manager was never "bothered" again by the police, affirming that she preferred Brazil to Colombia because, "In Brazil, yes you can!"[5]

In 2014, while I was away from the field and studying in São

4 Regarding Tabatinga and the region see: Zárate 2008; Aponte-Mota 2011; Picón 2012; Yagüe 2013; Olivar 2013, 2014, 2015; Olivar, Cunha & Rosa, 2015; Albuquerque & Paiva 2015.

5 In Brazil, adult autonomous prostitution is not against the law; yet any form of third party involvement, as well as promoting prostitution, maintaining a house of prostitution and "human trafficking" for this purpose (and exclusively for this purpose) are included in the Penal Code (articles 227 and 331-A). The involvement of minors in this activity is typified in article 218-B. However, in Brazil, one can run a brothel for the most part, without any legal problems. In Colombia, she could also legally run her business, because Colombia has legislation that regulates sexual commerce in "zonas" (red-light districts).

Paulo, I was surprised to read the following news in an online Brazilian newspaper: "**In AM [Brazilian Amazonas state], Colombian women are rescued from a brothel in a police operation.** Human trafficking is investigated; young women were forced to prostitute themselves. Six women were rescued as part of the operation Brazil Integrated".[6] In the body of the story, the journalist mentioned that the "brothel" had been closed. The operation was conducted in 10 municipalities in the Brazilian Amazonas state by the Regional Integrated Center of Command and Control (CICC-R—acronym in Portuguese) that forms part of the Amazonas State Secretariat of Public Security. At the time, I had spent four years getting to know this "brothel", its owner, and the many workers that circulated in it very well. I had never seen or heard any event or complaint related to human trafficking or other intensive exploitation of the women's sexual labour. When I returned to the field, it was explained to me that it had been an aggressive and spectacular operation, with more than four military vehicles and more than 15 men in uniforms from diverse defense and security forces, including the Federal Police and army. Despite the threats and accusations, the "brothel" was not closed, and at no time was "human trafficking" or any kind of "rescue" mentioned. There were only (empty) suspicions about harboring arms and drugs and the "irregular" presence of the Colombian women in Brazil.[7] Security officers took the women to the Federal Police station to register their personal data and then they were released. In this sense, "human trafficking" and "rescue" were only part of the most public aspect of the police action: the media story.

The distance between these two scenes is illustrative of this article's objective: to present how human trafficking policies and discourses arrived at the Amazonian triple border between Brazil, Colombia, and Peru and how they have circulated and been locally (re)produced by a diverse group of agents.[8] In this sense, the Foucauldian notions of "governmentality" and "capillarity" are

6 "No AM, colombianas..." in http://g1.globo.com/am/amazonas/noticia/2014/12/no-am-colombianas-sao-resgatadas-de-boate-durante-operacao-policial.html.

7 "Irregular" is always a strange notion, since many people from the three countries circulate and occasionally live and participate in local commerce without needing migratory papers.

8 This article comes from my participation in the study, "Transits, crime and borders: Gender, human trafficking and sex markets in Brazil" [*Trânsitos, crime e*

especially useful for this analysis.[9] In the first part of the chapter, I will briefly show the production of documents, discourses, and programs regarding the relationship between human trafficking and territories of international borders, particularly in the Amazon. This production intensified, starting in 2010, as anti-trafficking policies, policies confronting the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, and international border security policies, all came together and were propelled by an assemblage of government, non-governmental and religious interests.

Considering this production, in the second part I present, ethnographically, how the 2014 Brazilian Catholic Church's Fraternity Campaign affected how trafficking *arrived*, or was recreated, on the triple border of Brazil, Peru, and Colombia, with a focus on the city of Tabatinga. I seek to understand effects of revealed and potential power, which are generated through anti-trafficking/exploitation efforts, on transborder social, sexual and political dynamics. I argue that this model of trafficking/exploitation is a constructed device for governmentality, used to reproduce a mythical image of the "region" that serves borderization defense and public security policy interests and could update colonial and/or nationalistic practices and discourses that are strongly marked by gender, ethnicity, race/color and national or regional origin.

CONFRONTING HUMAN TRAFFICKING, BORDER(S) and the

fronteiras: gênero, tráfico de pessoas e mercados do sexo no Brasil], coordinated by Adriana Piscitelli (CNPq number 404868/2012-6), and my post-doctoral research from 2010-2013 conducted in Tabatinga, along with the Center for Gender Studies PAGU/Unicamp (FAPESP 2010/50077-1) and the current study about "Gender in border and transborder territories in the Brazilian Amazon" [*Gênero em territórios de fronteira e transfronteiriços na Amazônia brasileira*] (FAPESP number 2013/26826-3).

9 Briefly, governmentality is a notion associated with a Foucauldian analysis of biopolitics and the government of population/territories in which government is not just exercised by state institutions, but also by churches, NGOs, community leaders, and not only based on written laws, but also normative regulations and devices (Foucault 2008; see also Lemke 2000 and Butler 2004). The "capillary level of power", refers to local, personal, community "extremities" that are sensitive to power and the ways in which it is produced and exercised "from below", entangled in daily life, desire, the "truth" of knowledges; this is in opposition to centralized and vertical interpretations of power (Foucault 1995: 198; 1980: 39, 96, 201, 255). In this sense, I follow the path of Sharma and Gupta (2006) and Das and Poole (2004) to understand the state. I thank Dario Muñoz for conversations about this.

AMAZON

Since the beginning of the 2000s, academic and feminist research and criticism has examined the anti-human trafficking agenda in Brazil—in particular, focusing on "trafficking for sexual exploitation"—always in dialogue with international research on the topic (Grupo Davida 2005; Piscitelli 2008, 2011a, 2012, 2013; Teixeira 2008; Blanchette and Silva 2012; Silva, Blanchette, and Bento 2013; Sprandel 2014; Lowenkron 2014). This is a heterogeneous critical body of work based on, at least, three characteristics. It is based on —first—ethnographic evidence (with women and transgender participants in transactional sexual markets, clients, partners, political discussion spaces, documents). Second, it makes analytical displacements (differentiations between violence, crime and human rights violations; focus on practices and agency; sexuality as a space of negotiation and diverse production of power relations; gender and the intersectionalities in producing otherness and inequalities; the State as multiple and process, technologies of governmentality) and, finally, it stimulates new political alliances (with sex workers, migrants, non-abolitionist feminisms, sexual diversities, law-makers).

The focus of the criticisms cut across the totality of policy. It analyses its philosophical, moral and political formulation (highly colonial and patriarchal, both national and transnational), its incoherencies with Brazilian jurisprudence, its diffusion and mystification as a highly important 'struggle' for the nation, the absence or fragility of its data, and its local operations, especially organized by human rights and justice agencies with high levels of media exposure. Brazilian scholars have shown how in the country's anti-trafficking policies and discourses *trafficking* has been a confusing mixture between penal law and public security and human rights policy, produced in a marked absence of data and spurred on, and surrounded by, moral panics.

Two areas have had a privileged place in this scholarship; prostitution and transnational transoceanic migration/mobility, as two social and economic environments that are negatively affected by the federal government's anti-trafficking policies/discourses. The joining of anti-human trafficking policies with border policies in Brazil, as well as the mass spreading of trafficking language, constitutes two of the "current shifts" through which "trafficking"

is being produced (Piscitelli 2011b). This has resulted in border territories, host cities to mega-events (such as the 2014 World Cup) and large infrastructure construction projects being described as "emblematic" spaces to confront trafficking.

Concern, in particular with regard to transnational mobilities, in the "north region" and its borders is not new in Brazilian anti-trafficking discourses/policy trajectories.[10] The idea of the *border* as a port of entry and exit of migratory flows—as a limit of the nation-state—was what dominated advocacy up until at least 2010, co-existing with another idea about *borders*: that of border territories. Public policy documents and some studies constructed the "north region"/Amazon and its "borders" as specific territories, and imbued them with characteristics that would make the "trafficking of women" and girls a structural, cultural and/or "inevitable" crime/phenomena (Leal and Leal 2002; SODIREITOS-GAATW/REDLAC 2008; ASBRAD 2012; Torres and Oliveira 2012; Brasil 2013a). It is within this panorama that the President's Office Secretariat of Human Rights (SDH/PR—acronym in Portuguese) developed the *Borders Project* in 2010 in partnership with a São Paulo NGO, for the "defense" of women, infants, and young people. The project consisted in reviewing information in four triple border cities on the Amazon (referred to as the "Northern Arc") to understand the work developed by local actors as part of the "System to Guarantee Adolescent and Child Rights (SGD—acronym in Portuguese)". The *Borders Project* was the result of the NGO lobbying with the SDH/PR and its relevance is due to its being the first to place a high heuristic value on the connection between the Amazon, border territories, human trafficking and sexual exploitation of minors under 18. It is important to note that the project's funding and institutional leadership was not from the National Secretariat of Justice, which was nationally responsible for

10 See for example the Study of the Trafficking of Women, Children, and Adolescents in Brazil – PESTRAF (Leal and Leal 2002) and the Tri-National Study of Trafficking of Women from Brazil and the Dominican Republic to Suriname (*Pesquisa Tri-nacional sobre Tráfico de Mulheres do Brasil e da República Dominicana para o Suriname)* (SODIREITOS-GAATW/REDLAC 2008). Concern with borders was present in terms of "sexual exploitation" of children and adolescents associated with "trafficking" in 2004 as documented by Sprandel, Carvalho and Romero (2004) about harmonization of policies in Mercosul and in Silva, Senna and Kassar (2005) about experiences in Corumbá (MS), both produced by the ILO. To read more about these trajectories, see Piscitelli (2015a) and Piscitelli et al (2015). For a solid critique of PESTRAF, see Blanchette and Silva (2012).

confronting human trafficking, but rather from the Secretariat of Human Rights, which is nationally responsible, among other things, for protection policies of the human rights of children and adolescents, and federal programs to confront the sexual exploitation of this population. In this sense, the project is connected to those developed by the ILO in the beginning of the 2000s (see footnote 10), drawing a clear line, within the public administration, between the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, human trafficking and borders.

The production of borders and the Amazon/north-region as territories of special vulnerability to trafficking gained force from 2010 on, as much through the expansion of the range of agents involved and positions in the Brazilian anti-trafficking agenda,[11] as through the reinvigoration of Brazilian international border policies in the name of "security", "development", "integration", and "defense". As an example of the first tendency, it is worth highlighting the book *Trafficking of Women in the Amazon (Tráfico de Mulheres na Amazônia)* (Torres and Oliveira 2012), produced by two feminist, anti-trafficking militants and university professors. This book presents an abolitionist perspective on sex work, and associates "local culture" with determinants of trafficking or of "vulnerability" through diverse pathways that range from colonial violence, ease in mobility and certain forms of local *cultural* kinship traits, including sexual desire of the "conquering hosts" for the indigenous "imberbes" girls (without body hair) (ibid.: 95-97).

As an example of the second tendency, it is worth highlighting the *Diagnostic Study of Human Trafficking in Border Areas* (Brasil 2013a), conducted in 2012 by the National Secretariat of Justice (SNJ – acronym in Portuguese) alongside the European organization International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), all within the framework of the Brazilian federal government's National Public Security Strategy for Borders (ENAFRON—acronym in Portuguese). This *Diagnostic Study* is the result of an overlap between the reinvigoration of border policies and "current shifts" in policies confronting human trafficking.

The borders were part of the "emblematic goals" in the National Plan to Confront Human Trafficking II, produced in 2011

11 With regards to the proliferation of anti-trafficking in global analysis, see Kempadoo (2015).

with the participation of human rights and children and adolescent rights actors (Brasil 2013b: 7). The *Diagnostic Study* reinforced "the urgency of this task in relationship to the large geographic area already considered to be of high vulnerability" (ICMPD/ UNODC/SNJ 2012: 1). The association between trafficking, borders and migration regulation stands out if we take into consideration that it coincided with a moment (2012-2013) in which migration norms were adapted to receive the Haitian "diaspora" (see Silva 2013 and Handerson 2015) which massively entered the Amazon and was already in the national territory in 2012—and the expansion of the Mercosul migration agreement (Ordinance n° 6.975, from October 7th 2009) to facilitate migration between Brazil, Peru, Colombia and Bolivia. This implies a move to regulate mobility that is not at all paradoxical, as one part of the federal government seemed interested in making migratory policies more flexible, while the other part—that includes anti-trafficking and security and defense agencies—intensified control of migratory flows across land borders.

The *Diagnostic Study* has been the target of strong criticisms by the organizations interviewed and researchers who participated in it. In particular, they are critical of the "unethical" ways in which information was handled to favor the highly valued trafficking and "vulnerability" discourses regarding the regions and border populations.[12] Both the 2012 book, this *Diagnostic Study*, and other documents that associate trafficking and the borders/north region present diverse and inconsistent definitions of "trafficking" and a significant lack of empirical evidence and data to justify the interventions they demand. As has been shown by authors such as Grupo Davida (2005), Kempadoo (2005, 2007), Agustin (2007), Piscitelli (2008), Doezema (2010), Blanchette and Silva (2012), O`Connell Davidson (2012), this appears to be a tradition in the production of data and public information about trafficking in Brazil and the world. It seems to become critical when used to produce certain discourses, policies and emotions about places or regions considered to be marginal territories of the State or modernization projects. Despite this, the book and diagnostic study were rapidly disseminated and have been heavily used in processes

12 See for example the letter from the NGO ADEH in Santa Catarina: http://siteadeh.wix.com/adeh#!pedido-de-retificao-enafron/c1hl

of "awareness raising" about anti-trafficking in the Amazon.[13] In fact, a Spanish translation of the report was used as part of a "training" at the beginning of 2015 in the Colombian city of Leticia (on the border with Brazil).

Such were the public policies and discourses that circulated in Brazil connecting "human trafficking" and Amazonian "borders" up until the end of 2013. These policies and public discourses structured the field of possibilities which the Catholic Church encountered in Tabatinga in 2013 as it prepared its 2014 Fraternity Campaign.

The day trafficking arrived at the border: the 2014 Fraternity Campaign

From November 2010 to November 2013, trafficking discourses did not stand out in the narratives of the government agents who, on paper, would be responsible for the topic, nor it was present in the talk of most of the people who participated in the local/transborder sex markets.[14] In the explanations of some of the military, civil and religious agents of governmentality in Tabatinga interviewed at the end of 2013 and beginning of 2014, "human trafficking" appeared primarily associated with Haitian migration in Tabatinga (through narratives about coyotes).[15] In addition to this human trafficking was mentioned in two contexts in interviews and conversations I conducted in 2013. First, it was mentioned by an armed forces official referencing a "slave labour" incident among Peruvians logging wood along the Javari River on the border of Brazil and Peru that resulted in "robbery of riches" (referring as much to wood as the humanitarian and health assistance that the

13 Regarding these processes see: Hoffmann 2015

14 On the triple border there is a sex market that is quite broad and diverse, in the form of wide reaching "sexual economies" (Cabezas 2009) in which prostitution (houses and people that recognize themselves as linked to commercial sex *work* and are recognized as such socially) occupy a smaller space in relationship to other more diffuse forms of "transactional sex" (Hunter 2002) or "tactical sex" (Cabezas 2009). The only four or five brothels that exist (that are recognized) are quite precarious, small and located in the Brazilian side (Tabatinga). The open and diffuse participation of male, female, gay and transsexual adolescents in these "sexual economies" is important and socially signaled. I conducted fieldwork in brothels and with adolescents that practiced "transactional sex" (Olivar 2013; 2014).

15 About the Haitian migration to Brazil, much of which passes through the Amazon, see: Silva (2013), Viera (2014) and Handerson (2015).

Army lends to 'foreigners' in cases of emergency). Second, it was mentioned by female agents from social services and the Catholic Church's Pastoral of Human Mobility regarding the "sexual exploitation" of adolescents and the "prostitution of girls". Lastly, it is important to note that, in Leticia, on the Colombian side, the story is relatively different, as given its larger state infrastructure and the tourist economy, "trata" (human trafficking in Spanish) appeared related to concerns about sex tourism, Colombian regulations of sex work and interpretations of "sexual exploitation" as "trata" due to the ease of cross-border mobility.

This background contrasts sharply with changes that began in the second half of 2013. In September 2013, the Outpost for Humanized Care of Migrants in Tabatinga[16] was inaugurated just a few steps from the border. Even though it didn't appear to be fully operational, it marked an institutional architectural presence of anti-trafficking and, consequently, established grounds to mobilize a political agenda. On December 2, 2013, in the context of a presentation of partial results of the Amazon Gender Violence Watch Program[17] in Benjamin Constant, a Brazilian municipality near Tabatinga, Laura Lowenkron, a researcher from PAGU, gave a talk whose perspective was befitting of some of the Brazilian academy's critiques of anti-trafficking discourses. From her ethnography of Federal Police agents, she showed the big lack of "concrete" evidence and data about human trafficking, and the political pressure coming from Human Rights agents and Justice officials to produce "cases" (Lowenkron 2014). It was the first time that human trafficking had been featured in any of the Watch's activities; it was not part of the program's systematic review foci and had never appeared in the data collected.

16 According to the Ministry of Justice's site, "The Outposts for Humanized Care of Migrants [Postos Avanzados de Atendimento Humanizado ao Migrante] are situated in the principal locations of entry and exit from Brazil, to receive people who have been deported and not-admitted, with an interdisciplinary team that develops a humanized care for these migrants identifying possible victims of human trafficking, and offering, in accordance with each case, care through a local network." See: http://www.justica.gov.br/sua-protecao/trafico-de-pessoas/redes-de-enfrentamento/postos-avancados.

17 Program in the Anthropology department at the Federal University of Amazonas that brings together extension, research and teaching to produce information about violence against women, and of which the PAGU Nucleus is a partner since 2012. See: http://pt-br.facebook.com/pages/Observat%C3%B3rio-da-Viol%C3%AAncia-de-G%C3%AAnero-no-Amazonas/618056044920044

After the talk ended, three people asked to speak, one of whom was a white woman linked to federal health services in the municipality. She criticized the talk, saying that one shouldn't banalize the violence suffered by trafficking victims, and mentioned a "skill building workshop and training" about Human Trafficking that took place in Tabatinga the weekend before. She became emotional as she talked about how trafficking should be incorporated as a "terrible form" of violence against women. She said that she learned a lot in the training and that "in fact" there was a lot of trafficking that affects many women, and especially girls, in Tabatinga.

The next day, the Watch's activities began with a panel of authorities that included a female community leader, who was an important local human rights activist and self-declared feminist with a strong influence in local politics. She presented trafficking as a form of violence against women, associating it with prostitution and drug trafficking (especially to "mules" who would be forced or "convinced" to transport drugs). She referred back to the training over the weekend, in which a Colombian researcher from Leticia had presented data about trafficking and sexual exploitation of girls who went to Santa Rosa and came back "the next morning destroyed, drunk, and cut". For this community leader, human trafficking needed to be a central part of everyone's agenda. She spoke personally with the local commanders of the Border Security Strategy (a special force of Amazonas Military Police—ESFRON acronym in Portuguese) and the Brazilian Navy in an urgent manner, about intensifying the surveillance specifically on Peruvians and on girls' mobility across the river.

It was then that we found out that the "training" referred to was the *2014 Fraternity Campaign Training Course: Fraternity and Human Trafficking*, of the National Bishops Commission in Brazil, organized by the Diocese from Alto Solimões,[18] with participation from "representatives of the Churches [Catholic] of Letícia, Santa Rosa and Islandia". According to the material disseminated in

18 According to people linked to the Campaign, this is an initiative of the International Church Organization, the Vatican and the International Union of General Superiors, which without a doubt exemplifies the large alliances between non-religious and Christian humanitarianisms, and between the powerful transnational organizations that manage and populations. See: http://www.cnbb.org.br/campanhas/fraternidade/12900-cnbb-divulga-cartaz-e-os-subsidios-da-campanha-da-fraternidade-2014-fraternidade-e-trafico-humano

Tabatinga in December 2013, the campaign's objective was to "Sensitize people regarding how human trafficking victims' dignity is violated, being barbarically exploited in life and work, be it in the sex market, be it in agricultural or industrial productive activities. Frequently, human trafficking is linked to a phenomenon of migration and illegal and precarious permanence in the country" (Diocese 2013). This document revealed how once again an imaginary about *migration/permanence*, the Amazon and borders, mobilizes emotional affirmations that are abstracted from data and arguments in statements such as "the Amazon is vulnerable to the exploitation of women, children and adolescents" and "in Tabatinga, Leticia and border cities, reality becomes even harsher". And thus it was through the 2014 Fraternity Campaign that trafficking *arrived* at the border in Tabatinga at the end of 2013.

The presentation of the Watch's results occurred during a campaign "for the end of violence against women", which included two visits to Ticuna[19] indigenous communities near the city of Benjamin Constant. I had the opportunity to go along on one of the visits, which was about a penal legislative training session on domestic violence against women, and health, public security and human trafficking. It was led by the two women previously mentioned, and included the participation of local workers in the fields of health, social work, rights, public security, among others. The training occurred in a community meeting room on December 4, 2013, and was attended primarily by indigenous adolescents and women. Several of the talks were translated into Ticuna.

At certain moments during the talks the presenters spoke to the women as if they were children (using infantilizing language); this performance, and the presenters' "transformed" and "non-indigenous" perspective gave the talks a heavy civilizing bias (Elias 2000). The local indigenous culture appeared as an important explanatory variable for violence against women, at the same time that the "new laws" (Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking) were presented as opportunities for "discipline" and necessary changes. For example, one of the white women, a Health Services agent, who led the "talks", made a point of telling the indigenous women that they should make better use of the *Bolsa Familia* (Family

19 Ticuna is the largest ethnic category in the region and one of the most populous in the Amazon, with more than 40,000 people (Ricardo and Ricardo 2011).

Grant—monthly stipend for poor families) by buying a stove to avoid cooking over fire or a washing machine to avoid *having to* go to the river to wash clothes. Hence these kinds of cultural knowledge and practices were turned into behaviors associated with gender violence.

A nun linked to the Fraternity Campaign led a course on trafficking during the educational activities in the indigenous village. The content about Human Trafficking was fundamentally centered on definitions promoted by the Palermo Protocol, complemented by Catholic references and language, and by some biblical quotes, such as "'It is for freedom that Christ liberated us' (Gl 5,1)".[20] In addition, the content followed the hegemonic rhetoric on the topic: "people transformed into merchandise", "unknown crime", "invisible violence", "networks of organized crime", "XXI century slavery", "three of the largest illicit economies . . .". While presenting "modalities of trafficking", the nun easily slipped into other topics not directly related to trafficking modalities, such as indigenous cultural practices and the importance of obeying "non-indigenous" law. For example, she used a broad notion of sexual exploitation (that included "pedophilia", and disseminating sexual photos without the permission of those involved); degrading, forced and slave labour (without the migratory component); domestic servitude and forced marriage to "later take the person to another country" ("something very common in our villages"); and illegal adoption. The association with drug trafficking was also strongly present.

One of the women activists concluded the Sister's presentation, turning once again to infantilizing language to reinforce the drama, as if the Sister's presentation had not been sufficiently explicit, pleading or terrifying.

> I accompanied a case, *just that it wasn't of a Brazilian, it was a foreigner, of a little girl who was sent out there, there in the house of an aunt that lived there, the Colombian aunt that lived in Colombia and was married to the uncle who was Peruvian . . .* there the 9-year old girl was raped by her uncle, who had AIDS and this girl got AIDS from her uncle . . . What has to be clear is that if we do

20 'É para a liberdade que Cristo nos libertou' (Galatians 5,1)" was the campaign slogan (our translation), see the website of the Brazilian Conference of Bishop http://www.cnbb.org.br/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=13702:cnbb-disponibiliza-material-da-cf-2014&catid=16&Itemid=191.

> this we are putting our children at risk . . . This is not to say that if we send our children to their uncle's house this is going to happen, right?

If the city, the law and the "non-indigenous world" were treated as clear references to "change" and improved life conditions, "the Peruvians" (and in a lesser sense, "the Colombians") were absolutely constructed as referents of crime, threats, insalubrity and violence. To my horror, during that visit, between private spaces and public talks, the agents responsible for the training sessions made more than ten accusatory comments about "Peruvians" (of which two included references to Colombians), including some jokes about the Mayor of the border town Islandia (Peru). The accusations about *the Peruvians* related to "human trafficking" and "exploitation" and included the lack of sanitary conditions, carelessness, slave labour, contraband, irregular migration, domestic violence, and of course, drug trafficking. Some comments were extremely harsh.

Human trafficking thus arrived in Tabatinga on December 1-5, 2013, installing itself in places, languages (Portuguese, Spanish, and Ticuna), ethnicities and institutional agendas that, until then, had been virtually unaffected by this discourse. Its arrival was an outcome of a partnership promoted and made possible by the Catholic Church and supported by local agents of health, social services, human rights, children rights and women's rights. Together, they rapidly gestated public "need" around the topic.

Under pressure from church agents and in coordination with a Social Services Specialized Service Center, Child Services Protection[21] and the Municipal Secretariat of Tourism (that is, connecting "sexual exploitation" with "sex tourism"), the workers in the Outpost improvised "awareness raising activities" in schools, and massive "pamphleting" on the border at the airport and Tabatinga's port. All of this happened within the framework of expectations generated in preparation for the World Cup, as according to local understanding, Tabatinga would be a "passageway" for an enormous flow of Colombians on their way to Manaus.

21 State institutions that operate locally and are focused on offering social assistance to people in "special conditions of vulnerability" (the first) and to protect the human rights of children and adolescents (the second).

In March 2014, the Diocese held an event to publicly present the Campaign and discuss the issue with authorities. The meeting included talks from various branches of local power, such as the State Public Ministry, Federal Police, the Catholic Church, universities, and Child Protection Services, among others. They made free-flowing presentations of feelings, ideas and motives surrounding "human trafficking", stating what they considered should be done to confront it. It was a space of uncritical reproduction of a lot of the information disseminated through the national mass media about the topic. Demonstrating tension between "State/politics" and "family/culture", a federal employee argued that the region had a level of "cultural misery" that led people to become involved in certain practices. The then coordinator of the Outpost for Humanized Care of Migrants affirmed that, "The big problem is not in the absence of public policies or fragile public policies, but the evil in society. Because those who traffic, who exploit, and who abuse are not the policies, but the people". Following this lead, the meeting identified a concrete target around which there was general consensus: to close the dance club Tabu, in Tabatinga, which was held up as a site of "child prostitution" and the sale of illicit drugs (and which was finally closed in September 2015).

Police operations at various levels to "capture" adolescents in "situations of risk" became much more frequent and larger in Tabatinga in 2014 and 2015. Often discursively associated with drug trafficking, one of the more recent operations resulted in the "capture" of more than 100 children in one night to be "delivered" to their parents,[22] all with the approval of the Child Protection Services. My data does not permit me to affirm that there is a direct causal link between the "awareness raising" and repressive actions, yet it evidences the creation of a "context" (Wagner 2010) of conditions that make this particular form of anti-trafficking/exploitation possible.[23]

22 See: "Polícia apreende 60 . . ." in http://acritica.uol.com.br/noticias/Manaus-Amazonas-Amazonia-Policia-adolescentes-estabelecimentos-Tabatinga-AM_0_1292870758.html and "Três colombianos são presos . . ." in http://acritica.uol.com.br/noticias/Policia-Militar-operacao-Tabatinga-Segura_0_1354664528.html.

23 In *Invenção da Cultura* [Invention of Culture] Roy Wagner understands "context" not as a background that provides meaning, but rather, "any handful of symbolic elements that occur together in some way (. . . .) it is an environment in which

During 2014 and 2015, the Fraternity Campaign was transformed through various awareness-raising meetings and trainings through the "Network of confronting human trafficking on the triple border", led by a Catholic missionary coming from Brazil's south region (it is worth noting the presence of non-local people and foreigners from diverse regions).[24] These meetings were organized by a transborder coalition of missionaries, nuns and non-religious people, and had a strong Catholic-humanist (Schuch 2009) bent and connotation.

The drastic contrast between this encounter of considerable forces and interests on behalf of the historical and contemporary protagonists of the Amazon borderization (churches, defense and security forces, non-governmental organizations, civilizing and development agents) and the scenes that open this article illuminate the large shifts in the size and scope of "anti-trafficking" related state interventions between 2010 and 2014. What in 2010 was a local visit from two Civil Police officers, in 2014 was a spectacular, broad State-level operation involving various workforces and federal agencies that integrated security, border, migratory control and labour policies. It was an unprecedented event for the brothel where the 2014 operation occurred, and for many other businesses in Tabatinga. During these years things moved from a local surveillance of national sexual morals (the "sexual exploitation of children and adolescents" and the presence of Brazilian women in a Colombian brothel) to the national surveillance of local/transborder sexual morals (as seen in the "rescue of (young) Colombians forced" to prostitute themselves within an international context of human "trafficking"). If, by December 2014, the effects of the *arrival* of trafficking on the border had not arrived at formalized prostitution, the news surrounding the police operation at the Tabatinga *Colombian* brothel indicated that the panorama was changing. In particular, it signaled that adult prostitution that was associated with migration, and organized as labour, could gradually become the focus of border security attention, or the expansion of a kind of

symbolic elements are related to one another within it, and are formed by the act of relating them" (Wagner 2010, 77-78).

24 I am especially thankful to Blanca Yagüe, who gave me information and written and áudio-visual registers, and also Flávia Melo Cunha, Patrícia Carvalho Rosa and Írison Neves for the collective reflection and for always being on top of events and information.

rescuing/criminalizing human rights discourse present at the core of anti-trafficking/exploitation model, and as such, repressed.[25]

Effects of power in fabricating trafficking/exploitation and the border

The genealogy of the intertwining of trafficking-Amazon-borders also demonstrates some of the real and potential effects of power over the local/transborder population. While the Fraternity Campaign bases its definition of trafficking on a Catholic interpretation of Palermo Protocol, the local re-elaborations and uses of it follow a path of the opinions, political and religious interests and the moral emotions of the agents. As such, they reinforce, in what could be considered as a perverse "indigenization of modernity" (Sahlins 1999),[26] local juridical-political and administrative categories, paths and structures of power and meaning. In this scenario, three areas in which "trafficking" reveals its primary disciplinary, civilizing and biopolitical effects can be identified: mobility/foreign presence, prostitution and "local cultures".

In Tabatinga, "trafficking" appears only tangentially associated with tourism (through its relationship with Leticia) and is much more easily associated with local logics of visibility, stigma and contempt regarding the Peruvian presence "in Brazil". Although one can consider this as similar to a classic use/effect of anti-trafficking policies (meaning, the repression and control of poor people's migration in search of better opportunities), the image mobilized around "the Peruvians" constitutes a particular shift. The production of "the Peruvians" as a threat does not correspond

25 This, in the sense of "Militarized humanitarianism meets carceral feminism" (Bernstein 2010).

26 In response to the narratives of the uncontrollable expansion of the capitalist world-system, Sahlins counters with narratives about how cultures reclaim their "culture", not in terms of nostalgic maintenance but in terms of a meaning structure that is capable of adapting and reinventing that which comes from outside while following the norms, traditions, and local desires. "Rather than a refusal of the commodities and relations of the world-system, this more often means what the Enga sang about, a desire to indigenize them" (Sahlins 1997, x). In our case, the "modernity" discourse associated with human rights and the anti-trafficking/exploitation campaign was appropriated and adapted in local terms –indigenized- by local agents of governmentality (who are part of the "culture", after all), reproducing positions of power and conditions of meaning.

to a federal policy of closing the borders, a migratory limitation or the extraordinary presence of foreigners in the city. On the contrary, it seems to be a local reaction by certain agents invested in nationalistic and civilizing discourses regarding a border they perceive to be "extremely open" and the practical and programmatic ease with which the Peruvian population (notably poorer and more "indigenous") circulates and inhabits the *Brazilian* territory. In addition, it is strange to consider "the Peruvians" (as a politically imagined population) in terms of *migration*; they historically inhabit the territory and materialize different forms of otherness seen as being inferior or backward, in addition to foreign. It is their extremely near and ordinary "difference" in commerce, daily life, memory, and genealogies that is seen as needing to be marked and controlled (Campos 2012; Olivar, Cunha and Rosa 2015).

The repressive effect on prostitution of the strategic and slippery use of "children" and "trafficking" is not new in anti-trafficking discourses (Ho 1995; Agustin 2007; Kempadoo 2007; Piscitelli 2008, 2012; Doezema 2010; Blanchette and Silva 2012); nonetheless, in Tabatinga, it has at least two particular meanings. The first and most evident is the one seen through the case of the Colombian brothel, that is, the repression or control of adult *foreign* women participating in organized commercial sex. Different from other cases, however, in Tabatinga this has had a larger effect in the media and not (until 2015) in the concrete organization of sex work and female prostitutes' lives. The second one is that which emerges from the "prostitution of girls". "The prostitution of girls" on this triple border translates into the composite device trafficking/exploitation: as due to the broad participation of adolescents in "sexual economies" (Cabezas 2009), diverse agents consider local prostitution to be fundamentally of minors ("sexual exploitation") and "transnational". This "exploitation", however, is not exceptional. It is not concentrated in brothels, it is not structurally organized and people who practice it do not "assume" an identity as prostitutes. Rather, as those in child protection services know well, it is organized in diffuse friendship, kinship, and affect networks that facilitate more or less systematic encounters and transactions within the ordinary flows and spaces of the city (Olivar 2014; see Mujica 2013 too). In this sense, the effect of police operations to close bars and nightclubs frequented by poor and

ethnically marked adolescents and to arrest minors to prevent drug trafficking/consumption and sexual exploitation "preventively"—including the repercussion in the media—is more about the visibility, repression, control and governing of determinate socialities and sexualities of young local people and strongly marked by class, color, ethnicity, nationality and certain practices that incessantly cross moral, legal, sexual, ethnic, and territorial borders. To put it into local terms: the practical effect is not the repression of prostitution, but rather the repression of "partying", "putaria" (loosely translated as fucking around) and "trends", social structural possibilities historically used to access alliances, pleasure and money (Olivar 2013, 2014).

On the other hand, it is worth affirming that this "prostitution of girls" has a strong ethnic and national mark: the most referred to girl "victims" are either indigenous, Colombian or Brazilian. In the case of the indigenous, the concern shifts to a series of multi-faceted civilizing investments and tutelage of sexual, economic, mobility and kinship practices. In the case of the nation, once again "Peru" assumes a space of risk, as the Peruvian island Santa Rosa has been discursively privileged as the place for "visibility" of this prostitution, as some agents said. This has translated into requests, on behalf of some of the governmentality agents, for more surveillance of river mobility, especially among young (sexualized, ethnicized) women. In other words, what we see here is the local agents' production of a border and identification policy promoted by anti-trafficking and guided by normative structures and ideas surrounding sexuality, gender, generation, nation and ethnicity.

Finally, a heterogeneous rhetoric surrounding "local cultures" is quite relevant and expresses itself through the generalized opinions contained in documents and the local development of these policies. This can be seen, on one hand, through references to "indigenous cultures" or "Amazon cultures" (their sexualities, kinship forms, physical particularities, the victimization that they have been historically submitted to), and on the other hand, regarding sexual, affective, conjugal, and economic relationships of local women with the military, commercial agents, and drug traffickers, in particular in urban contexts. It is within this frame that "violence against women", besides sexual exploitation, has been an important agent and space for the discursive production of trafficking in this transborder region. It is like trafficking, but with

a broader reach that includes humanisms, feminisms, militarisms (Bernstein 2010; Kempadoo 2015); even local feminisms. On the other hand, the struggle against the *sexual exploitation* of adolescents, which generates little interest at the state level, when illuminated and politically treated as *trafficking* makes it the object of federal attention, border policy operations, potential bi-national agreements and public awareness through the Fraternity Campaign.

Considering everything, when we remember that "trafficking" and "rescue" were just notions of the more public and spectacular dimension of the media story about the police operation, they seem much less important or urgent in the judicial field than in the political/moral field, and in the construction of public imaginations about the border, prostitution and the State's own actions. In the same way, despite the media stories about the "rescue" and the creation of a "network of confrontation", "human trafficking" does not appear to have effectively penetrated the agendas of State bodies such as the Federal Police, Child Protection Service, among others, nor does it affect daily mobility across the river and border. It seems that it is in the fields of "awareness raising" and imagination, in the moral panics over young and "foreign" people, and/or in new potential tools of governmentality and control, that anti-trafficking grows through the efficacious use of religious language, spectacles of grandiose police operations and media dissemination.

In summary, the imaginary of these territories is a privileged and efficacious space of power—as Kempadoo (2004) presents in terms of the exoticized sexualization of the Caribbean—and can be seen in at least two ways. On the one hand, interventions in the sexual and gendered dimensions of the nation, position international border territories, particularly the Amazon, as "emblematic" objects for security, defense, integration, and development policies. It is through the fundamental role of anti-trafficking/anti-exploitation of human/children/women's bodies and rights that the *borders* penetrate the spaces of sexualities, the family, cultural intimacy, humanitarianism, and from there, vindicate surveillance. On the other hand (as was seen in practically all of the documents analyzed), exploiting the mythical and dark image of the Amazon (Pineda 2011; Serje 2005), gives birth to horror stories of victimized populations without control, otherness-

translated-into-vulnerabilities, and "open borders", among others, that are continually renewed. It is in this way that *trafficking* gains the attention of the moral, political, and economic interests and with it, an abundance of materialities and corporalities that have a mythic narrative as their only, and sufficient, proof.

Final Considerations

To conclude, I would like to quickly highlight some of the characteristics and particularities of the re-elaboration of anti-trafficking discourse and practices in the Brazilian Amazon, and more specifically, Tabatinga.

In the panorama presented, it is worth emphasizing the protagonist role of the Catholic Church in the *arrival*/capillary construction of "trafficking" on the triple Amazon border that evidences (1) the power of the institution in the region, (2) the clear affirmation of the Catholic Church to lead the political, moral, and economic anti-trafficking circuit[27] and, (3) the full availability of trafficking as an object in the broader Brazilian public sphere as a political, moral, and economic resource, marking a new shift in research about "trafficking". That is, the principles and autonomy of the Fraternity Campaign in relation to the State reveal the lack of clear commitment, as much in terms of the knowledge production about social realities, as in the enforcement of penal laws or international norms.

Still, the efforts of the local church in this sense, noticeable since 2007, were not enough. To be effective within the conditions created by recent shifts in anti-trafficking discourses in Brazil and their encounter with transnational, federal and state border policies, it also needed a strong investment of economic, human and discursive resources from a national central order and the participation of the Church's international institutional structure.

The emotional encounter between trafficking and the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents seems to consummate a *modus operandi* in Brazil (Blanchette and Silva 2012; Luna Salles

27 This participation has been especially highlighted by the Network Um Grito pela Vida (A Shout for Life), that mobilizes important quantities of resources for "awareness raising" about human trafficking (Hoffmann 2015; Luna Salles 2015). See: http://gritopelavida.blogspot.com/ Agustin (2007) widely explores this "rescue industry" that in a provocative way, Bernstein has referred to as "sexual economies".

2015; Piscitelli 2015b). In our case, this political composition is complemented by borderization policies and those combatting violence against women, empirically constituting a composite and multifunctional governmentality device in border contexts with strong colonizing and nationalistic undertones.

In this sense, "migration" and "prostitution" as privileged fields affected by anti-trafficking in the world (Kempadoo 2005; Doezema 2010; O'Connell Davidson 2012; Piscitelli 2012, 2013; Silva, Blanchette, and Bento 2013; among others) acquire particular forms and open up other populations and dynamics, such as transborder youth mobility, Peruvian presence in Brazil, relationships with "military", local kinship production practices, among others. In this configuration, the "indigenous girls" acquire a special place as a representation of all vulnerabilities, and, as such, as a justification for federal tutelage and "need for change".

As previously mentioned, *trafficking* discourse has been a confusing mixture between a penal law and public security and human rights policy. Here we can see that in the massive national and transnational process of "awareness-raising", that included soap operas[28] and religious campaigns, *trafficking* acquired the form of a public political discourse that is highly aesthetic, moral and emotional. In this way, *trafficking* penetrated the public sphere of governmentality with force, making itself extremely available for a variety of agents whose most diverse interests find legitimacy and funding through it (Kempadoo 2015). In this process, as we saw in Tabatinga, its connection to judicial and political specificities, where we might say it originated, could be gradually abandoned.

Lastly, we can see how this unstable and mutant assemblage around trafficking is a useful device in local moral economies and systems of inequality. It produces and reproduces a mythical image of the Amazon region and its borders. This scenery is a clear image of the Amazonian borderization processes and the lasting effects and operation of historical colonial powers in Amazonia, which are not only circumscribed to military forces and commercial explorers, but also to "rescue", evangelization and "civilization" agents. How this assemblage participates in and profits from the production of

28 Between 2012 and 2013 the Brazilian biggest TV channel—Globo Televisão-casted a soap-opera named Salve Jorge. It was written with the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime as a propaganda for the mainstream ideas and fantasies about international human trafficking for sexual exploitation.

the "region" in terms of the need for a larger military and public security intervention, as well as development, rescue and "change of mindsets" is the defining particularity of our case and the larger question that needs more research.

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TRANSNATIONAL SEX WORKER ORGANIZING IN LATIN AMERICA: RedTraSex, Labour and Human Rights

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ABSTRACT

RedTraSex is a Latin American transnational network organizing sex workers to push back and challenge the persistent and leading narrative on sex work, labour and human trafficking. The presence of the network highlights the role of collective action needed to challenge laws and address the rights of sex workers across the region. Representing sex worker organizations in fifteen countries in the region, RedTraSex creates an alternate vision around organizing and affirming the rights of sex workers and they contribute to the formulation of an alternative to the language of human trafficking that is based in sex worker's own definitions, experiences and organizing. This research analyzes writings produced by RedTraSex, and qualitative interviews conducted with members of the Costa Rican sex worker organization, La Sala (The Living Room).

> "Nos parimios a nosotras mismas. Y, como todo parto, no fue facil ni silencioso."
> "We gave birth to ourselves. And, like all births, it was not easy or silent."-
> (RedTraSex 2007a, 19)

Establishing a Sex Worker Network in Latin America: RedTraSex

This article considers the importance of the international network of sex worker organizations in Latin America known as RedTraSex, a group that has invigorated collective sex worker organizing and training throughout the region. RedTraSex (Red de Mujeres Trabajadores Sexuales de Latino América Y El Caribe-Women's Network of Sex Workers of Latin America and the Caribbean), a network of sex worker organizations in fifteen countries in the region was founded in 1997 and formalized in 1999. The original plan for the network emerged from of a conference of sex worker organizations in Costa Rica in 1997. It is a network of organizations

from Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and the Dominican Republic. The executive regional secretary of RedTraSex is based in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The group is an active transnational network that organizes sex workers around various political issues, including labour and reproductive health. Furthermore, the organizers actively meet and participate in conferences throughout the region, as well as work independently in their local organizations to create unique sociopolitical organizing goals based on the needs of sex workers within each country.

The goal of RedTraSex is to "Augment the presence and visibility of organizations of female sex workers in political spaces and to make decisions at the national, regional and international level" (redtrasex.org/arNuestros Logros). RedTraSex is very political in orientation, and actively discusses and organizes around HIV/AIDS prevention, human rights, violence prevention, labour rights, machismo and gendered double standards. They actively distinguish the work they do as being with women who are of legal age who consent to work in the sex industry. They frame themselves as workers fighting for recognition and for an end to violence and coercion against sex workers. It is concerned with empowering workers through strengthening women's organizing, and in promoting an awareness of workers' human rights. It presents a different perspective on making sex workers visible as political agents. This insight on sex work organizing provides both a practical perspective and a theoretical insight on sex worker political development and social movement organizing. Consequently, by politics, I am referring to a broader understanding of political behavior, including participation in community organizations and social movements to smaller acts of informal organizing, as well as the established organizers, activists, and policy-makers who work with direct or extant issues related to prostitution. This also includes various types of resistance and workers' critical analysis about participation in local and international organizations.

The analysis I present here contributes to the scholarship on how sex workers organize politically and mobilize to engage human rights concepts and language to their political advantage. As RedTraSex explains, "We define ourselves as 'workers' because we

see ourselves as women who, without opportunities, we opt to get and maintain a living for our families by doing this work" (RedTraSex 2007a, 13). They fight for recognition of their work across Latin America and the Caribbean, noting that this visibility will put in place the legal protections for consenting workers, and will actually help women trafficked into prostitution to have criminal recourse for their experiences. They refuse to claim the notion of the helpless victim, instead opting to identify themselves as workers, recognizing that framing the work within a labour discourse matters to combating the institutional violence and stigma that perpetuates state violence against sex workers. Their work to increase the visibility of sex workers as workers, contributes to the formulation of an alternative to the language of human trafficking that frames sex workers as trafficking victims that need to be protected. Sex workers demand labour recognition and inclusion to create a political reality that is based in sex worker's own definitions, experiences and organizing. Sex work organizations pressure the state to include voices, like those of RedTraSex member organizations, in political debates. This is fundamental to policy change that seeks to include their perspectives, and sex workers' lived experiences, to address the kinds of violence and coercion that sex workers face, often called "trafficking". Furthermore, sex workers combat a global trafficking narrative that rarely consults actual sex workers before implementing policies that affect them (Cabezas 2000, Garofalo 2010, Lopez-Embury and Sanders 2009, Mukerjee 2006).

Historical discourse has framed the positioning of migrant and/or working women as either prostitutes or enslaved and trafficked women, interpretive frames that persist until the contemporary period. Historically, this was a fear of 'white slavery,' thought of as the kidnapping and prostituting of white women, shown through the express concern for women's purity, sexuality, and migration (Guy 1991). The literature on these women's forced or voluntary migrations highlights how fear of female prostitutes also extended into concerns about the purity and morality of white women broadly and internationally (Chapkis 2007). Historically, the startling tales of large numbers of "white women sold into ruin" were mostly unsubstantiated, but created a broad movement of organizers who worked to pressure governments for a response to the problem (Chapkis 2007).

Abolitionist arguments maintain that prostitution has a negative effect on women and should be eliminated and this perspective remains the most formally influential in a contemporary sense. However, critiques do exist that assert that international law does not recognize the distinction between forced and unforced prostitution (Schleifer 2006, 219). Some highlight how approaching prostitution with abolitionist aims results in framing of prostitutes through the lens of sexual deviance only for those who voluntarily enter sex work, and frames everyone else as victims. Prostitutes are then classed as diseased or un-diseased, as responsible or irresponsible, and thereby are framed as either deserving or undeserving of aid, rescue, or reform (Scott 2006, 227). Once protection becomes the aim, framing sex workers as needy powerless victims, they are often kept out of policy and decision-making circles around issues affecting their lives (Blanchette and Murray 2016). Sex worker organizations, which have emerged globally, like RedTraSex, and the many other organizations that exist in Latin America, have made this discourse more holistic. By demanding the rights of sex workers, or rather, by demanding that their rights be respected, as would be the human rights of any other citizen, RedTraSex has become a visible political entity within the region and has pushed sex workers to organize visibly in spaces that shape their lives.

Scholars have studied sex workers as social movement organizers and deal with the nuances they address in their labour, while also asserting agency through their work and informal or political organizing (Chapkis 1997, Cruz 2012, Jenness 1993, Majic 2010, Cabezas 2009, Berger 2004, Kempadoo and Doezema 1998, MODEMU and Murray 2002, Rivers-Moore 2009, Blanchette and Murray 2016). Organizing publicly, given the stigma and discrimination still often associated with sex work, is an indication of a willingness to engage with the politics associated with prostitution(RedTraSex 2007a, 2007b). In the case of Latin America numerous sex worker organizations begin to coalesce in the 1980s. Notable among some of the earliest organizations were the Association of Autonomous Workers "June 22" in Ecuador (1982), the Brazilian Network of Sex Workers (1987), the Association of Professional Female Prostitutes in Uruguay (1986), Davida in Brazil (1992), La Sala of Costa Rica (1994), Association of Argentine

Prostitutes (AMMAR) (1994), the Movement of United Women in the Dominican Republic (1997), and COIN Centro de Orientación e Investigación Integral in the Dominican Republic (1996) (Abad et al. 1998, Blanchette and Murray 2016, Kempadoo and Doezema 1998, Kempadoo 1999, MODEMU and Murray 2002).

The sustainability of an organization depends on maintaining local support. Della Porta and Diani (1999, 88) discuss the connectedness people experience with the group noting that, "To identify with a movement also means to have feelings of solidarity towards people with whom one is not, in most cases, linked by direct personal contacts, but with whom one shares, however, aspirations and values". This helps build membership in the movements (Cabezas 2009, RedTraSex, 2007b). For sex worker organizations to grow, they need this alternative framing to attract membership, as well funding and attention from outside organizations. A Member of Coyote USA notes the difficulty of doing this:

> A major factor has always been the difficulty in obtaining funds, either from foundations or the government, to continue public education and/or service-oriented projects. A second equally important factor is that speaking out about prostitutes' rights when you are a prostitute involves a good deal of personal risk; it is difficult to sustain the effort without financial and political support. For many people and organizations, prostitution is still an extremely controversial issue (COYOTE, National Task Force on Prostitution 1987, 292).

In identifying with the above struggles that sex workers face, and in using this knowledge to work in communities both locally and transnationally, organizers are able to cultivate solidarity, develop a more unified struggle, and nurture support from the local community.

An important part of examining sex worker organizing and activism is through the exploration of texts written by sex workers. In this article, I examine RedTraSex documents, including the books *A Movement of High Heels: Reflections and Activities to Strengthen Our Organizations* (2007) and *10 Years of Action: The Experience of the Network of Sex Workers in Latin America and the Caribbean* (2007) to look at organizing and empowerment strategies. These add uniquely to the corpus of literature produced by sex workers and

sex worker organizations (see, for example Cabezas 2000, Cabezas 2009, Chapkis 1997, Delacoste and Alexander 1987, Kempadoo and Doezema 1998, MODEMU and Murray 2002, Taormino et al. 2013). Since I believe close examination of texts by sex workers will only improve debates on the subject, I include analysis of RedTraSex texts, to highlight the important role sex workers have in shaping conversations in social, academic and policy circles.

This article also explores empowerment and leadership development in organizations via the entry point of founding RedTraSex members, Argentine organization AMMAR (Association of Argentine Prostitutes, founded in 1994) and Costa Rican sex worker organization, La Sala (The Living Room, founded in 1994). Both organizations were instrumental in the 1997 meeting of sex worker organizations in Latin America and the subsequent development of RedTraSex, and consequently both groups have influenced the development of sex worker organizers throughout the region. AMMAR was one of the first organizations in Latin America to successfully organize into a workers union in 1995, a major accomplishment that established a blueprint on how to integrate sex workers into the labour movement. This project includes interviews with La Sala activists who have worked with RedTraSex, as well as from sex workers who work near the organization.[2] I explore RedTraSex, AMMAR, La Sala and associated network organizations in order to examine the following question:[3] what are the strategies used to organize and empower sex workers? In considering the relationship between separate organizations and the larger network, I turn to La Sala's connection

2 This is a UCLA IRB approved study with a verbal consent process. All sex worker participant names have been changed throughout this paper. RPIL Study, IRB # 11-003405-CR-00002.

3 I spent seven months over two trips working with La Sala from January to June of 2012, and in August 2013 where I conducted 40 interviews with current and former female sex workers. I made this specific choice because of my concern with women's organizing and political engagement processes. While the majority of women were Costa Rican, I also interviewed Dominican, Peruvian, and Nicaraguan women. The organizers of La Sala graciously offered me space in their loft office space to conduct interviews. Interviews ranged in length from twenty minutes to one and a half hours, though most interviews lasted between 45-60 minutes. With an average age of fifty, most participants are mothers and many are grandmothers. They represent many self-described race/color categories, including self-described categories of *blanca* (white), *trigueña* (curly hair, brownish), *morena (*brunette, dark hair and skin), *mulatta* (mixed,

to RedTraSex, and each of their goals to develop politically engaged sex worker leaders throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

The study uniquely highlights the transnational worker led push to frame sex workers as workers and organizers in Latin American and Caribbean countries. AMMAR and La Sala, as members of RedTraSex, represent various network concepts and ideas about sex work, human rights and labour. A better understanding of these groups will help to drive a more comprehensive political understanding of how people who are often framed as powerless assert positions of power within their socio-political contexts and push back against being framed at either end of the spectrum as people to be saved or avoided.

A Sex Worker Union in Latin America: AMMAR

Argentina is the home of an organization of sex workers called AMMAR (Association of Argentine Prostitutes) who have organized and been accepted into a union, which inspires women throughout the rest of the region by showing the possibilities of labour organizing (Hardy 2010). AMMAR's role within RedTraSex highlights the political gains that the network has achieved, highlighting an organization that has formed a union. AMMAR joins other sex worker organizations who have successfully unionized like exotic dancers who unionized in San Francisco, CA, sex workers who successfully unionized in Australia, in Paraguay where they successfully unionized and achieved their rights to retirement and a pension, and in Mexico, where La Union Única organizes sex workers and surrounding auxiliary workers (Cabezas 2000).

In the case of AMMAR, formed in 1994, the organization was able to integrate itself into the Central de Trabajadores Argentinos (Central Argentine Union—CTA) in 1995, a workers' union in the country. This provided a huge boost to the organization, helping to legitimize the sex workers' concerns as labourers amongst other workers. They have been mobilized against police abuse of sex

African/European), *and* mestiza (mixed race- Indigenous/European). They have a broad range of educational attainment, though the majority of respondents did not complete high school. Many women described migrating to the capital from regions across the country, highlighting stories of agricultural and rural families, and the need to migrate to larger cities for greater access to work.

workers. They became galvanized after the 2003 murder of a fellow sex worker compañera, organizer, and general secretary of AMMAR, Sandra Cabrera, who had spoken out against police violence, bad treatment and extortion of sex workers (Hardy 2010). While a police officer was originally held for her murder, he was not prosecuted for the crime.

As an organization, AMMAR has had political success: they have met with the former President of the country Néstor Kirchner on the rights of sex workers and were instrumental in his acknowledging and signing a decree on the discrimination experienced by sex workers since they are not receiving social security or retirement benefits (Reynaga 2005, 4). They have participated in international meetings on HIV/AIDS, where AMMAR leader Elena Reynaga was the first sex worker speaker to be invited to speak at a session of the World AIDS conference in Mexico in 2008 (RedTraSex pamphlet). They have participated in high-level hearings and meetings with United Nations branches, including United Nations AIDS, who have also provided program funding. Representatives from RedTraSex have traveled throughout Latin America to speak on issues of health and HIV/AIDS. Reynaga has become an international figure who has represented the organization in various political spaces, with heads of states, within International Organizations, and conferences on HIV/AIDS. She reflects on the process of unionizing:

> In March of 1995, we became part of the CTA, and this was the turning point in our struggle to gain acceptance, recognition and clout. It was of great help in our combat against police violence, since we now had the backing of this large federation of labour unions, and when we lodged complaints of violence and harassment, the complaints were not only signed by AMMAR, but also by the CTA (Reynaga 2005, 3).

The weight of having a labour union behind sex workers is significant in their fight for recognition of human rights and labour conditions of sex workers. The presence of the union makes it slightly easier to challenge the growing international rhetoric and anxieties around sex trafficking, arguing that not all prostitutes are sex trafficking victims, and that as workers, they must be included at the policy-making table.

The Politics of Representation: Who Leads?

There are growing numbers of sex work organizations, including those made up of advocates and sex workers, and this distinction of who makes up the base of the organization can potentially affect the focus and goals of the organization. The question of sex worker involvement and leadership is a point of focus for RedTraSex. In *A High Heels Movement* (2007b), RedTraSex highlights a strong distinction between NGOs and groups made up by sex workers. In defining differences between sex worker advocates and organizations made up by sex workers, they argue:

> We are the base of the organizations. We call it this because the sex workers are the base, and from this arise the direction of the organizations: we, the people that live the problems, decide to be the protagonists of our destiny, taking it in our hands to transform it. We form the organization and direct it. We decide what issues to work on and how to work on it. Only in these base organizations is the voice really our own. (RedTraSex 2007b, 180).

The women of RedTraSex acknowledge the difference between having advocates who are concerned with various issues sex workers deal with and the empowering of sex workers themselves. RedTraSex does not advocate against sex worker advocates, and notes that, "Some [organizations] have stifled us, and others have sincere concern. They can be very good people, but they will never be true voices of sex workers" (2007b, 180). Advocates might have positive intentions, but may or may not work directly with sex workers on the policies they choose to engage or support. RedTraSex also speaks to broader differences between sex worker and advocate-led leadership, including issues like the ability to control funds, make the important decisions about which projects to pursue, and control how they form and present their identity to the local community. The text provides a critique about mixed organizations: "Some of us participated in the past in organizations FOR sex workers. But we noticed that we didn't take a leap. Like one compañera said 'It's been years since we've been going to trainings. How many workshops have they given us and still we have not begun to fly with our own strength?'" (ibid. 182). This highlights a sentiment about the mixed groups whereby organiza-

tions for sex workers might come to stifle leadership and project development on the part of sex workers.

Furthermore, RedTraSex frames itself within a labour debate "The base organization presents an identity that brings us closer to working people: in forming an organization OF sex workers we are an organization of workers that fight for our rights next to all other working people" (RedTraSex 2007b, 181). Not only does RedTraSex mobilize sex workers, but they are politicizing sex workers. In *A High Heels Movement* (2007b) each chapter is followed by a series of activities, icebreakers, and conversation starters that meeting participants can use to address how to organize and work together. This is an attempt to both educate and provide a space for individual and group development through engaging activities. RedTraSex frames itself and its work in solidarity and an insistence on the inherent human rights and dignity of sex workers, challenging the status quo around sex work. It is actively concerned with discussing gender roles, machismo, worker's rights, and other systematic issues that affect workers (RedTraSex 2007b). The network asserts the need for the organizers to be both brave and independent in their organizing, offering advice that:

> In RedTraSex, the organizations of sex workers now are not only health promoters. From our organizations of base, we do politics. What does it mean, "we do politics"? We are not in any political party, nor do we tell our comrades who to vote for in the presidential elections. To do politics means that we look for positioning and political action to achieve change (RedTraSex 2007b, 191).

The organizers are developing a way to have other sex workers think of themselves directly as political actors with direct effects on political outcomes. This does affect how organizers are able to balance work traditionally connected with sex worker activism, like HIV prevention, to responding to new opportunities for organizing, like challenging the victim-centered rhetoric and political policies associated with sex trafficking.

Labour and Human Rights

> "No nos olvidemos: una sola gota de agua apenas moja, pero juntas hacemos un aguacero."
> "We cannot forget: one drop of water barely wets, but together we make a downpour." (RedTraSex, 2007b, 176)

In the case of how RedTraSex frames the work that they do as seen through their websites, research, and manuals, social movement theory with a focus on frame analysis can serve as a good point of entry. Zald (1996, 212) comments that "frames are the specific metaphors, symbolic representations, and cognitive cues used to render or chart behavior and events in an evaluative mode and to suggest alternative modes of action". An organization works to frame the approach it's going to take, whether it is in organizing, or how it will present itself in the media. The use of frames affects how groups are able to attract people based on the symbols used (Della Porta and Diani 1999). The framing a group uses is an important consideration, especially as it relates to their ability to garner media attention in a way in which movements cannot generally afford to solicit on their own (McAdam 1996). This access to media helps an organization or NGO seem to be useful for amassing support within the local communities, but to also serve as important messages for policy-makers, foreign funding agencies, and the target population of the organization.

We have to explore the ways in which sex worker organizations are able to push the discussion of human rights and human trafficking away from framing sex workers as victims, and towards enabling use of human rights tools to assert the rights granted to all people. RedTraSex continues to move this conversation by writing about rights as objects to be wielded, "Rights are weapons. They are tools formed out of words. They serve us, above all to argue to demand that a situation changes" (RedTraSex 2007b,150).

RedTraSex argues for sex workers to become politicized around their life and labour conditions, and to consider themselves and their organizing as occurring within the realm of the political. To this end, the network itself has gained a role in the fight against HIV, and has political currency in its meetings with government representatives, policy-makers, and health advocates. In advocating for changing laws around prostitution, they crack open a narrative around sex work, labour and migration. Furthermore, the network sees developing women as leaders and supporting the organizations in each country as political in nature. This network serves to affirm the group in the explicitly political space of health policy and human rights, cementing sex workers' role as participants and advocates in international organizing efforts.

RedTraSex reflects this demand for policy change and decriminalization, "Sex workers DON'T want a law for us. We seek to achieve the same rights as the whole of the working people, the rights that correspond to people that live from their work" (RedTraSex 2007b, 151), emphasis original). The narrative of sex as work challenges ideas of sex trafficking because it forces people to frame sex work as something that someone might choose. The demand for laws to view and treat sex workers as workers challenges policy-makers to dig deeper and address factors including domestic immigration laws and top-down state policies that make the poorest and most unprotected migrant workers even more vulnerable. Every worker can relate to wanting access to basic demands and rights, and RedTraSex helps affirm this as well by educating others on concepts of human rights and the rights of every worker.

RedTraSex promotes sex workers as political actors and leaders within their communities, and recognizes that they can be central to change for sex workers throughout the region if they are given space to discuss the issues affecting their lives. They assert "we look for a better quality of life for sex workers, so that they recognize us as subjects of rights and strategic actors for the development of our communities" (RedTraSex 2007a, 22). They note throughout the literature that sex workers need to take the lead on issues affecting their communities, including efforts around health and policy.

RedTraSex affirms the power of the collective and highlights all of the important work that can be accomplished when sex workers decide to organize. Their literature highlights all of the potential successes of this movement when sex workers work together on their own behalf. This affirms the role of organizing for rights, "How do we reclaim our rights? Never alone. Always alongside our compañeras. To be organized helps to better our situation and our possibilities to win" (RedTraSex 2007b, 150). This highlights the work necessary in order to develop strong sex worker led organizations. The decision making by women, who have lived the experiences of sex workers, allows them the space to speak on the their own behalf, speaking to the policies created and approaches that could be best served within the community.

Affirming the Power of the Transnational

In July of 2012, the glossy Costa Rican fashion magazine Perfil (Profile), whose audience is adult women, ran a feature article on the Costa Rican organization La Sala. It discussed the question of rights for sex workers in Costa Rica, and how the workers want to be recognized, pay their taxes, have access to health care, along with the rights of all workers. Elena Reynaga, who served as the Executive Secretary for both RedTraSex and AMMAR, is also featured in the interview. Reynaga's words as a leader of a transnational organization RedTraSex, affirm La Sala members by highlighting their collective struggle across Latin America. Article author María Fernanda Cruz includes the voice of Reynaga in the article noting that the organizers seek to "Adopt an Inter-American Convention to promote the complete exercise of 'free and dignified sexual and reproductive rights' and that the state guarantee the right of women to make decisions about their bodies" (Cruz 2012, 94). The magazine highlights the goals of the group, as well as their efforts within an international framework to assert their rights, indicating the extent of their international organizing. As in the case of the Perfil article, the framing of sex workers as workers makes them very relatable to the magazine's readership. This encourages the public to see sex workers within a framework of labour and human rights. Additionally, featuring leadership from RedTraSex in an article about La Sala highlights the international ties of the Costa Rican organization, helping to frame them as both organized and well connected.

While each organization in RedTraSex is autonomous, the existence of the network creates a central force that strengthens each individual organization that comprises it. In many of the countries that make up the network, there are only a small number of sex worker organizations, and sometimes only one organization exists in that country. Given the lack of similar projects within each nation, the international network affirms a larger transnational political space that not only works to back each smaller organization, but also provides a space for Latin American and Caribbean women to come together on a political, organizational, and transnational level. Member organizations also note the way the network helps to make their group more visible, aiding in garnering media attention and

funds. Maria Conseulo Raymundo,[4] director of the Salvadoran sex worker organization, Orchids of the Sea, notes, "RedTraSex provides us more visibility with government institutions. If we are on our own nothing happens, but when we are united in so many countries, the people have to take us seriously" (RedTraSex 2007a, 76). The network maintains emphases on human rights and sex worker leadership that help to centralize some of the goals for sex workers across Latin America. It both represents an effort to organize and creates greater recognition and traction for individual organizations. Increased visibility of organizations ensures their ability to secure funding and survive. The power of belonging to RedTraSex is seen through the organizers of La Sala in their expectations of solidarity and support by other RedTraSex member organizations. La Sala's ability to assert belonging to the network acts as further evidence of their political work and international influence.

Participating in Transnational Relationships: RedTraSex and La Sala

Many women have been politicized through their participation in the network and experience empowerment of various kinds via travel and association with the group. La Sala leader, Nubia Ordoñez,[5] addresses the role of travel in the empowerment of workers in Costa Rica:

> Well, participating in the network has been very enriching for us, so much, so much because we have traveled so much. My compañera Grettel, Camila and I, sometimes two at a time, and sometimes only one of us could . . . In every workshop we have been to, we come back with a huge energy, you know? Every workshop we go to with them (RedTraSex) we come back with so much strength and so much desire to continue with the project and to go on. It's been really nice to be in the network . . . we have felt important to be able to participate in the network, to be able to travel . . . but I say that for La Sala it has

4 Some leaders and organizers within organizations use their real names in spaces of sex worker organizing as a way to increase the visibility of their work, to reject the stigma, and to encourage and support other sex workers.

5 Ordoñez is a longtime leader of La Sala who organizes publically and has been very active in the media and in international organizing for the rights of sex workers.

> been really positive to belong to and to be connected to the network. We have gone to Argentina, to Mexico, the Dominican Republic, we have gone to Peru, to El Salvador, to Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, we have gone to Panama.

As this testimony attests, a number of women connected to the RedTraSex project have had the opportunity to travel abroad to participate in conferences, training, and leadership opportunities; these have been fundamental to their experience with the network and their sense of development within this context. For some connected to organizing around sex worker rights, their willingness to speak out or provide visibility about prostitution testifies to the empowerment strategies of the network and speaks to the organizers' goal to actively participate in politics. Camila, 36, a former member of La Sala who remains connected to the organization, talks on this issue:

> I came to get to know the place (La Sala) and I began to like it and continued coming to help the others. Perhaps some people have anxieties about empowerment, myself, in respect to empowerment, I've been outside of the country to represent La Sala with my compañeras and speaking in the media that travel all over the world like CNN, First Impact, Red Live, those from here (TV), channel 7, channel 15 which is from the University of Costa Rica . . . . The one who is not empowered does not go on television—and they didn't block out my face, they didn't darken out my face, my identity was not protected. I talked to them and period. When this happened my mother was living in Italy, my uncles in the United States, and these are worldwide news sources, both CNN and First Impact are news from outside of the country, so my face traveled to the whole world, and the world saw it with me saying that I am sex worker—so I don't believe that I need more empowerment.

Camila expresses her thoughts about an empowerment process based in the willingness to be public about sex work in an international media forum with the potential to travel throughout Latin America and the world. Camila was interviewed while at a gathering of RedTraSex members outside of Costa Rica. Not many women I spoke with talked of empowerment in this direct way, but Camila's account expresses the significant potential of empowerment and highlights the need for visibility for RedTraSex members. These gatherings of sex workers representing women from across

Latin America and the Caribbean, garner local and international media attention. The development of RedTraSex shows how they have worked to highlight the politics of sex worker issues in the region, both as individual nations and as a transnational network pushing for just policies (RedTraSex 2007a, 2007b).

Some women who organize with La Sala examine their experiences of going into public to talk about sex work as important to their political formation and empowerment for themselves and for the broader community. In 1997, as RedTraSex organized at the first conference of sex workers in Costa Rica, the group had a difficult time getting the space to hold the conference. There was an outcry on the part of a local priest about the conference that was featured on local television, in the print media, and also recounted in the RedTraSex text (RedTraSex 2007a). Olivia, 49, a sex worker and former member of La Sala, spoke about her memory of the workers' response to that encounter:

> A man who was a priest wanted sex work to be seen as a crime and to send the women and the business owners (of brothels, etc.) to jail. So I showed my face, I went on the program "In View". . . The thing is that we had to show our face for all of the sex workers. A number of us went on the program, but my comrades went on the show with masks on and things, but I did not, I went on as I am, real. Yes, we had to go and raise our voice because this man pretended to be working on getting a project passed through the legislative assembly so that that the female sex workers would be sent to prison and others to a psychiatric hospital because he said that we were crazy, so we went from La Sala to show our faces, to raise our voice and defend our rights, and I was a leader!

While the priest did not get his way to keep the conference from occurring, the event and surrounding media attention reflects a certain anti-prostitution discourse that sex workers often face. These points of public discourse push some workers, like Olivia, to be public for the sake of being visible as unapologetic sex workers: inspiring others to do the same, encouraging people to participate in the political process, and recognizing sex workers role in affecting policy change. Olivia notes the importance of being in public spaces to humanize and politicize the issue of sex work. Additionally, the act of being public helps to de-stigmatize sex work. Abril, 72, of La Sala notes:

> I don't have to hide from anyone, not even my children, because I am not ashamed of what I am because it's a job. It's a job that one has and we all have them. Like me, I go out with all these old men and like in everything, I don't hide from anyone. I say that I should be on TV (that's more like it!), so that they can see me . . . because I am not ashamed because this is what gives me food to eat—Abril, 72.

This kind of perspective serves an important function for the public and other sex workers alike. For the public, the language of labour works to create solidarity with other workers by affirming prostitution as work.

If other people can view sex workers as workers, just like themselves, then it is less of a jump to assert that these workers should also have their labour rights protected. Carolina, 50, of La Sala provides an example of how sex workers are often framed:

> Of course yes, we give a lot of workshops about this (self-esteem, stigma), we give a lot of workshops—you know that stigma exists and discrimination, why? 'She is bad, this is the easy woman'—but they don't say this is the woman who gets her children ahead, that this woman is a fighter, she's an entrepreneur, she is the mother and the father of the children—you understand? Because they see her from a place where they think that this woman isn't worth it, she is the easy woman, but this environment is very difficult and very cruel.

Carolina insists on the need to represent sex workers as complex human figures and workers rather than as 'bad women'. In political terms, if sex workers in each country are viewed as labourers by the state, then they can also affirm their right to things like social security, access to health care, and improved working conditions. Olivia, 49, speaks to the need to professionalize the work:

> Yes one has to dignify their work, because society has an idea that we sex workers are drunks, drug addicts, bad mothers—Not me—with my example I also want to show this society that sex workers also have values and principles. I fight every day to be an excellent mother, a citizen because I am also a citizen in this country, and not consuming drugs or vices, I make my country better, my community, my journey . . . at least through my example I've helped many compañeras stop consuming drugs or alcohol.

Olivia is affirming her space as a dignified worker and citizen. This is an important connection albeit rarely seen, because sex workers are often not conceived of as active citizens deserving of rights. Olivia's statements thus affirm broader connections between citizenship and the state by evoking the sex worker's status as citizen, and thus as deserving of the collective rights granted to all. She is also invoking a politics of respectability that challenges the presence or use of drugs or alcohol in sex work, reframing the sex worker as respectable in her labour rather than representative of negative pathology or social transgression. These speakers reject simplistic dichotomies in which sex workers are persistently cast as disease carriers, moral transgressors, or trafficked victims to be protected, and instead highlight a politically active and visible role in shaping the work or state based constraints in their lives.

Conclusion

Organizations like La Sala, AMMAR and RedTraSex work to create spaces for marginalized workers to have the opportunity to express themselves and their needs rather than have these concepts dictated and decided by outside actors and policy-makers. Their use of written texts, in particular, provides space for alternative discourses and empowering language to mobilize transnational activism.

RedTraSex continues to work to encourage the frames of labour and human rights as ways of connecting both sex workers to each other, and to other workers. These frames help to strengthen the self-esteem of sex workers, often working to professionalize their labour and their work as directly connected to what they do for their families. This ends up being a central organizing tenet for sex worker activism that serves to bolster images of professionalism around sex work, with the concept of labour being a main foci through which the organizing is framed. To serve as public witnesses to this identity as legitimate laborers, RedTraSex is always looking for women organizers who are willing to be visible and organize around the issues affecting sex workers.

The literature of RedTraSex provides activists with tools to organize, similar to the ways human rights concepts are employed as tools that can be used by the sex worker to frame her struggle. In the context of social movements, the language of human rights and labour serve as recognizable frames for workers and the public

alike. In addition, RedTraSex's use of human rights language is not only helpful for providing arguments with which people are familiar, it also helps to transform this language from a tool that is used in discussions about protecting women into a component of organizers' toolkits, which can be used to help sex workers frame their own struggles within larger contexts of grassroots movements and fundamental rights.

Through interviews with La Sala members, it is apparent that the ties between organizers and the trainings they have completed with RedTraSex have worked to empower and embolden workers, who are confident and sure of their human rights. The community of workers, which extends beyond the borders of Costa Rica, strengthens their resolve to achieve more access to labour and human rights recognitions for sex workers across Latin America and the Caribbean. The leadership of La Sala organizes publically, speaks to the media, holds events and trainings, including on the human rights of sex workers. The interconnected nature between RedTraSex and member organizations like La Sala, create transnational connections between organizers, strengthening the movement throughout the region.

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Commentaries

Rights Talk, Wrong Comparison: Trafficking and Transatlantic Slavery

Julia O'Connell Davidson

Transatlantic slavery relied on force to move people, while today's 'trafficking' does not. Vulnerable migrants have more in common with those escaping from historical slavery than those entering into it.

'Human trafficking', according to Free the Slaves,[1] is the process through which a person 'is moved from one place to another for the purpose of enslavement', a definition eagerly seized upon by Western political leaders since it allows them to present their efforts to control borders as part of a moral struggle for human rights and against slavery. But what are the similarities between what is described as 'trafficking' and the transatlantic slave trade to which it is routinely compared? There are no modern equivalents of the many fortresses and castles that dotted the western coast of African slave trading regions, in which captured people were held in dungeons, sometimes for long periods, before being loaded and shackled on slave ships. Today, whether queuing outside recruitment offices or waiting for a boat owner to take them across the Mediterranean, those who may or may not end up in highly exploitative and heavily restricted conditions are invariably people who actively *want* to migrate, and generally have excellent reasons for wishing to do so.

The transatlantic slave trade relied upon overwhelming physical force at every stage of movement. What is dubbed 'trafficking' does not. In fact, attention to people's motivations for moving provokes a very different kind of comparison between past and present. It suggests that contemporary migrants who are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse have more in common with those who sought to escape *from* New World slavery, than those transported *into* it.

1 http://www.freetheslaves.net/about-slavery/faqs-glossary/

Keeping chattel slaves in

Though legally constructed as property, those held in chattel slavery remained human beings with wills of their own. This presented slaveholders with a unique set of problems that they did not face with their inanimate property. To enjoy their property rights, slaveholders needed to closely control the mobility of the enslaved.[2] At the same time, it was not in their interest to literally imprison slaves, as a slave held permanently captive in a dungeon would not be a productive asset. Physically constraining them by means of balls, chains and other such instruments also was often impractical, as slaves were often needed to run errands or transport produce, among other tasks.

Slaveholders wanted to simultaneously allow and repress the mobility of their human property, and they relied heavily on the law and law enforcers to secure these contradictory goals. In Barbados, the Slave Code was revised in 1688 to introduce a pass system, making it mandatory for slaves to carry a pass or ticket when leaving their plantation. It also placed the burden of policing this system on *all* white men, requiring them to whip and detain wandering slaves until claimed by their owners. This system for controlling the enslaved was mimicked and elaborated in slave states of the American South. From 1642 in Virginia, ship captains were prohibited from setting sail with passengers who had no pass. Here and elsewhere, extremely punitive sanctions were incrementally introduced against captains and owners of vessels found carrying fugitive slaves to freedom, and against anyone offering succour and assistance to slaves as they made long, difficult and extremely dangerous journeys by foot.

For escaping slaves, the journey to freedom was often across harsh physical terrain, usually without benefit of map or geographical knowledge. Those fleeing from Texas to Mexico (where slavery had been abolished in 1829), for instance, faced the peril of armed slave hunting parties, getting lost in the desert, and even being captured by nomadic Comanches or Apaches. Sometimes, in exchange for a small sum, Mexicans living in Texas would guide them to the border. Here and elsewhere, escaping slaves also took great risks by placing their trust in a third party. Punishments

2 https://www.opendemocracy.net/beyondslavery/edlie-wong/bound-and-determined-new-abolitionism-and-campaign-against-modern-slavery

for captured runaways included whipping, stocking, ear cropping and other mutilations. Though some of those who smuggled slaves to freedom were brave altruists in the mould of Harriet Tubman, others who offered assistance proceeded to cheat or betray them.

Keeping unauthorised migrants out

There are striking similarities between the techniques designed by slave states to contain slave mobility, and those deployed by contemporary states to manage and control migration. For passes and tickets, read passports and visas; for laws criminalising ship captains who assisted fugitive slaves, read carrier sanctions.[3] As Slave Codes historically obliged all white citizens to police the movement of slaves, so increasingly in Britain, the entire community is being mustered to monitor unauthorised movement. Employers, universities, and now hospitals and private landlords are all under a legal obligation to check the status of migrants and report those suspected of living in the country without authorisation or of breaking the terms within which they have been permitted to move.[4] Banks and building societies too face sanctions if they allow 'illegal' migrants to open accounts.

In 2002, the Immigration Act in Malaysia was amended to introduce whipping for illegal migrants and for those who employ them. Three years later, a Volunteer Corps was granted powers to arrest irregular migrants. Corporal punishments are not administered to irregular migrants in the EU, Australia or the United States, but their border policies are lethal. Many deaths are attributable to the deliberate actions of state actors. There are also noticeable continuities as regards contemporary states' methods of limiting the mobility of migrant workers whose entry they *do* authorise, and the ways in which slave and colonial states simultaneously enabled but constricted the mobility of slaves.

Immigration controls generate markets for migration services (both state authorised and clandestine), and it is true that actors in these markets do sometimes exploit, cheat and/or mire migrants in debt. They may even rape, hold hostage, or kill those they have promised to assist. However, many simply provide a service, albeit

3 http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/zegp20/current

4 https://www.opendemocracy.net/5050/ch%C3%A9-ramsden/immigration-and-uk-general-election-reclaiming-agenda-for-all

often at a high price. Many irregular migrants even receive support and assistance for purely altruistic reasons, or on the basis of kinship or friendship, and not for profit. As was the case for escaping slaves, the motives and practices of those who facilitate unauthorised cross border movement today span the full moral spectrum from thuggery to selflessness. But no matter where they stand on this spectrum, they are criminals in the eyes of state actors, just as all those who facilitated the movement of fugitive slaves were criminalised by nineteenth century slave states.

What have rights got to do with it?

The legal edifice that controls mobility today was no more designed to protect human rights, and is no more compatible with that ambition, than what was constructed by slave states centuries ago. Its object is to deny the 'right of locomotion'[5] to certain groups of human beings. Without that right, people are at heightened risk of abuse and exploitation in the course of movement and at the point of destination. Describing those for whom the risk turns into reality as 'trafficked' and comparing their situation to that of Africans transported into slavery displays a startling indifference to the historical realities of transatlantic slavery.[6] It also exonerates states rather than holding them accountable for the staggering human cost of the immigration regimes (including anti-trafficking policies) over which they preside.

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5 https://opendemocracy.net/beyondslavery/edlie-wong/bound-and-determined-new-abolitionism-and-campaign-against-modern-slavery

6 https://www.opendemocracy.net/beyondslavery/james-brewer-stewart/%E2%80%98new-abolitionists%E2%80%99-and-problem-of-race

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Sex/Trade/Work in the Caribbean—Challenging Discourses of Human Trafficking

Angelique V. Nixon

In October 2014, I was invited to present at a Global Moral Panics symposium at Indiana University Bloomington that brought together scholars from diverse fields to explore global moral panics—defined as "issues hyped in the media and public discourse that crystallize a problem of geopolitical inequality." They described global moral panics as those envisioning "a threat arising in the third world and threatening the first," imagining avenues for "first-world citizens as saviors," and proposing "solutions that criminalize migrants and laborers, expand punitive state capacity, and exacerbate the underlying sources of the problem." The symposium set different forms of contemporary global moral panics alongside each other, and participants were asked to share the symbolic strategies and social conditions that facilitate the production of such panics. While the description of the symposium indicates a careful analysis of how global moral panics are framed, I was still left questioning what necessitates a global moral panic. I wondered about specific sites of global moral panics, namely human trafficking and sex work.

Interestingly, I was one of the only participants there who engaged Caribbean sex work, though the Dominican Republic was cited a few times in scholarly reviews about sex work, and Kamala Kempadoo's research on human trafficking and sex workers was referenced many times. However, the Caribbean region and issues of sex work were largely absent outside of my presentation, which focused not on the "global moral panic" of sex work in the region, but rather the ways in which it is NOT a global moral panic, precisely because of tourism. Furthermore, while many participants raised issues of white supremacy, white savior discourse, as well as global inequalities, they rarely brought them together in the ways that Kempadoo does in her most recent work on human trafficking. And the Caribbean seemed to be largely left out of this conversation. I attribute this to the very nature and structures of the global tourist industry, and specifically how Caribbean tourism works—the embodied encounters, touristic desires, and package deals of "Caribbean paradise." The sexual and cultural availability of the

region for touristic consumption predicates on there being an acceptance of the consumption of places and people. Thus, the lack of panic.

Conversely, certain aspects of Caribbean sexual practices and behaviors elicit moral panics within the region, particularly non-normative sexualities. While some practices such as consensual transactional sexual relationships (often known as friending) may be accepted culturally, they are not embraced completely and can become sites of moral panic if they intersect with sexual minorities and youth/adolescents. Further, sexual minorities (LGBTI, MSM, and other same-sex and same-gender loving people) and sex workers often incite local moral panic, and they continue to experience numerous challenges—ranging from the lack of access to rights and protection, to discrimination and violence. Caribbean LGBTI and sexual minority organisations and activists across the region have worked tirelessly to create spaces for community building, consciousness raising, and political advocacy work.[1] Ironically, Global North LGBTI funding has had both positive and negative impacts on regional work to support sexual minority organising, and it is often through the lens of Global North media that homophobic violence and discrimination in the region receives mass media attention, which often elicits a reverse moral panic—a Global North gaze upon the homophobic Caribbean—one that does not offer any nuance to place or space. Nevertheless, sexual minorities and sexual outlaws exist and live in all kinds of ways across the region, in spite of local moral panics that work differently depending on the local context(s). It is important to note that sex worker organisations across the region have grown in the past decade, and they have worked to challenge the 'forced' versus 'voluntary' dichotomy, and other moralising discourses, through public campaigns calling for rights and protection, while also

1 Regional organisations such as Caribbean Vulnerable Communities (CVC) and CariFLAGS have long participated in the building of regional LGBTI movements and support structures. More recently, the University of the West Indies Rights Advocacy Project has worked with regional and local organisations on a number of legal actions across the region. Local organizations include: United Belize Advocacy Movement, SASOD and Guyana Trans United in Guyana, United and Strong in St. Lucia, GrenCHAP in Grenada, JFLAG, We Change, and Pride in Action in Jamaica, and CAISO, Silver Lining Foundation, Woman's Caucus, Womantra, I Am One, and Friends for Life in Trinidad & Tobago, among others.

working to support sex workers across the region.[2] There is much more to be said about these complicated networks and support systems, but the point here is to acknowledge the complex landscape of Caribbean sexualities, sexual practices, and sex work that are not legible in the dominant discourses of human trafficking.

Human trafficking across the Caribbean (like other regions) also elicits a dichotomous response, depending on the perceived purpose, and the kind of work people who are "trafficked" end up doing. Sex work and domestic work are often separated, while both kinds of work are further divided between perceptions of 'forced' or 'voluntary', which creates a false dichotomy and a troubling discourse of who is most deserving of protection and empathy. Moreover, the sex trade is complicated and the division between sex and domestic work does not capture the realities of trafficking nor the choices people have to make. To be clear, "realities of trafficking" refers to the complexity of what may actually be happening on the ground, as opposed to the reporting mechanisms and discourses of trafficking that get circulated in media and international human rights agencies. For the purposes of the commentary, I am interested in the discourses of trafficking and how the language used does not fully explain the complex landscape that is known as human trafficking. More specifically, I draw attention to what many scholars have argued for years—that a 'forced' versus 'voluntary' dichotomy does not capture what goes on in the sex trade.

In the important 1998 collection *Global Sex Workers*, Kempadoo in "The Migrant Tightrope" and Jo Doezema in "Forced to Choose" explain how incredibly difficult it is to discern between voluntary and forced sex work. Firstly, very few instances of a complete trafficking situation exist (i.e. to call something "trafficking" according to the United Nations definition, there needs to be evidence of forced migration coupled with forced labour). Secondly, most sex work involves work in illegalised, underground, or

2 The Caribbean Sex Worker Coalition is a network of sex worker organisations that includes civil society organisations and sex worker advocates and activists from the English, Spanish, and Dutch speaking Caribbean. "The Collective aims to support sex worker organizations as they confront human rights violations, stigma and discrimination, lack of or limited access to social services and health care, violence, personal safety threats, harassment, immigration, and the other numerous challenges facing Caribbean sex workers." (www.caribbeansexworker collective.org)

informal sectors, which often involves a range of oppressive situations that cannot be simply defined as forced or voluntary, but rather coerced and controlling mechanisms: lack of contracts, poor pay, bad working conditions; forms of debt-bondage (where a person may have to pay off a debt for travel expenses and immigration papers and uses sex work to do so); the confiscation of passports; deception about the type of work; and coerced choices (for example, women are commonly recruited as strippers or dancers but then might be pressured into selling sex), and so on.[3] The realities of the sex trade and, relatedly, domestic trade, disrupt the global moral panic discourse that feeds upon the sympathies that emerge from narratives of forced work. Yet only *some* places and *some* people within *some* regions elicit the global moral panics regarding human trafficking and sex work. This is most evident if one considers the lack of attention paid to human rights violations across these regions, especially in terms of migration policies (case in point, recent violations of people of Haitian descent, born in the Dominican Republic and stripped of citizenship and deported after generations of working and living there).[4] And there is also a glaring lack of attention if one examines the language used in the research on human trafficking across the Caribbean and Latin America.

According to the "Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report" (2015) by the US Department of State, six CARICOM countries (Barbados, Guyana, Haiti, St. Lucia, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago) have been on its "Tier 2 Watch List," and another four (Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Jamaica, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines) were added in 2015. This suggests that the numbers for human trafficking are as high as in other places that incite the global moral panics associated with the anti-trafficking campaigns. In my review of a number of international reports,[5] I was struck by the following:

3 I am indebted to conversations with Kamala Kempadoo that helped me to frame this commentary and overview of the dichotomy between forced and voluntary work in relation to sex work and trafficking.

4 See my article co-written with Alissa Trotz on this very issue: "Where is the Outrage": Tenuous Relations of Human Rights and Migration." Groundation Grenada. 12 June 2015. http://groundationgrenada.com/2015/06/12/where-is-the-outrage/

5 These international reports include the 2015 Trafficking in Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean and two United Nations Reports, one on Global Action to Combat Trafficking focused on North America, Central America, and

1) based on the numbers of reported "trafficked persons" and reasons for trafficking—"domestic" is reported at way higher numbers than "sex", yet "sex trafficking" is what received the most attention and focus of the media and anti-trafficking campaigns; 2) the language used to define sex trafficking (smuggling of migrant persons, sex slaves, prostitution, brothels, etc.) do not reflect the complexity or realities of sex work that scholars and activists have consistently reported and highlighted—specifically the separation between kinds of work and what people are made to do; 3) the framing of hegemonic discourses on "bad countries" and "bad people" completely from a Global North perspective, with very little commentary on the demand for sexual and domestic labour in the Global North; 4) Caribbean states being advised to institute "security" in order to address the Global North and western concerns over trafficking, yet there is no related advisory to Global North countries and their demands for sex and domestic labour—i.e. no discussion of larger structural issues; 5) and finally, while the language of vulnerability is used in these reports, there is an incredible lack of analysis on what makes people vulnerable in the first place. In other words, I am concerned about the lack of historical and structural analysis within these reporting mechanisms, and thereby, the discourses of trafficking. Further, "anti-trafficking" measures perpetuate Global North discourse and moral panics around one particular notion of human trafficking. The Caribbean region offers a challenge to the existing discourses precisely because of its invisible and unique colonial, postcolonial, and neocolonial experiences.

The relationships between sex, trade, and work in the Caribbean are complex and deeply affected by historical and global relations of power, as well as local/regional needs and desires. Caribbean people's participation in, and reliance on, informal economy, migration patterns, and movements across the region are fueled through neocolonial relations and structural adjustment policies. These neocolonial relations are most readily seen through the Caribbean tourist industry. Foreign investment, neo-liberal policies, and dependency capitalism are the driving forces of Caribbean tourism, which then relies upon so called "free trade"

the Caribbean and the Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols.

and easy access to the Caribbean "paradise" for pleasure, business, and resources. The cost of producing this "Caribbean paradise" includes social inequalities, environmental degradation, and sexual and cultural exploitation of people and places. Hence, the Caribbean (post)colonial condition in which informal economies, migration, and over-dependence upon foreign investors (which are most often former colonial powers) become necessary for survival (from the personal to the national).

The realities for Caribbean people can be understood through the intersections of what I call the nexus of Sex/Trade/Work – given the reliance upon tourism and global systems of trade. But these relations are difficult to discuss, and when it relates to sexuality and sex work, they become even more troublesome. Yet human trafficking has received wide attention, with sex trafficking being the main focus of recent global pressures to increase border security and to control migration and movements globally. Human trafficking reports and policies are wrought with discourses of control, policing, and security that ignore much of the global forces that drive the conditions in which trafficking grows. Further, many of these reports and anti-human trafficking campaigns fail to address the differences between forced/coerced "prostitution" through sex trafficking, and other forms of sex work and sexual labour. This makes it difficult to discern in the reports what the actual numbers are for sex trafficking in the region; while at the same time, they reveal a striking discord between the intense global moral panics over sex trafficking and the significant lack of panic over domestic work trafficking. It is also important to discuss how the Caribbean region is situated within human sex trafficking discourses, when sex tourism and transactional sexual relationships are a vital part of Caribbean economies and tourism industries in particular.

As I discuss at length in my book *Resisting Paradise: Tourism, Diaspora, and Sexuality in Caribbean Culture (2015)*, the region is not only selling the trademarked "sun, sand, and sea," but it is also selling culture, desire, and sex (most often through Black and mixed-race bodies). Interestingly, the region is most often represented as a Black space despite its racial and ethnic diversity. Thus, it is through this representation and images of paradise that Caribbean culture and people are often marketed within the global tourist industry. These are often wrapped up in each other in the

realm of representation and can be best understood through the frame of touristic desire, where culture and sex are inextricably part of the production of paradise. As Mimi Sheller asserts in *Citizenship From Below*, "tourism can be understood as a form of embodied encounter between foreign travelers and local people that involves corporeal relations of unequal power" (2014, 211). It is this embodied encounter that lies at the center of the connections between sex, work, and trade – especially for Caribbean people involved in sex work, but, even beyond that, with and through all people working directly or indirectly in the Caribbean tourist industry.

The region has continuously been "languaged by sex," as Faith Smith argues in *Sex and the Citizen*, through taboos of miscegenation and homosexuality—forged through colonialism and carried forward, thereby affecting "desires, identities, and silences" in the present. The Caribbean exists simultaneously and relatedly as wrongly sexed, violently homophobic, and rightly sexed, a laid back paradise available for pleasure and consumption by foreign visitors (Smith 2013, 10). These concurrent narratives distort the landscape yet they also have a direct effect on how the region understands itself. Thus, postcolonial liberation becomes aligned with being hetero-normative, or what Smith describes as a "package deal", in which affirming sovereignty also means "the assumption of heterosexuality as the best or only way to be Caribbean" (2013, 10). But this "package deal" also privileges the business of tourism, for a non-homophobic Caribbean to better "serve" the global tourist industry; yet at the same time, the touristic desires for "paradise" dictate sexual-cultural availability within the larger structures of global capitalism and hegemony.

Part of this sexual-cultural availability for tourism is made possible through informal economies built through sexual labour; much of this has to do with conditions created in which people may be coerced into sex work, or some may choose to engage in sex work, because it generates greater economic benefits (in spite of the dangers or illegality). This landscape offers context for understanding how I contest the discourses and dichotomies around issues of human trafficking. Further, it engages the too often unspoken realities of the tourist economy, and touristic desires in relation to sex work and sexual labour. And finally, it is a reminder that the Caribbean is a unique region in this regard and therefore

local/regional responses and activism is vital in terms of creating change.

Kempadoo's work reveals the limitations of Western-led dominant discourses around human trafficking, and helps us to understand the "collateral damage of the anti-trafficking industry" as being sex workers, labour migrants, and refugees (2015, 12). This is particularly important to understand in relation to the Caribbean region and the tourist industry; and, for my purposes, connects specifically to the relations between sex/work/trade and the glaring lack of moral panic on the violations of human rights in terms of migration policies and deportations. I propose (as Kempadoo and others have) an anti-trafficking framework that is feminist, anti-racist, class focused, and supports women's, migrant, and sexual minority rights to mobility, security, and justice.

This framework must include an embrace of sexual labour and transactional sex work as an integral part of the informal economy, as—as in some ways a form of resistance to the neocolonial global economy (, and the tourist economy, in particular), that relies on sex and sexual labour. There must be safety and justice for workers in a frame that does not criminalize or moralise; and we would need radical policy changes across the region for migration, movement and migration rights. My proposal is drawn from the conclusion of my book *Resisting Paradise* in which I argue for these forms of rebellion as resisting paradise:

What would happen if we framed sexual labour and transnational sex work as working outside the bounds of capitalism because of the confines of neocolonialism? And what if we redefined the place and meaning of sex work in our languages and societies? (Nixon 2015, 201)

I would like to extend this further as a way to challenge the dominant discourses of human trafficking that continuously frame the Global South as deviant and backward to the Global North. And I argue that we must also challenge the dichotomy and hierarchy between domestic and sex work—with domestic work so often justified, invisibilised, and gendered.

The future of Caribbean feminist and sexual minority work relies upon our ability to prioritize decolonization that is centered upon sexual freedom and the rights of sex workers, sexual outlaws, women, domestic workers, migrants, and sexual minorities to determine livelihood and live freely with the rights and protections

deserved by all people. By no means do I want to simply conflate these positionalities or intersections, but rather by engaging these intersections and commonalities as well as differences, I call for a destabilising and deconstruction of the hierarchies that exist between kinds of work and the people who do them. Perhaps what is most common across our human experience is the desire for livable lives with dignity, equity, and freedom.

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Eso aquí no pasa! ¿Qué pasa? Que esto es Estados Unidos, aquí no es como en Europa que cualquiera compra un pasaporte y entra… [This does not happen here. What happens? That this is the United States, this is not like in Europe that anyone can buy a passport and enter]. (San Juan,

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NOTES and COMMENTS

Walk-Foot People Matter

Charles V. Carnegie

One might say that nowadays most Jamaicans take the following propositions as axiomatic truths:

1. Not all motorists are "people of quality" (you know that oft-quoted line from the late Rex Nettleford about a buttu in a Benz being no less a buttu).
2. Notwithstanding this first proposition: All people of quality travel by automobile.
3. Those who don't are by definition *not* people of quality.

For public officials, law enforcement officers, the media, and most motorists it seems, walk-foot people simply don't matter. To them, the only grown-up, fully worthwhile citizen is one who is motorized. At least so one must conclude from the ways pedestrian citizens are treated.

These remarks are based on ethnographic observations gleaned over the past few years doing research toward a series of essays about contemporary Kingston (See, e.g. Carnegie 2014). Moving about the city and other areas of Jamaica via public transportation and on foot has afforded me a pedestrian-eye view of things that most middle and upper class Jamaicans these days rarely experience.[1] The smattering of ethnographic data on Kingston presented here directly implicate both government policy and the routine but *disabling indifference* of the media and of ordinary citizens.

1 In a magnificent essay, "Walking While Black," writer Garnette Cadogan freshly describes the liberating pleasures (and the perils) of walking the city; comparing and contrasting his experiences over several decades walking Kingston, New Orleans, and New York. Returning to Kingston following an eight-year absence, he finds himself able to shed momentarily some of the circumspection he had perforce developed in New Orleans. Cadogan elegantly remarks: "Walking had returned to me a greater set of possibilities . . . I strolled into my better self, I said, along with Kierkegaard, 'I have walked myself into my best thoughts.'" (Cadogan 2016).

Sidewalks and Crossings

Pedestrians face constant indignities and are routinely put at risk by actions of the state and by their fellow citizens. Most sidewalks, where they do exist, are hazardous. Surfaces are eroded, uneven, and discontinuous. Twisted, sawed-off steel rods, scarcely visible even in daylight, occasionally protrude just above ground level; cavernous holes remain uncovered where manhole covers have been removed; utility poles, cables and construction debris frequently impede safe passage.

Many of Kingston's busiest arteries have been expanded from two to four or five lanes and sidewalks have correspondingly been shrunken so that it is often difficult for pedestrians to walk two-abreast or to pass each other in opposite directions without one having to step into the street. These cramped conditions are made worse by utility poles, support cables, hydrants and other obstructions. Motorists park their vehicles on sidewalks with impunity. Recently, I saw a line of a dozen parked cars fully blocking the sidewalk on Old Hope Rd. outside St. Peter & Paul church, directly across from the Matilda's Corner Police Station.

Most sidewalks in Jamaica deteriorate rapidly because they are not constructed to meet proper engineering standards. If sidewalks are built with three to four inches of concrete that is properly vibrated and cured, at a strength of 25 MPa, and cast in six-foot lengths with joints to accommodate shrinkage and expansion, they will last practically forever, insists John Allgrove, a civil engineer of over fifty years experience working in the public and private sectors. Sidewalks in some of the older housing developments like Mona Heights and Hope Pastures, those in sections of downtown near the waterfront, and many in New Kingston meet these specifications and have lasted for fifty years. By contrast, many sidewalks built by the KSAC, local authorities and private contractors use crushed stone covered by a thin, half-inch layer of sand and cement mortar. This slender layer of sand and cement is like putting a coating of butter on bread, Allgrove notes.

Street crossing accommodations for pedestrians—zebra crossings, phased traffic lights and walk signals—are woefully inadequate. Marked pedestrian crossings are most consistently found near schools, and crossing guards are sometimes employed

to assist children to cross safely at the start and end of the school day. The irony, however, is that having taken care to protect and train children in the proper use of cross walks near their schools, we then leave them to the slaughter elsewhere as well as in their adult lives. The widespread absence of pedestrian-friendly facilities, then, undermines the road safety training children receive in school. Pedestrian deaths account on average for almost 30% of all road traffic fatalities. Based on statistics supplied by the Police Traffic and Highway Division, of the 260 people who died in traffic accidents in 2012, 85 were pedestrians; and in 2015, 91 of 382 traffic fatalities were pedestrians.

We have daily traffic reports on radio, regular auto sections in the newspapers, irate letters to the editor about potholes, but seldom do we have *sidewalk* reports. While the media habitually pay attention to motor vehicle traffic, roads in need of repair, and malfunctioning signals, they pay little or no attention to the hazards pedestrians routinely encounter. We pander to those citizens whose practices are most environmentally destructive and ignore or actively discourage those whose carbon footprint is smallest.

Having narrowed sidewalks to create additional lanes for motorists, the authorities have lavishly installed metal barriers in certain areas of high-density traffic such as Half Way Tree, Three Miles, and sections of Spanish Town, presumably to prevent pedestrians from straying into the pathway of moving vehicles. These barriers add to the indignities pedestrians are plagued with. They send a clear signal that the state regards walk-foot citizens as no more than animals or imbeciles: corralling pedestrians like cows. Although the number of pedestrians has increased with population growth, governments have cut back on the provision and maintenance of basic facilities to accommodate them. The state now attempts to deflect recognition of its own neglect by signaling that it is the inattentive pedestrians who are at fault, incapable of looking out for their own self-preservation.

In some glaring instances, access to sidewalks allowing safe-passage for pedestrians has been entirely taken away. Such is the case in downtown Kingston where sidewalks adjacent to several public buildings on Barry St. and Tower St., for example, have been blocked off. Ironically, these buildings house the Supreme Court and the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, institutions whose job it is to preserve the rights of citizens. In taking steps,

apparently to ensure the safety of their own staff, they have turned a blind eye to the safety of their fellow citizens. Through systematic neglect by the state and the indifference of fellow citizens, pedestrians and cyclists are being made into endangered species just as dray cart drivers and their working mules and donkeys became in the 1950s and '60s, many of them killed off by lethal, fast-moving automobiles.

A Who Rule?

Motorists rule! For example, drivers routinely turn across the path of walkers who are already in an intersection, cutting them off. This happens frequently with cars approaching from behind and turning into side streets, shopping centers and driveways in situations when pedestrians supposedly have the right of way. If it occurs to them, drivers approaching from behind may honk their horn belligerently, as if to say, "Get out a mi ___ way!" In other instances, tooting the horn might be done with polite intent: "Sorry, I'm coming through, watch out." Male motorists are more likely to stop for women to cross the street (sometimes in the oddest places), though it must be noted that women otherwise walk in public under periodic threat of (unwanted) catcalls and assault. What pedestrians really need, however, are not these paternalistic gestures—to be given a "bly"—but to have their rights recognized and their safety accommodated just as car-driving citizens have theirs. Such routine violations of the rights and safety of pedestrians as I describe rarely if ever attract attention, reprimand or prosecution on the part of Police officers.

Surely, it is worth asking whether some of these discriminatory practices such as the hazardous condition of sidewalks, the absence of marked crossings and signals, the permanent blocking off of sidewalks that force pedestrians to be exposed to oncoming traffic, the failure to enforce violations against their rights—whether such conditions may be actionable under certain provisions of the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms. Central and local governments, along with their planning and building authorities, should be made to consider and cater for pedestrians and pedestrian traffic as they do auto traffic. Pedestrian citizens should be treated not as an afterthought, but as fully worthwhile.

Walk-foot people have it rough in other respects that those of us who routinely drive may seldom notice. When there is water on the roadways, they are at risk of being splashed by passing motorists. From April onwards through the summer months streets are baking hot, daytime temperatures average over 30 degrees Celsius, and streets feel even hotter because of the loss of trees. Just a few short decades ago, many of Kingston's streets were shaded by trees that were planted along the sidewalks, or overhanging the fence lines of adjacent private properties. Hurricanes and human action by developers and individual owners have drastically culled or severely pruned many of these trees to make room for construction, and for security and other reasons. The overall effect has been to make the streets of Kingston hotter, more unpleasant and visually austere.

Coupled with this new canopy-mutilated aesthetic, the city's built environment now conveys far greater hostility towards the walk-foot citizen. The construction of higher and higher perimeter walls, often topped by razor wire, has created militant, regimented public spaces and corridors that not only preclude the visual gaze, but cut off the possibility of even passing social contact between those on either side of the barrier. Viewed from the walker's perspective, once pleasant streets like Kingsway, for example, have become walled corridors: bland, forbidding and hostile. So too the way we fashion and use our cars—windows deeply tinted and tightly rolled up—mimics the barriers to social contact we've created with those threatening fence lines.

The indignities and acts of discrimination faced by the pedestrian citizen constitute forms of what scholars now call structural violence: a concept that refers to the routine, but often unnoticed, ways in which social institutions as well as more powerful minority or majority groups impede and harm others, preventing them from accessing opportunities and from meeting basic human needs. As this brief, pedestrian's-eye survey shows, walk-foot people are constantly disrespected and subjected to structural violence by the state and by their fellow citizens of all ranks and backgrounds.

Another commonplace instance of entrenched though disregarded structural violence is of course the language discrimination that speakers of Jamaican Creole confront in education, the legal system and other institutional contexts, as well as in everyday social

settings. Linguists and other scholars have long pointed to the disabling consequences of this willful disregard of the Jamaican language. Hubert Devonish, for example, writing in the *Sunday Gleaner*, noted that the vast majority of Jamaicans (83%) speak Jamaican as their home language and that fewer than 50% of us have the ability to use both English and Jamaican (Devonish 2016). He cited a UNESCO study as well as studies done in neighboring Haiti, which show that learning outcomes are considerably improved when the language of instruction in school, at least in the formative early years, is the same as the language children use at home. Devonish pointed out that in the Haitian study, conducted by MIT Professor of Linguistics, Michel DeGraff, "The research . . . established that the use of the mother language produced children much better at their content subjects than those who learnt them in French." He noted further that: "The mother language pupils were also superior in the learning of French." Or, as Carolyn Cooper noted in her succinct summary of the report put out by UNESCO to mark International Language Day in 2016: "Di report seh when pikni go a school, teacher fi teach dem eena language weh di pikni dem understand" (Cooper 2016). In spite of the weight of the evidence based on both local and international research, however, we continue to penalize speakers of the Jamaican language and to impede the learning potential of most Jamaican children by adamantly resisting recognition of their home language.

My title, "Walk-foot People Matter," alludes of course to "Black Lives Matter," the clarion call of a movement now drawing attention to the racism still very much present in the United States. Many among Jamaica's now largely black elites, though readily supporting the aims of "Black Lives Matter" in the U.S, would be chagrined at the suggestion that we too also continue systematically to discriminate against our fellow citizens. As I have shown here, however, and as other scholars have pointed out in relation to the denial of the Jamaican language and in other respects, these barriers continue to be resolutely maintained in Jamaica over six decades after Independence. Devonish implies in his article that we ought to be astonished and outraged that many of these indignities are imposed not on a minority population, but on a majority of underclass Jamaicans. I would add only that we ought to be sufficiently outraged *to act*.

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REVIEW ESSAY

Transgressive Bodies, Caribbean Sexualities, and Queer Feminisms

Keith E. McNeal & Rachel Afi Quinn

Rosamond S. King (2014) *Island Bodies: Transgressive Sexualities in the Caribbean Imagination*. University Press of Florida, 261 pp.

Angelique V. Nixon (2015) *Resisting Paradise: Tourism, Diaspora, and Sexuality in Caribbean Culture*. University of Mississippi Press, 229 pp.

The study of sexuality in the Caribbean has now truly come of age. Rosamond King and Angelique Nixon have built dynamic new works upon the pioneering contributions of such scholars as M. Jacqui Alexander, Kamala Kempadoo, David Murray, Faith Smith, Mimi Sheller and numerous others, synthesizing two decades of Caribbean sexualities literature and charting new conceptual terrain in their own distinctive ways. Each of these author's inaugural scholarly monographs has received an award from the Caribbean Studies Association: King's *Island Bodies: Transgressive Sexualities in the Caribbean Imagination* won the 2015 Gordon K. and Sybil Lewis Award while Nixon's *Resisting Paradise: Tourism, Diaspora and Sexuality in Caribbean Culture* was awarded the 2016 Barbara Christian Prize. Taken together, these books focus attention upon the significance of erotic autonomy, creative expression, and cultural resistance in the region, not only in terms of the Caribbean present, but also its possible futures.

King and Nixon are both literary scholars with cultural studies orientations informed by queer theory and transnational feminism, yet each pursues a unique project with its own set of source materials and research methodology. Both compellingly insist that scholars recenter Caribbean realities in ways that counter persistent mythologies about the region. King maps regional patterns of heteropatriarchy and its spectrum of sociosexual transgressions in relation to an assortment of Anglophone, Francophone, Hispanophone and Néerlandophone literary and cultural materials,

producing a sort of quasi-ethnographic portrait of what she coins the "Caribglobal" cultural imagination with regard to gender, sexuality, and agency. Nixon focuses upon the work of diasporic Afro-Caribbean women writers in conjunction with artists and cultural workers in Jamaica and the Bahamas in order to interrogate the political economy of travel, tourism and sexual labour in the region and how Caribbean identities are produced at the intersections of tourism and diaspora. Seeking to draw broad-ranging conclusions about this complex region and the people who live and travel there, both scholars foreground literature yet also analyze other forms of popular cultural expression, such as film and visual arts, within frameworks emphasizing neocolonial continuities in economy and society.

Angelique Nixon's *Resisting Paradise* explores responses to the way "paradise" functions as a racialized, gendered and sexualized trope that perpetuates neocolonial domination of the Caribbean, also thereby conditioning the production of literary and cultural expression related to the region. Nixon reiterates Derek Walcott's critique of regional governmental dependence on the tourist economy and its impact upon Caribbean consciousness at the expense of autonomy and sustainability. In this regard, she also extends Ian Strachan's (2002) *Paradise and Plantation: Tourism and Culture in the Anglophone Caribbean,* which interrogates relations of power rooted in the colonial era of plantation slavery that have been recontextualized within the contemporary political economy of tourism. Nixon engages the work of scholars, writers, poets and visual artists not only in order to examine how tourism shapes culture and experience among those living and working in the Caribbean, but also survey alternative ways of responding to the complex double-bind of economic dependency upon tourism. She hones in on an important, yet often overlooked element of the tourist market: diasporic subjects (based in the US, in Nixon's case) who travel to and within the Caribbean in order to maintain ties and reconnect with their heritage. Indeed, Nixon shows how influential Afro-Caribbean women writers have advanced critiques of tourism's neocolonial exploitation of the region through varied literary strategies, such as improvising upon and resignifying the travelogue genre. She also examines the projects of various "cultural workers" who have developed heritage or cultural tourism projects that seek to resist exploitation and—like the

literary and artistic representations she examines—oppose extant neocolonial consumption of the Caribbean.

Nixon's introductory chapter surveys interdisciplinary scholarship regarding the intensifying entanglements of migration, diaspora, travel and the political economy of tourism in and out of the Caribbean. Her second chapter, "Caribbean Migrant Writers and the Politics of Return," examines the work of US-based authors Jamaica Kincaid (from Antigua) and Edwidge Danticat (born in Haiti), whose diasporic-return writings challenge dominant narratives of the tourist experience through subversive refiguration of the tourist guide and conventional travel writing genres. Through their creative works, these "native tourist" authors position tourism as a site of anti-neocolonial struggle, thereby revising their own places within the Caribbean imagination while making contributions to representations of and discourse about the region. In chapter 3, "Black Female Travel: Diasporic Connections and Revolutionary Desire," Nixon's readings of Paule Marshall's and Audre Lorde's writings suggest the possibility of black female travel for pleasure, reconnection, and radicalization. These early chapters highlight the work of writers who offer a literary critique of what Krista Thompson has referred to as the "Caribbean picturesque."

The next section of Nixon's book turns to a comparative examination of the tourist industry and alternative touristic engagements in Jamaica and the Bahamas. Chapter 4, "Living and Imagining in Paradise: The Culture of a Tourist Economy," explores how those working within the Bahamian industry challenge the mythology of a Caribbean paradise in their own respective ways. Nixon's interviews with workers and cultural producers reveal their own yearnings for an industry more responsible to the community within which it is located, yet they espouse variably critical consciousness in relation to how dependent each is upon the industry (perhaps unsurprisingly, she finds that those more dependent tend to be less overtly critical). Nixon also charts the commercialization and commodification of Junkanoo, which has paradoxically depleted the soul of this Afro-Caribbean festive tradition while also supporting its expansion and the economic livelihoods of its performers and producers. In Chapter 5, "Negotiating Tropical Desires in Social and Political Landscapes," Nixon considers the work of Jamaican scholar-activist Erna

Brodber, who has produced a local community initiative called "educo-tourism" that provides ethical alternatives for travel to Jamaica and a focused space for reclaiming and re-educating black Atlantic identities, both homegrown and diasporic. This effort aligns with Brodber's literary work, such as her novel *Myal* (1988), which counters dominant narratives of Afro-Caribbean cultural history. Here Nixon also discusses her interview with Jamaican filmmaker Esther Figueroa, while reading her documentary *Jamaica for Sale* (2009) as a similarly spirited critique of neocolonial exploitation and domination by foreign capital and the tourist industry.

With Chapter 6, "Vexed Relations: The Interplay of Culture, Race, and Sex," Nixon further questions the impact of neocolonial mythologization of the Caribbean as paradise in relation to sexual labour and the erotic exploitation of black bodies. She explores Michelle Cliff's *No Telephone to Heaven* (1987), Oonya Kempadoo's *Tide Running* (2001), and poetry by Christian Campbell, all of which, she argues, uniquely highlight troubling continuities between the colonial past and present predicaments with regard to sexual relations and diverse forms of erotic expression. Nixon's feminist positioning as a "black mixed race Caribbean queer woman from poor and working class roots" is essential, even as it gets buried in this rigorous, mulitivocal project, only surfacing toward the end of the final chapter the book, "Rethinking Sites of Caribbean Rebellion and Freedom." In line with her transnational feminist perspective, Nixon inserts herself briefly yet compellingly into the text through poignant reflections upon the life experiences of her mother and grandmother. Gender, race, class, sexuality and the politics of identity in the Bahamas for these three generations of women inform Nixon's epistemic privilege on this topic throughout. She concludes by posing important and personal questions concerning Caribbean sexuality as a commodity juxtaposed with a politics of respectability that simultaneously subjugates local subjects while rationalizing the alienating trope of paradise.

Nixon's overall effort is a timely contribution to the field, given deeply entrenched patterns of economic dependency upon tourism and its dominating effects upon the lives of those who work in and are exploited by the industry in the Caribbean. And while she offers no overt solutions to manifold problems and dilemmas, Nixon productively explores ways the Caribbean and its diasporic

thinkers, writers, artists and activists have developed critiques of neocolonial forms of exploitation in travel and tourism within the region, and begun to formulate responses as well as cultivate alternative models. By strategically foregrounding the experiences and voices of black women in particular, she installs a critical shift in master narratives conditioned by androcentric colonialism and its ongoing structural and ideological legacies.

Our biggest concern with Nixon's theorization relates to what we see as an overly expansive and idealized concept of "resistance" applied to any form of consciousness, thinking, writing or artistic expression that criticizes or opposes neocolonialism and economic exploitation, whether or not it has real-world effects that change the situation. There is surely a difference between opposing exploitation in literature or art, for example, and more assertive forms of resistance that change existing political-economic structures and diminish domination. Indeed, as M. Jacqui Alexander emphasizes in (2005) *Pedagogies of Crossing: Meditations on Feminism, Sexual Politics, Memory, and the Sacred*, "the meeting ground occupied by the hegemonic and the oppositional is a troublesome one" (p. 11). To be clear, we are not downplaying the significance of literary or artistic representations that criticize inequality and power relations; indeed, sociopolitical change is impossible without disrupting dominant ideologies and changing hegemonic patterns of thought. However, a more nuanced conceptualization of "resistance" in relation to the materials analyzed by Nixon, one that is concerned with the messy contingencies of power relations and social change as compared with privileging the power of representation, would be especially valuable for readers cognizant of the Caribbean's deep and complex history of varying forms of oppositional culture, organized resistance, slave revolt, and political revolution. To invoke Nixon's Lordean terminology, in other words, "revolutionary desire" does not necessarily make for "resistance" in every instance.

Rosamond King's *Island Bodies* thoughtfully parses the diverse spectrum of transgressive sexualities in the Caribbean, concerning not only queer sexualities and transgender experience, which are empirically and conceptually important on their own terms, but also female heterosexual behavior and expression that transgresses Afro-Creole respectability, as well as interracial male heterosexual relations with white women, which King addresses as a form of

ethnoracial transgression via heterosex. This is a productive strategy that foregrounds an analytical focus on sexual and gender variability while simultaneously throwing into relief the dominant ideologies and structures that condition the field of social relations. King aspires to speak about the entire region by interrogating the heteropatriarchal matrix encompassing and conditioning everyone's experience to some degree, thereby producing the range of sexual expression and gender transgression she explores through various cultural forms and discursive registers. Her source materials are literature and popular culture in addition to visual arts, film and documentary videography, as well as several instances of queer activism and community building. She pursues her analysis with an awareness of sex and sexuality as vehicles of both domination and autonomy.

In chapter one, "The Caribbean Trans Continuum and Backhanded Re/Presentation," King acknowledges the complex realities of transgender experience in the region and posits a continuum of experience from transsexual through transgendered to performative transvestism, demonstrating not only how literary representations of transgender folks are growing and diversifying, but also interrogating how trans characters are nonetheless still largely portrayed in regional literature as quasi-shamanic healers in supporting roles serving the social order's main protagonists. King also examines the ways transvestism in cultural festivity such as Carnivals or Crop-Overs of yesteryear tended to mock proletarian black femininity and womanhood, which reinforced masculinist heteropatriarchal ideology. In both instances—literature and popular culture—these forms of trans representation are therefore "backhanded" and far from liberatory or resonant with actual transgender experience.

King's second chapter, "'El Secreto Abierto': Visibility, Confirmation, and Caribbean Men Who Desire Men," moves to the phenomenon of male-male erotic relations as constituting what Lawrence La Fountain-Stokes has referred to as the "open secret," by which male homosexuality in the region is tolerated so long as it is pursued or conducted with public discretion (in counterpoint with the liberal bourgeois North Atlantic injunction on visibility and "coming out"). King rightfully emphasizes that the Caribbean "problem" with homosexuality is not so much homosex, per se, as it is with behavior that transgresses heteropatriarchal gender

ideology—hence the widespread pejorative cultural focus on the shame and danger of effeminacy. In this regard, King insightfully argues that the recent rise of political homophobia in the region is largely a ruse that serves to distract from deeper structural problems of postcolonial sovereignty and economic dependence within the capitalist world-system. What King does not account for, however, are complex processes of social change by which some contemporary gay men have become more visible and value being "out" in ways that resonate with, yet do not entirely mimic, dominant Western models of visibility.

Writing about "'This Is You': 'Invisibility,' Community, and Women Who Desire Women," King turns in chapter three to the contrasting case of constructed lesbian invisibility in the region, by which female homosexuality is largely disappeared from cultural consciousness despite the subcultural reality of woman love. In other words, lesbianism seems to constitute a sort of "present absence"—interestingly, even including in literature by lesbian authors such as the late Michelle Cliff and Dionne Brand—whereas male homosexuality operates as an "absent presence" in Caribbean ideology, which King attributes to the androcentrism and politics of heteropatriarchy in Caribbean societies more generally. She also considers activism among women who desire women in Cuba, Trinidad, and the Dutch Antilles here, noting that these efforts focus more upon social support and community-building over visibility and overt political intervention. King is at pains to clarify that the mythology of lesbian invisibility is not the same as actual invisibility, encouraging us to think more in terms of "near" invisibility.

Chapter Four, "'Force-Ripe': Caribbean Women's Sexual Agency," explores representations of heterosexual female agency in ritual performance, literature, and popular music in relation to what King dubs the "Cult of True Oomanhood," an Afro-Creole iteration of Eurocolonial morality premised upon heterosexual conjugality, reproduction, serial monogamy, and double-standard gender norms. King's analysis discloses pervasive regional ambivalence about women's erotic agency across a range of sociocultural registers. Caribbean popular music seems to be more accepting of heterosexual female expression and autonomy than other forms of cultural expression, as she vividly demonstrates with regard to the popular work of Jocelyn Béroard (zouk), Drupatee

Ramgoonai (chutney), Ivy Queen (reggae), Alison Hinds (soca), and Rihanna (pop music). King develops a poetic analogy with the colloquial Anglophone expression "force-ripe" in this chapter, which seems to capture the overdetermined status of women's sexual agency in the Caribbean as generally repressed by dominant codes of heteropatriarchal respectability, as well as stigmatized or disciplined when asserted beyond this matrix. Yet the metaphor is ambiguous, since fruit picked early by others in order to compel premature ripening would seem to conflict with her analysis of women's own agency in "ripening" themselves in Caribglobal contexts of sociosexual constraint and domination. The analogy is nonetheless provocative.

In the final chapter, King once again skillfully invokes colloquial language to explore cultural meanings. Playing on Bob Marley's lyrics as well as his interracial relationship, "One Love? Caribbean Men and White Women" considers the different form of transgression concerning interracial relations between black Caribbean men and white non-Caribbean women that contravenes conventional racial boundaries from both sides of the equation. She does so by exploring examples of celebrity romances such as the Jamaican Marley, Porfirio Rubirosa (of the Dominican Republic) and Waldemar Nods (Surinam) in addition to various literary and filmic texts. King examines how an ideology of sex with white women feeds off of the "black stud" stereotype harkening back to racist colonial imagery and serves as a sort of compensatory reinforcement of Caribbean machismo through the pseudo-conquest of white women, including when this transpires in sexual labour transactions and romance tourism. These interracial relations may therefore be transgressive, but not in the same way as the other forms of counter-hegemonic sexuality explored in King's study. Notably, the differences between regional experience and that of the diaspora emerge most significantly here as compared with the other forms of transgressive sexuality surveyed by King. She does not consider the opposite scenario of sexual relations between Caribbean women and non-Caribbean men.

King's afterword ends on a positive note, acknowledging the reality of heteropatriarchal domination and problems of discrimination in the region, yet asserting the integrity of "Caribglobal" sexualities and erotic autonomy against global Northern hegemony and its corollary homonationalisms. Indeed,

King's effort to deconstruct the trope of Caribbean "homophobia" is an important theme throughout the book. And the concept of *Caribglobal* represents her effort to speak not only about the Caribbean region in conventional geocultural terms, but also incorporate analytical attention to its diaspora abroad. That said, it must be noted that her attention is less directed overall toward diaspora experience (especially when compared with Nixon, for whom the terminology of Caribglobal may have been even more useful).

Moreover, in King's ambitious effort to speak in sweeping generalizations about the region as a whole, much of the Caribbean's kaleidoscopic variability tends to get lost in the shuffle, making her treatment of some sub-regions stronger than others, as she herself acknowledges. Suggesting as King does that scholarship on gender roles in the Spanish Caribbean has been focused primarily on masculinity, for example, dismisses a significant amount of scholarship about women in Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic and Cuba that has been produced by and is in dialogue with feminist scholars and activists throughout the region and its attendant network of intellectual collaborators across Latin America. While King is clearly aware of regional cultural diversity, her overall treatment moves in a homogenizing direction situated in what anthropologists call the "ethnographic present"—a representational strategy that paints a coherent cultural portrait suspended in time, yet which has sustained cumulative critique in recent decades. Her comparison of the contrapuntal tropes of (in)visibility with regard to female and male homosexuality is helpful as far as a purely cultural or ideological analysis goes, but it begs the important matter of how public discourse is lived, navigated, negotiated and challenged at the level of experience. Indeed, while King often invokes experience in her analysis and says she is more interested in desire and behavior than identity at the outset, her study remains constrained by the limits of the source materials she examines. Yet in this way, she effectively reorients and raises questions for further empirical study.

These two studies productively complement one another not only in terms of their different considerations of sexuality and sexual labour, but also in terms of their relative focus: King focuses more on "the" Caribbean despite her discourse about the Caribglobal, whereas Nixon frames her inquiry more from the

diasporic angle, although they are each clearly concerned with both sides of this very complex equation. King uses the language of the postcolonial more frequently than Nixon, who emphasizes the postcolonial condition as primarily neocolonial in ways that may shift the focus away from King's concern with autochthonous Caribbean imagination and sociality. Yet to the extent that both emphasize the enduring legacies of colonial slavery, racism and economic domination, they share a similar critical postcolonial orientation. They both also privilege literary narrative and practices of cultural representation such as visual arts, popular musics and public festivity—cultural texts that afford critical analyses of ideology and discourse, but can neither speak directly to matters of experience, nor fully account for patterns and questions of sociocultural change with regard to heteropatriarchy and neocolonialism, despite their respective concerns with transgressive sexualities and cultural resistance. Each scholar could have highlighted with greater specificity their respective methodological approaches from literary to cultural text, and among both still and moving images, in order to better account for how they explicate the significance of these varying forms of expression.

It is also pertinent to note that, for studies published midway through the second decade of the 21st century, both authors are almost entirely unconcerned with the extensive and complex use of digital culture and social media associated with and flowing through the region. Indeed, social media are the means through which economic, political, emotional, sexual and creative ties are increasingly sustained and continually remapped across transnational Caribbean communities and within the Caribglobal imagination, and through which "paradise" is ever re-mythologized. Despite the fact that a significant amount of cultural creativity, information dissemination and ideological reformulation takes place within the vicissitudes of online and hyperlinked networks of visual culture and social discourse produced and consumed by Caribglobal people themselves, these forms of discourse and debate remain unaddressed in both books. While of course no one can do everything, and Nixon and King help clarify terrain whose gaps may now be better researched in light of their work, this omission seems symptomatic of each author's overall lack of explicit theoretical concern with neoliberal "globalization"—what Alexander (2005) interrogates as the neo-imperial

machinations of late modern financial capitalism and the surveillance state.

The contemporary Caribbean remains a consumable good among travelers and tourists, both diasporic and foreign, not to mention among locals themselves. The Caribbean is also something those of us researching and writing about the region actively consume through our own forms of representation and discursive engagement in increasingly complex transnational conversations among "natives" and "travelers" within an uneven international political economy of publication. Even as we seek to make sense of colonialism and neocolonialism, and to interrogate mythologies as we struggle to represent the realities of those living in and traversing the region, we are complicit in dynamics of power related to gender, sexuality, economic mobility, anti-blackness and hierarchies of color profoundly nuanced by context and culture. Through their thoughtful, meticulous work, Angelique Nixon and Rosamond King not only compel us to think more deeply and critically about new interpretations of Caribglobal sexualities, economies and the influences of diaspora within and beyond, but they also raise the stakes for reading political, literary and artistic representations across this diverse and complex region.

Book Review

Daich, Deborah and Sirimarco, Mariana (2015). *Gender and violence in the sex market: Politics, police and prostitution*. Buenos Aires: Biblos.

Daich, Deborah y Sirimarco, Mariana (2015). Género y violencia en el mercado del sexo: Política, policía y prostitución. Buenos Aires: Biblos.

Prostitution, constructed since the late nineteenth century as a valid social problem in some local contexts, is now being rethought using new tools of understanding. The discussions in this book aim to challenge the tenacious perspective associated with an international concern about the growth of global trafficking networks in the early twenty first century. The anti-trafficking agenda is now hegemonic and has succeeded in overshadowing the diversity of experiences within local articulations of the sex market.

While in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and México prostitution is not prohibited, the police, the bureaucracy, abolitionist movements and non-governmental organizations seekingto combat trafficking and carry out the anti-trafficking policies of the nation states in response to international protocols and conventions, establish permanent control over the sex markets, which materializes into concrete repressive practices. The seven chapters of this indispensable compilation, most of which show a fruitful interaction between academy and sex worker organizations, are dedicated to unraveling those complex intertwining dimensions in both contemporary practices of policing and control of prostitution as well as in certain moments of the colonial and newly independent history of Latin America.

Mexican ethnologist Marta Lamas tracks down the origin of stigma against prostitutes. The pre-Hispanic figure of the "honest whore" associated with religious rituals was replaced by the whore-decent woman dichotomy introduced by the Spanish conquerors. With the advent of the French legal model of public health control in the nineteenth century and the abolitionist model in the twentieth, commercial sex work faced police control as part of the "organization" of the public sphere. Prostitutes started to organize themselves in the 70s, obtaining recognition of their occupation by the Mexican legal system in 2012 and licenses to work on the streets as self-employed workers. Nevertheless, the increasing tendency to criminalize commercial sex makes these licenses a relatively weak solution in a context of punitive policies rooted in a puritan, sexually panicked attitude.

For Argentinian historian Cristiana Schettini, the control of prostitution in Buenos Aires in the late nineteenth century, through regulation of the houses where it was practiced, can be explained only through understanding that the intervening powers, namely the municipality and the police, were themselves undergoing processes of organization and reform. Far from there being a chaotic and arbitrary conception of the actions of these powers, the author discovers that the organization of the sex market was the arena in which municipal inspectors and commissioners sought to establish the boundaries of their legitimacy by delineating the sex trade, real estate, and the moral order of the city.

The chapter by Argentinian anthropologists Daich and Sirimarco. shows how problematizing the relationship between the

police and prostitutes means questioning the category of 'victim' imposed on those practicing prostitution and focusing on the active deployment of strategies to evade police controls. Arbitrary policing is ensured by the Contraventional Code of Buenos Aires City that penalizes the supply and demand of "ostensible" sex in public places. As prostitution is conceptualized in moral terms, the purpose of the control becomes the maintenance of the "good order" of the city, protecting the public gaze from the sex trade. Police control operates through the use of insults, and even physical force, aimed at attacking the body of the prostitute, anchored in a matrix of gender inequality where the male assumes authority and exercises violence and power. Surprisingly, the authors discover that the prostitutes employ the same gender-based repertoire, using flirtation, the promise of sex, and their image as mothers and caregivers, to creatively negotiate challenges from the police.

In Colombia, the control of prostitution is also left to the police despite their proved inability to protect rights and create suitable conditions for the practice of prostitution. Colombian researcher José Miguel Nieto Olivar shows that his country's Penal Code leaves legal voids that enable police actions through the control of health, territory and public behavior. However, the emergence of organized and unorganized sex workers onto the public stage reveals the arrival of new political actors who have achieved major changes in existing projects, and shattered concepts of morality and their engrained symbolic power.

Explaining the revival of prostitution as a public issue within local contexts (especially in Argentina), Argentinian anthropologist Cecilia Varela traces its articulation to political decisions taken by organizations at transnational and supranational levels in a context of intense but restricted migration flows. Forms of control of prostitution in Argentina are strongly informed by the construction of the problem of human trafficking in the United States, which in seeking to establish itself as a moral leader on gender and sexualities, exerts strong economic and financial pressure on other states to comply with their policies, imposing tough controls on immigration. In partnership with abolitionist feminist movements, it imposes a paradigm of prostitution as a form of trafficking and violence against women, which is appropriated locally within the rhetoric of disappearances that is supported by movements for human rights in relation to the recent past and which, in practice,

are manifested in attempts to annihilate all forms of commercial sex.

One of the consequences of the appropriation of such policies in Argentina was the nationwide prohibition in 2011 of advertisements soliciting sex in newspapers, and of street flyers in Buenos Aires in 2012. As Déborah Daich explains, after police control of the streets intensified, many prostitutes decided to work "behind closed doors" and the "little papers" that offer their services along with an image and a phone number became the most effective way to advertise. Adherentsto the recent practice of removing these street flyers from public view invoke an anti-trafficking discourse that seeks to rescue the women from what might seem to be self-advertising but is "surely" capture by trafficking networks. In this way they are constructed as new social actors under a savior-esque and altruistic rhetoric that justifies their existence.

As Laura Lowenkron and Adriana Piscitelli detail, the process of the expansion of this humanitarianism, which feeds the social and legal figure of "the victim", is intertwined with the immigration policies of Brazil and Spain. In a comparative study of ways in which the two countries shape the discourse on trafficking, the authors show that the paradigm of victimization systematically violates the human rights of some migrants, presenting them as infants seeking protection and stripping them of the ability to manage their own lives. But the problem also resides in the fact that prostitutes declaring themselves as victims does not guarantee their access to rights as migrants but, rather, could lead to deportation given the arbitrary interpretations of the bureaucratic apparatus and the police.

As this compilation demonstrates, researchers in Latin American contexts, in cooperative dialogue with sex worker organizations, have shown there is considerable evidence to suggest that the interaction between domestic and international forces in designing anti-trafficking policies actually produces repressive mechanisms that are aimed at eradicating *all* kinds of commercial sex.

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La Guerra Contra los Seres Humanos: La Lucha Contra la Trata en el Caribe

Kamala Kempadoo

Este artículo considera la atención que dan los gobiernos de la región al tráfico humano en el Caribe. Primero, se examina cómo se ha clasificado a los países de la región según el informe anual sobre Trata de Personas entre 2001 y 2016, examinando las lagunas en los discursos hegemónicos sobre la trata, por ejemplo, el problema de las definiciones, las estadísticas, las pruebas, los fundamentos políticos del Informe TIP y las contradicciones en los índices de "desarrollo" en la región. Luego se pasa a examinar las respuestas de los gobiernos en la región. Se argumenta que la tensión, detectada en previas respuestas estatales, entre el número creciente de políticas contra la trata de personas y la negativa creciente a aceptar las definiciones e información producidas por el Departamento de Estado de los Estados Unidos, se ha intensificado y que el "daño colateral" de las intervenciones contra la trata sigue afectando a algunas de las poblaciones más marginadas y vulnerables de la región. Partiendo de los discursos contra-hegemónicos, el artículo también sugiere formas de abordar el tema respaldando los derechos humanos.

Palabras clave: lucha contra la trata, Caribe, migración, trabajo sexual, derechos humanos

La Guerre Contre les Etres Humains: La Lutte Contre la Traite dans les Caraïbes

Cet article considère l'attention portée à la traite des êtres humains dans les Caraïbes par les gouvernements de la région. Tout d'abord, il examine comment les pays de la région ont été positionnés dans le Rapport annuel sur la traite des êtres humains des États-Unis (TIP) de 2001 à 2016, en discutant des lacunes dans des discours hégémoniques à la traite, tels que les problèmes de définitions, de statistiques et de preuves, les fondements politiques du rapport de la TIP et les contradictions dans les indices de «développement» dans la région. Il examine ensuite les réponses des gouvernements des Caraïbes. Il est soutenu que la tension, identifiée dans les réponses antérieures de l'État, s'est intensifiée entre l'augmentation

des politiques de lutte contre la traite, le refus croissant d'accepter les définitions et les informations produites par le Département d'Etat américain et que le « dommage collatéral » des interventions dans la lutte contre la traite continue à affecter certaines des populations les plus marginalisées et vulnérables de la région. À partir des discours contre l'hégémonie, l'article suggère également des moyens pour aborder le sujet qui soutient les droits de l'homme.

Mots-clés: lutte contre la traite, Caraïbes, migration, travail sexuel, droits de l'homme

El Discurso Contra la Trata de Mujeres Dominicanas en Puerto Rico

Amalia L. Cabezas y Ana Alcázar Campos

Analizamos la ampliación del discurso contra la trata en Puerto Rico y su aplicación a los inmigrantes dominicanos. A partir de las entrevistas con los proveedores de servicios sociales, argumentamos que las mujeres dominicanas son invisibles en el discurso actual sobre la trata de personas por varias razones: su racialización en un contexto xenófobo, su trayectoria laboral íntima y los marcos nacionales e internacionales para entender el tráfico humano que las excluye de la categoría de víctima de la trata y determinan su clasificación como "extranjeras ilegales". Sostenemos que su racialización junto con su omnipresencia en espacios íntimos, frecuentemente mal regulados, de trabajo sexualizado (bares, cafés, espacios domésticos y de cuidado), las dominicanas son sujetos invisibles frente el reconocimiento social, y por tanto no merecen protección ni apoyo social.

Palabras clave: Trata de personas, dominicanos, Puerto Rico, Caribe, trabajo social

Discours sur la Traite des Femmes Dominicaines a Puerto Rico

Nous analysons l'expansion du discours contre la traite à Puerto Rico et son application aux immigrants dominicains. D'après les entrevues avec des fournisseurs de services sociaux, nous soutenons que les femmes dominicaines sont invisibles dans les discours actuels de la traite des êtres humains pour plusieurs raisons: la classification des races dans un contexte xénophobe, leur trajectoire de travail intime et les cadres nationaux et internationaux pour comprendre la traite des êtres humains qui les excluent de la catégorie de victime de la «traite» et de déterminer leur classement comme «étrangers illégaux». Nous soutenons que leur classification des races en conjonction avec leur omniprésence dans des espaces intimes, souvent mal réglementés par des travails sexuels (bars, cafés, espaces domestiques et espaces de soins), les dominicaines sont des sujets invisibles pour la reconnaissance sociale, et qu'elles ne méritent pas la protection sociale et du soutien.

Mots clés: la traite des êtres humains, Dominicains, Puerto Rico, Caraïbes, travail social

Explorando la Trata y la Explotación en la Frontera Internacional Brasileña en la Amazonía

José Miguel Nieto Olivar

En este artículo se presentan los resultados parciales de la investigación antropológica realizada entre 2010 y 2015 en Tabatinga, ciudad ubicada en la triple frontera de Brasil con Colombia y Perú en las Amazonas. Busco entender cómo se inició, se diseminó y se desarrolló el discurso sobre la trata en la región durante ese período. Me concentro en las múltiples relaciones entre las dinámicas sociales, sexuales y políticas locales y transfronterizas, y su relación íntima con la política y el discurso de "explotación sexual". Sostengo que el modelo de trata/explotación funciona como un medio para reproducir la gubernamentalidad y la desigualdad. Sugiero que el modelo de trata/explotación es un instrumento útil para construir una imagen mítica de la región, y sirve para actualizar las prácticas y discursos colonialistas y nacionalistas fuertemente marcados por el género.

Palabras clave: Explotación sexual, Perú, prostitución, movilidad transfronteriza

L'Exploration de la Traite et de L'exploitation sur la Frontière Internationale du Brésil en Amazonie

Dans cet article, je présente les résultats partiels de la recherche anthropologique menée entre 2010 et 2015 à Tabatinga, une ville située sur la triple frontière du Brésil avec la Colombie et le Pérou en Amazonie. Je cherche à comprendre comment les discours sur la traite des êtres humains sont arrivés, ont circulé et ont été produits dans la région pendant cette période. Je me concentre sur les multiples relations entre les dynamiques sociales, sexuelles et politiques locales/transfrontalières, et leur relation intime avec la politique et les discours «d'exploitation sexuelle». Je soutiens que le modèle de trafic/exploitation fonctionne comme un moyen pour reproduire la gouvernementalité et l'inégalité. Je suggère que le modèle de traite/exploitation est un dispositif utile pour construire une image mythique de la région, ce qui permet d'actualiser les pratiques et les discours coloniaux et nationalistes fortement marqués par le genre.

Mots-clés: Exploitation sexuelle, Pérou, prostitution, mouvements transfrontaliers

Organizando las y los Trabajadores Sexuales Transnacionales en América Latina: RedTraSex, Derechos Laborales y Humanos

Mzilikazi Koné

RedTraSex es una red transnacional latinoamericana para la organización de las y los trabajadores sexuales para rechazar y desafiar la narrativa persistente y dominante sobre el trabajo sexual, y la trata laboral y de personas. La existencia de la red destaca el papel de la acción colectiva necesaria para desafiar las leyes y abordar los derechos de las y los trabajadores sexuales en toda la región. RedTraSex representa a las organizaciones de las y los trabajadores sexuales en quince países de la región, y crea una visión alternativa para la organización y la afirmación de sus derechos y contribuye a la formulación de un lenguaje alternativo para la trata que se basa en las definiciones, las experiencias y la organización. Esta investigación analiza los escritos producidos por RedTraSex y las entrevistas cualitativas realizadas con miembros de La Sala, organización costarricense de las y los trabajadores sexuales.

Organisation des Travailleurs de Sexe Transnationales en Amerique Latine: RedTraSex, Droits du Travail et de l'Homme

RedTraSex est un réseau transnational latino-américain qui organise les travailleurs du sexe pour repousser et remettre en question le récit persistant et le plus important sur le travail sexuel, la traite de main-d'œuvre et des êtres humains. L'existence du réseau met en évidence le rôle de l'action collective nécessaire pour contester les lois et traiter les droits des travailleurs sexuels dans toute la région. En représentant des organisations de travailleurs sexuels dans quinze pays de la région, RedTraSex crée une vision alternative autour de l'organisation et de l'affirmation des droits des travailleurs sexuels et contribue à la formulation d'une alternative pour le langage de la traite des êtres humains fondée sur les propres définitions, expériences et organisation du travailleur sexuel. Cette recherche analyse les écrits produits par RedTraSex et les entretiens qualitatifs menés avec des membres de l'organisation costaricienne du travail sexuel, La Sala (La salle de séjour).

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Mzilikazi Koné has a PhD in Political Science from the University of California Los Angeles. Her areas of focus are in Race, Ethnicity and Politics (REP) and Comparative Politics. Her scholarly interests include the cross-disciplinary study of race and ethnicity and politics, women's groups, community and political organizing, sexual education and empowerment.

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