

# ‘Combating the Scourge’: Constructing the Masculine ‘Other’ Through U.S. Government Anti-trafficking Campaigns

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## I. INTRODUCTION

*Among them are hundreds of thousands of teen-age girls, and others as young as 5, who fall victim to the sex trade. There’s a special evil in the abuse and exploitation of the most innocent and vulnerable. The victims of the sex trade see little of life before they see the very worst of life—an underground of brutality and lonely fear. Those who create these victims and profit from their suffering must be severely punished. Governments that tolerate this trade are tolerating a form of slavery. . . . We must show new energy in fighting back an old evil. Nearly two centuries after the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade, and more than a century after slavery was officially ended in its last strongholds, the trade in human beings for any purpose must not be allowed to thrive in our time.*

—President George W. Bush, September 23, 2003

President Bush made this public address to the United Nations shortly after the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. In it, he represented trafficking as one of the “important issues” facing Americans and the world in the 21st century and noted that trafficking was a “third challenge” to security, akin to the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction and the War on Terror (Bush, 2003). In this speech, trafficking was elevated from a human rights issue on the periphery of international affairs discussions to one of the most pressing national security concerns. President Bush went on to state the view that trafficking posed a threat not because it endangered the physical safety of Americans, but instead because it destroyed the purity of young women and children trafficked around the world. The traffic in men was notably absent from his discussion, in spite of a number of emerging stories and cases that revealed that the problem of “modern day slavery” was broader than sex trafficking and included a specific trade in men and boys.

Almost eight years later, trafficking continues to capture the attention of the international media and politicians. While trafficking is increasingly linked to slavery (see Obama, 2010), it remains an issue because “there are thousands who are trapped in various forms of enslavement . . . Oftentimes

young women who are caught up in prostitution” (Obama, as cited in State Department, 2009, p. 2). A notable challenge to this limited image of trafficking came on August 31, 2010 when the international media reported that the Spanish authorities had arrested two groups of men for trafficking other men into Spain for sexual exploitation. Despite the clear evidence that these men were lied to, drugged, and forced and coerced into performing sex acts, many American news accounts and news blogs adopted non-trafficking terminology to describe the men, labeling them as “prostitutes,” “gigolos,” and “workers.” For instance, the headlines on the websites of the major American news services in August of 2010 read “Police dismantle male prostitution ring in Spain” (CNN.com) and “Spain: Gang Plied Gigolos with Cocaine, Viagra” (cbsnews.com). The effect of such coverage was to obscure these men’s status as victims, instead emphasizing that they were illegal sex workers. While in part the Bush Administration broadly rendered trafficking synonymous with prostitution (Doezema, 2010), it is particularly notable that the euphemisms used emphasized that these men engaged in sex work with women (as indicated by the term “gigolo”) had accepted the continuous supply of drugs, reinforcing the general assumption that men make choices and are less vulnerable than women and children (Doezema, 2010).

The trafficker is represented in similarly shallow ways. Both in the press and in the government-issued materials, he repeatedly is described as “evil” (Bush, 2003). He is, then, by his nature, unmanly and un-human. More than this, he is diseased, “ill,” and a “scourge” on society (Rice, 2010). Coupled with images of traffickers that show these men as foreign, the effect is to problematize the ethnic man not just as a slave, but also as the slave owner. As a result, trafficking relegates both trafficked men and traffickers to the status of “Others” who are risky. Trafficking both reproduces and draws on the stereotypes of non-American men, which suggest that these men negatively affect domestic employment rates, commit crimes, threaten national security, are a risk to “Our” welfare, and even will erode the American national identity (see Calivita, 2007). Current anti-trafficking regimes embody and restate xenophobic reactions directed against illegal migrant men, while often disguising the role domestic actors have in trafficking.

As Moyers (2008) notes, “Words have consequences,” and thus the political material on trafficking recreates a politics of hate around immigration that regenerates the conditions of poverty, restricted movement, and disempowerment driving trafficking itself (p. 1). Although the condemnation of the trafficker and his activities is understandable, the condemnation of him and the victim as foreigners who belong outside because they are inherently inferior and bad, is then deeply troubling. As Holmes notes, vio-

lent language is equivalent to murder and constitutes “vericide” (as cited in Moyers, 2008, p. 1). Dehumanizing, ideologically based media that creates a fear of the different “Other,” particularly the visibly dark-skinned man, exacerbates racist stereotypes “marketing fear and fault” (Block, 2009, p. 37). This kind of media conceals socio-political conditions that fuel trafficking, instead ascribing blame to individuals. Furthermore, it troublingly narrows discussions of trafficking and other immigration reform in the United States.

Discussing the ways in which current anti-immigrant sentiments are reproduced, specifically through public information campaigns on trafficking run by the United States government, allows for the exploration of the limits in current anti-trafficking thinking and opens up possibilities for reform of both the criminal law and immigration regimes. This article therefore not only explores how government anti-trafficking statements made between 1998 and 2010 create and reinforce divides in masculinities based on regimes of racial domination, but also notes particularly how anti-trafficking furthers the domination of white American masculinity. This masculinity must buttress borders, survey populations, and send home illegal men—acts that have all been implicated in creating migrant vulnerability in the first place (Aradau, 2004). My suggestion is that the current anti-trafficking regime therefore holds little promise for bringing about the end of trafficking violence, and thus discussion of trafficking must move beyond racial stereotyping and the immigration frame if we are to find new ways to attend to the human trade.

## II. THEORIZING ANTI-IMMIGRANT SENTIMENT AND NATIVISM IN THE UNITED STATES

Nativism and racism in America, embodied in hate speech directed against ethnic men, dates back to the Colonial period (see Calivita, 2007). Anglo-centric sentiments and concerns about the mobility of indentured servants after their release initiated an anti-immigrant rhetoric from the very beginnings of the United States (Glenn, 2002, pp. 33-34). Such sentiments, which regarded non-Anglo men as inferior and troubling, led to beliefs about the insecurity of racially and ethnically different men, which often infused into politics at the highest levels. Today, “new nativism,” the rebirth of the nativism of earlier periods of United States history, has emerged as a “policy of protecting the interests of native inhabitants against those of immigrants” (Burghart, 2007, p. 1). As Cole (1994) explains, immigrants, specifically immigrant men, are portrayed as overrunning America, taking jobs from Americans, exhausting American resources, destroying the unity of the American people, and not being entitled to con-

stitutional rights (see also Calivita, 2007). The core idea is that threatening persons must be pre-emptively identified and excluded by the police, immigration officials, and military, because these agencies are most qualified to identify whether the person has done something wrong and therefore deserves punishment or deportation. By producing and regulating identities (specifically through creating groups of “us” and “them”), the state constructs both what is to be feared (that is, what forms a threat), and notions of proper belonging (such as citizenship) and correct behaviors (such as nationalism or patriotism) (Campbell, 1998). It creates and restates categories of “Us” and “Other.”

While the United States guards its borders between “Us” and “Other” intensely, not all foreigners are treated in the same manner. As Ancheta (1998) notes, a process of “outsider racialization” is occurring. This process is twofold, involving, firstly, the categorization of some individuals as foreign regardless of citizenship (such as Asian, Latino, or Arab Americans), and secondly, the assumption that all immigrants derive from these racial groups. Some groups are accepted because of their whiteness, while others are immediately regarded as aliens. Crucially, white and whiteness are not rigid classifications, but instead evolving notions that have shifted since the colonization of America (Haney, 1994). White privilege is then a “historical fabrication” that is changeable and contingent (Haney, 1994; see also Jacobson, 1999). Nevertheless, being white continues to be a marker of capability, safety, and power. By contrast, ethnic men were regarded as unfavorable, savage, and even infantile, being demarcated as dangerous (see Spivak, 1985, 1988; Ihme, 2008; Connell, 2005; Hooper, 2001). This led to a social order in which, as Spivak detailed, “white men are saving brown women from brown men” (1988, p. 296).

This notion of the foreigner man as peculiarly and inherently risky has been examined extensively in the fields of hate studies, criminology, and international relations (see, for example, Jacobson, 1999; Mink, 1990; Calavita, 2007; King, 1999; Hansen & King, 2001; Dikotter, 1998; Aradau, 2004, 2006; Cole, 1994, 2003). Quite centrally, this literature increasingly notes that the foreign man is increasingly being formed as a “threat” through the ever-expanding process of “securitisation” (see Wæver, 2004). This process, according to the Copenhagen School, is a discursive practice, in which texts position specific entities or issues as posing a threat to a particular group, thereby justifying special treatment of the supposedly dangerous group. Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde (1998) suggest that the labeling of issues as “threats justifies the use of extraordinary measures to handle them” (p. 21). The foreign man comes to be exceptional (Agamben, 1999; Huysmans, 2004; Walker, 2006) and separate from ordinary society (Stumpf, 2006). Categories of belonging are then reinforced, as citizen and

foreign man are lined up against attributes such as innocent/guilty, admitted/excluded, and legal/illegal (Stumpf, 2006); “nonmembers are cast out of the community by means of borders, walls, rules, and public condemnation” (Stumpf, 2006, p. 44).

Militarization of border protection thus becomes a normalized function of white masculinity. Militarism, as Enloe (2000, 2007) details, not only prioritizes masculine values, but also injects cultural and racial beliefs into military regimes. What she suggests is that masculinity is made synonymous with white manhood, which is a version of manhood that dominates military and state institutions (Enloe, 2000, pp. 23, 26). Integrally, then, race, immigration, and crime are interwoven through discussions of foreign men threatening America through trafficking in weapons, drugs, and even people. Castro (2007) spells out this link, suggesting that “terrorism, drug-trafficking, and illegal immigration . . . [become] a unified threat to national security” (p. 12). Borders emerge not only as security zones, but also as places where criminality occurs, resulting in what Stumpf (2006) labels “crimmigration” regimes. In these regimes, criminal law and immigration law come together to exclude the risky “Other.” Both areas of law impose sanctions to reinforce and support this lower positioning of illegal men (Stumpf, 2006). The law reaffirms and justifies aggression against undocumented men while reaffirming the status of white men to adjudicate belonging and enforce borders. As Kraska summarizes:

The interwoven scripts of militarism and masculinity provide the cultural foundations for organized forms of violence by militaries and police, and their taken-for-granted scripts furnish a more diffuse, but still pervasive social network of threatened and real violence among individual men. (2001, p. 154)

Anti-immigrant sentiments embodied in anti-trafficking regimes that drive militant and enforcement policies thus extend violence, rather than ending it—a point which I consider in the sections that follow.

### III. WOUNDED WIMPS AND ALIEN WORKERS: CONSTRUCTING THE TRAFFICKED MAN

The centerpiece of the government’s anti-trafficking campaign is the annual *Trafficking in Persons Report* (“*TIP Report*”), issued by the Department of State as required by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000. These reports summarize all government anti-trafficking activities and provide a public account of trafficking both in America and globally. Integrally, these reports present a series of fictional “victim stories” as “testimonies” that are “meant to be representative . . . and illustrate the many

forms of trafficking and . . . the myriad forms of exploitation that define trafficking and the variety of cultures in which trafficking victims are found” (State Department, 2008, p. 4, 2009, p. 4). Also, the reports contain images, country narratives, and summaries of state-sponsored media campaigns, all of which are intended to inform agencies, non-government actors, and the public about what trafficking is. They are authoritative sources that guide funding and even inform the president’s decision to place sanctions on countries that fail to live up to America’s anti-trafficking standard.

Despite the focus on women in the presidential accounts detailed in the Introduction, in recent years, an increasing number of trafficking testimonies have appeared in the reports that detail the experience of trafficked men. The 2008 *TIP Report*, for example, provides the following account of the experiences of a trafficked man in China:

A man at a local train station offered 16-year old Shen, from a small Chinese farming community, a well-paying job in a nearby city which he eagerly accepted. Within hours, he and 12 others were bundled into a minivan and dumped at a brick yard where they were beaten, barely fed, and forced to perform heavy labor for 20 hours per day. Guards at the kiln would beat them with iron bars and wooden staves when they worked too slowly, at times smashing brick [*sic*] across a worker’s head or body. Guard dogs kept Shen and the other slaves living in fear. (State Department, 2008, p. 8)

An even more graphic and brutal account of trafficking to the United States follows:

Thirty-two year old “Sandro,” from the interior of Mexico, found himself in a migrant shelter in Tijuana. A recruiter approached him in the shelter and urged him to come to the U.S.-Mexico border to “take a look.” As they neared the border, the recruiter (knowledgeable of the shift change in the border patrol), pushed him over the border and instructed him to “run.” Sandro was guided by Mexican traffickers to a “safe house” where he was tied to a bed and raped about 20 times. He was then transported, at gun point, to another “safe” house in San Diego and forced into domestic servitude. Eventually, he was taken to a construction site during the day. His pay check was confiscated by his traffickers. He felt he had no recourse since he lacked even basic identification papers. His abuse continued when one of his traffickers forced him at gunpoint to perform sexual acts. (State Department, 2008, p. 6)

Notably, in both of these accounts, exposure to physical cruelty is brought to the forefront, with being beaten and raped emerging as core victim experiences. This does not suggest that these victims were subjected to “manly”

violence, but evidences that they were subjugated and rendered entirely unable to escape.

Indeed, the legal framework and executive actions repeatedly highlighted that physical violence is used to elicit services or labor, both from men and women. For example, the TVPA section 102(6) identifies that

victims are often forced through physical violence to engage in sex acts or perform slavery-like labor. Such force includes rape and other forms of sexual abuse, torture, starvation, imprisonment, threats, psychological abuse, and coercion.

The act goes on to suggest in section 102(9)–(10) that

trafficking includes all the elements of the crime of forcible rape when it involves the involuntary participation of another person in sex acts by means of fraud, force, or coercion. Trafficking also involves violations of other laws, including labor and immigration codes and laws against kidnapping, slavery, false imprisonment, assault, battery, pandering, fraud, and extortion.

The effect of such statements is to buttress the claim that trafficking is inherently damaging and criminal, and thus the TVPA is reinforcing existing legal prohibitions and previous agreements on despicable conduct. Similarly, President Obama, who stated in his January 4, 2010 address that victims are “often suffering from horrible physical and sexual abuse,” affirmed the destructive effects of trafficking. In light of both law and policy, the State Department surmises that the “impacts of human trafficking are devastating. Victims may suffer physical and emotional abuse, rape, threats against self and family, and even death” (State Department, 2009, p. 5).

For men, this experience of rape is troubling not only because it is violent, but also because it interrupts the usual constructions of masculinity and men’s embodiment. In particular, the notion of male brutalization and rape constructs the man’s body as unbound, violable, and subject to harm. This marks a clear departure from the usual construction of masculinities, wherein men are (usually) conceptualized as the penetrator (see Butler, 1993). Indeed, the penetration of the man (either through the violation of him sexually or of his skin) is regarded as particularly abhorrent because it violates the normal expression of masculinity wherein (heterosexual) men by definition desire to penetrate “the other” (e.g. a woman) and therefore are resistant to being penetrated by “the same” (e.g. a man) (Butler, 1993; cf Anderson, 1982; Hickson et al., 1994; Stermac et al., 1996). The brutalizing and penetration of the male victim’s body thus takes away both integrity

and autonomy from the victim, who becomes entirely impotent at the hands of the trafficker.

The male victim deserves special treatment and protection because he is violated and unable to defend himself. The state's intervention is necessary both to save him and to restore the normal gender order. As a result of being wounded and in distress, the male victim requires extraordinary treatment. He stands both as an "illegal alien" and as a "true" victim in need of aid and refuge. As the 2005 Department of Justice information brochure entitled "Distinctions Between Human Smuggling and Human Trafficking" suggests, "Persons smuggled are violating the law. They are not victims . . . key component[s] . . . that will always distinguish trafficking from smuggling are the elements of fraud, force, or coercion" (2005, p. 4). The victim's conduct is de-criminalized not because he is truly innocent—for he has clearly violated the law or the border—but because he deserves to be pitied (Aradau, 2004, 2008). He is absolved of his wrongful conduct because of his suffering (Aradau, 2004).

By emphasizing the physicality of suffering, trafficking in men becomes concerning because of the "physically demanding" nature of exploitation. Like the female victim, the male wholly succumbs to the violent trafficker and is therefore both objectified, and even feminized. His inabilities and powerlessness reaffirm not only his subordination, but also his inability to perform the idealized hegemonic masculinity. Unlike real men who are supposed to resist violence, the male trafficking victim is expected not to have resisted his traffickers and to not resist United States law enforcement and prosecution endeavors (see Christie, 1986; Aradau, 2008). Men are victims only if they are unable to do anything but cooperate; they are utterly passive, and during their experience of trafficking, they are wholly "unfree." Men, then, must be "captives": something that implicitly requires force or violence. This wording was adopted by Susan E. Rice, the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations, in her March 25, 2010 speech in which she called for "us [to] rededicate ourselves to the mighty task of setting free the captive—and to ensure that all make the journey from slavery to freedom." While the TVPA does not require physical force, accepting that psychological coercion is enough for trafficking, continual reminders that the victim is bonded or dominated occur in discussions of trafficked men. For example, the TIP reports use words and phrases to this effect throughout the report. Male trafficked persons become victims by being "lured" into the exploitative situation. For example, there are 24 instances of the use of the word "lured" in the 2009 *Report* and 22 instances in the 2010 *Report*. Most often, the word is used in the country narratives section with reference to how people are convinced to travel for jobs. It is employed in circumstances where individuals are captured with-

out force, but where their consent was fraudulently obtained, and thus highlights the ignorance and innocence of the victim.

This innocence is further illustrated by accounts of victims' being "abducted" or "forcibly recruited." Words such as "kidnapped" and "abducted" appear 5 and 24 times respectively in the 2009 *Report*, but both are overwhelmingly used with reference to women and children, and only with regard to men and boys when they are in warzones. The country narratives use the word "abducted" to describe the experience of men and boys in the Darfur region who were "subjected to forced labor in agriculture, herding, portering goods, and domestic servitude," emphasizing the particular invisibility and vulnerability of those present as civilians during conflict (p. 266). Similarly, "forcibly recruited" is used throughout the 2009 and 2010 TIP reports with reference to child soldiers. Notably, while "recruited" suggests an element of consent, the use of "forcibly" here works to erase such consent and make the child completely unable to exercise agency (see State Department, 2009, pp. 102, 107, 264, 2010, pp. 97, 108, 171, 358). It is also used in reference to girls and prostitution, again to emphasize the lack of agency (State Department, 2009, p. 109).

The lack of agency is reinforced by the suggestion that men are retained by being "locked" up. This word appears in five different testimonies included in the 2009 *Report*, detailing victims who were locked into rooms, houses, and apartments and thus were effectively held and "chained" (see pp. 17, 34, 38, 199, 220). In the 2010 *Report*, references are made to rooms, cells, and warehouses. It is also detailed that men are "trapped." The 2009 *Report* uses this word once (p. 2), but implies it several times throughout, stating that victims are often "trapped without assistance" (see p. 162). Prominently, CdeBaca, in his introductory letter in the 2009 *Report*, stated, "Globally, there are countless persons who labor in bondage and suffer in silence, feeling that they are trapped and alone" (p. 2; see also State Department, 2010, pp. 2, 23, 37). The use of the word "bonded" reinforces that the trafficker is the person curtailing the liberty of the victim. This word is used 56 times in the 2009 *Report* and 74 times in the 2010 *Report*, and notably is used primarily alongside labor or work. It implies a clear difference between trafficking and consensual employment, and brings to the forefront the subjugation of the individual. This linking of complete powerlessness to bondage is explained explicitly in the 2009 *Report* (State Department, p. 16). Combined with the suggestion that men are often "forced at gunpoint," the effect of these words and phrasings is to emphasize the condition of complete subjection and pain.

It is notable that the reference to guns is made only once in the 2009 *Report* with reference to the forcible giving of blood by a man who was trafficked for organ removal (State Department, p. 17). The overt use of an

immediate threat against his life highlights how his consent was completely absent due to an external stimulus, thus voiding it entirely. Such an account of organ trafficking sits in stark contrast to the research and scholarly articles, which suggest that most organs are acquired by payment and coercion rather than by overt violence (see Scheper-Hughes, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2008). However, armed men are also brought to the forefront in a victim testimony in the 2010 *Report*, with reference to men forced into labor onboard boats. Again, the noting of guns is used to suggest why a man was trapped upon a fishing boat—a place where most labor is assumed not to be coerced. The experience of violence in these accounts is so severe that it overwhelms and devastates the capacity to exercise any choice, and as such, victims perform labor or cross the border completely under the trafficker's control (Srikantiah, 2007, p. 194).

The male victim, then, is differentiated from other criminals and undocumented migrants in that he is not coerced merely by circumstance, but rather “by the actions of an individual wrongdoer: the trafficker” (Srikantiah, 2007, p. 192), discussed in the section that follows. Like the female victim, he is not simply coerced, but is hunted, and his treatment is something more akin to the treatment of an animal than a human being: He is “prey.” This word is used prolifically in government reports, including the 2009 *TIP Report*, and is often engaged with explicit reference to the external agent—the trafficker—exploiting a weakness and exerting power over the victim (see pp. 8, 33, 36, 44, 191, 248, 260, 275, 278; also see Bush, 2006; USAID, 2004; Department of Justice, 2008). Trafficking in this sense is about the denial of his humanity and involves “egregious human rights abuses” (Office of the White House Press Secretary, 2000; see also Obama, 2010). Highlighting his injuries and suffering in this way not only induces sympathy, but also constructs the affront against him as an affront against humanity as a whole.

Notably, this rights-cased formulation mirrors the depictions of old chattel slavery, wherein the focus is on the slave's being chained and bonded (Azmy, 2002, pp. 982-983). This analogy was made explicit by Luis CdeBaca, Ambassador-at-Large of the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons of the Department of State, in his Opening Statement to the House of Representatives, wherein he pointed out that “as old as the practice of slavery may be, the criminals that bind these people's hopes by force, fraud, and coercion are looking for new ways to commit these crimes,” and therefore the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons is guided toward “freeing more people from the shackles of modern slavery and preventing this human rights abuse in the first place” (2010a, p. 18). The binding of the modern victims has not only a descriptive function, detailing the frequent discovery of victims who are locked up or physically

restrained, but also a metaphorical function, linking trafficking to the image of antebellum slavery. This configuration not only acts to affirm that trafficking has a link to rights and international development, as it emphasizes a direct violation of the Constitution and the American principle of abolitionism, but also directly couples trafficking with race, as well as gender.

Most notably, by emphasizing bondage in concert with physical brutality, the analogy suggests that trafficking marks the placement of the trafficked man outside of normal American society. Because regular men possess freedom both of choice and of movement (see Connell, 2005), the use of violence and torture to restrict the male victim makes his experience exceptional and anomalous. His suffering, pain, and desperation stand in stark contrast to the normal male experience, wherein men are expected to control both their emotions and their environment. Because proper masculine performance involves self-reliance, it is "unmanly" to be dependent and seek help (Struve, 1990). The "ideal man" is silent, robust, and in charge of his emotions, and thus is not to talk about his abuse or to seek help (Mills, 1993). "Real" men are stoic, or aggressive, when faced with insecurity and emotion, and thus the male victim's insecurity and misery make him a lesser entity, and his expression of masculinity is rendered improper and inferior (Goffman, 1963, p. 128). The suggestion is that the proper ordering of things can be repaired only through the provision of the liberal regime to the male victim and through the implementation of liberal-democratic principles in the countries where trafficking takes place. Rather paradoxically, freedom is achievable only through an offer of protection from the state, making a regime that resembles colonialism appear normal. Integrally, though, protection requires submission to state processes and treatments, and thus submission to the state is required and discursively bolstered.

The absolute submissiveness of the victim to the state is reinforced by the T visa scheme set out in the TVPA. Under this scheme, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS), along with other services, must file, process, and certify victims. The Department of Health and Human Services (n.d.) states that

the certification process typically takes only a few days after HHS is notified that a person has made a bona fide T visa application or has been granted continued presence status (both of these actions are done by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security). ("The Certification Process," para. 1)

While on its face this procedure attends to the fact that many trafficked individuals do not speak English, it also implies the complete incapability of the victims, who cannot file their application, even in their own lan-

guage, which could later be translated and reviewed. Foreign victims lack any resourcefulness or expertise: They are by their very nature helpless, even infantile, which reinforces many of the assumed stereotypes projected during the eugenics movement that held salience in the 19th and early 20th centuries (see Calivita, 2007). More than this, the victim lacks any credibility, and gains status as an authentic victim only through the state, which can determine whether his story adequately assigns him the position of innocence and helplessness. Only once a man is certified can he gain special rights and legal status, which will re-masculinize him and place him as a real man—that is, as an American man. The United States must educate and heal him. Although he has succumbed to the trafficker and therefore has been a troublingly subordinate entity, the state has the capacity to save him and other incompetent ethnic men from other evil ethnic men who wish to exploit them, and through visa status and compliance with the American state offer him the possibility of belonging.

#### IV. A ‘SPECIAL EVIL’ AND A ‘SCOURGE ON SOCIETY’: CONSTRUCTING THE TRAFFICKER AS A THREATENING DEVIANT

By focusing on trafficking as the exploitation of a passive victim, the actor enslaving him or her—the trafficker—becomes central in anti-trafficking discussion. Because trafficking is regulated as a criminal transgression, rather than as an economic or a development issue, the focus is taken off of the conditions in which trafficking happens. The current regime obscures other causes of trafficking, such as disparities in development and lack of legal migration options (especially for women who have a role in producing trafficking) (Berman, 2003). Instead, an active perpetrator is blamed. As the TVPA section 102 notes:

Traffickers primarily target women and girls . . . Traffickers lure women and girls into their networks through false promises of decent working conditions at relatively good pay . . . Traffickers also buy children from poor families and sell them into prostitution or into various types of forced or bonded labor.

Responsibility for exploitation is located with the offender, who “targets,” “lures,” and “buys” his way into the illicit market, reaffirming the complete innocence of this victim (Christie, 1987; Doezema, 2010, pp. 115-116).

However, little is said about who traffickers actually are, other than that they are “cruel individuals,” including “mobsters” and “organized criminals” who are exploiting women and must be stopped. When a photograph of a trafficker is provided, it is generally blurred across the eyes, or the face is obscured by positioning the camera behind the individual. Such

positioning is particularly apparent in the 2006 *TIP Report* at page 14, which shows images of a trafficker dragging a victim to a vehicle. The photo does not show the man's face.



Since key facial features are obscured, the reader and the public must deduce, or imagine, who might form this class of offender. Because there is no human face on the trafficker, the figure becomes elusive and monstrous as a result of its obscurity. The effect of face hazing is not only to protect the offender's identity, but also to depersonalize and "strip" him of his "human background" (Doyle, 1998, pp. 100-101). The text accompanying the image states that the offender belongs to a Japanese gang; however, the public is not told who he actually is. In part, this is because the government wants the public to look for trafficking everywhere. The public is told repeatedly that traffickers come from all walks of life, with the reports' images confirming this diversity both in men and in the women they exploit. As Ambassador CdeBaca suggested in a CNN interview on April 4, 2010 in answer to the question "Who are the traffickers?":

There's not necessarily one profile. For every case we get, which involves, say, for instance, the stereotypical, you know, Russian-organized crime boss or something like that, you have an opportunistic, abusive employer . . . at the end of the day, we're looking at a vulnerable victim and somebody who is willing to cross that line into enslaving someone else. (2010b, para. 208)

Just as the images depicting only men as traffickers suggest that the offender can be generalized as male, this account suggests that they are also different from good men and can be identified because they are a "special evil" (Bush, 2003).

Because the public do not know what the trafficker looks like, they must work from the characterizations of the trafficker provided by the government and media. These campaigns clearly depict the trafficker as bringing his victims to America, and thus a core characteristic assumed is that he

is foreign. Images like that of the Japanese man act to confirm this attribute in the minds of the public. But because his face cannot be seen, the suggestion is implicitly that the trafficker could be *any* foreign man. Constant surveillance and directed border control techniques are necessary to protect Americans, as these can detect suspect characteristics and isolate the trafficker. All incoming foreigners must be observed and checked. Crucially, this supports the U.S.-VISIT program, wherein everybody is fingerprinted and photographed indiscriminately either at the time of applying for a visa or for those on visa-waiver programs at the United States' border, and matched against law enforcement databases, both national and international (State Department, 2004b). Every arrival is a risky body. However, men are especially risky, as evidenced by the requirement implemented in 2002 that they fill out the additional Supplemental Non-immigrant Visa Application (DS-157). This form is required of all male non-immigrant visa applicants between the ages of 16 and 45, regardless of nationality and regardless of where they apply, and requires men to provide a detailed family, employment, and service history (Powell, 2002). The effect of such a regime is specifically to delineate young foreign men as most threatening. Coupled with repeated allusions to the trafficker's being black and "dark," the view presents the public with the notion that traffickers are ethnic men, not Americans.

The blackness of the trafficker is not only physical, but also metaphorical. The trafficker is morally corrupt, as he is engaged in the "the dark trade" (State Department, 2009, p. 31). In the State Department's 2009 *TIP Report*, for instance, the trafficker is presented as a person who engages in activities that are "horrific" (p. 15), "cruel" (p. 175), "heinous" (p. 27), a "nightmare" (p. 8), a "debasement" (p. 2), and "repugnant" (p. 24). The person who engages in trafficking, in short, is wicked and an "evil" that is both "special" and "old" (State Department, 2004a, pp. 5, 12-13, 2005, p. 9). This government mirrored this depiction in anti-trafficking materials distributed in South America that stated, "I asked God to help me leave my country, and the devil heard me. Don't Be Fooled, you could be a victim of human trafficking."

A similar representation was made by Representative Neil Abercrombie in his speech advocating the signing of the TVPA on May 9, 2000, wherein he stated that trafficking is

an evil . . . one of the worst human rights violations of the contemporary world. . . . Traffickers use rape, starvation, torture, extreme physical brutality and psychological abuse to force victims to work in horrible conditions as prostitutes, in sweatshops or domestic servitude. (Section 13)



(Department of Homeland Security, 2010)

While violence is not by itself always regarded as wrong, as it is central to masculine performance, the violence described here as enacted by the trafficker is wrongful because it is undertaken in the wrong context and with improper aims. It is not enacted to protect women (and thus affirm gender privilege and orderings), but instead is abnormal, extreme, and committed to make money (see Connell, 1995, 2005). As Nancy Murphy said to the House Committee on International Relations on June 25, 2003, “As horrific as it is, traffickers see good business in this pool of human misery and take great advantage of it” (p. 55). The trafficker is fundamentally greedy, and thus sinful.

Government statements reiterate his immoral disposition. For example, Mark Lagon, then-Ambassador and Senior Advisor to the Secretary of State, suggested that “some societies treat minorities as disposable . . . which allows victims to be enslaved as sadistic and greedy exploiters go unpunished” (2008, para. 2). Similarly, Condoleezza Rice, former Secretary of State, in her letter in the 2007 *TIP Report*, identified that “perpetrators prey on the most weak among us, primarily women and children, for profit and gain.” The trafficker is not impoverished or acting out of desperation, but is instead money-hungry and materialistic (see CdeBaca cited in State Department, 2009, p. 2). The 2009 *Report* encapsulates this view, holding that “poverty alone does not explain this tragedy [e.g. trafficking], which is driven by fraudulent recruiters, employers, and corrupt officials who seek to reap profits from others’ desperation” (p. 9). This perspective is supported by an image that appears in the 2010 *Report*, which depicts the trafficker surrounded by money and wearing jewels.

The suggestion is that the trafficker engages in the ruthless business of



(State Department, 2010, p. 29)

exploiting others simply because he has the capacity to make a vast income. He, and by proxy the outsider, is a callous profiteer. The trafficker's conduct is not, then, a manifestation of the market, but rather corrupts it. He disrupts the economic system by undercutting normal costs, and is ruthless in his search for wealth. More than this, he uses his money for sinister purposes. As the Congressional Research Service (CRS) (2010) reports, "Human trafficking is now a leading source of profits for organized crime syndicates, together with drugs and weapons, generating billions of dollars" ("Summary," para. 1).

This confirms, as discussed above, that foreign men are involved in a host of entwined practices that not only threaten national security, but also are criminal. The state must then intervene not only to punish them, but also to prevent attacks on America. By seizing the trafficker's assets, the state can prevent him from using them for corrupt ends such as sponsoring terrorism or other crimes. As Murphy observed to the House Committee on International Relations on June 25, 2003:

Trafficking is a profound form of terrorism directed against women and children worldwide. Not unlike the victims of 9/11, these women and children are leading normal lives by their own cultural standards when a sudden, unexpected blow comes from outside that not only destroys their individual lives at the "point of impact" but also sends shock waves shuddering through their families, villages, and whole societies. Like any form of terrorism, the victims are targeted not as individuals, but as members of a vulnerable group whose destruction or exploitation the terrorist

desires. Like any terrorist, the human trafficker must be flushed out and punished. (p. 56)

By connecting traffickers with terrorists, the trafficker is, in moral terms, quite firmly depraved and dangerous. Because the terrorist is already conceived as foreign, risky, and wicked (Butler, 2008), the connection is to affirm that the trafficker is equally as “dark.”

Recurrent references to the trafficker as “dark” imply specifically that he is non-white in appearance. Whereas the TIP reports often picture Anglo men as punters and sex tourists, overwhelmingly traffickers are pictured as Asian, black, or Slavic European. Although a great variation in skin color is therefore apparent, the implication of ascribing to traffickers the status of being dark is to represent them as a group who—irrespective of their skin color—are essentialized as “ethnic.” In pictorial depictions, the trafficker is directly placed as ethnic and nefarious, capturing and exploiting “good,” “innocent” victims against their will (Aradau, 2004; Doezema, 2005). As depicted in the poster on page 29 of the 2010 *TIP Report* (provided above), the trafficker is not only Asian in appearance, but is also a “puppeteer” exercising complete control over the victim, who is clearly pale and white. It is notable that although the competition and distribution of the stamp was in Serbia and the trafficker has blue eyes, the person is clearly androgynous and made to resemble Eastern European/Central Asian characteristics, implying that the individual is non-Western. The slant-eyes suggest an Asian background and clearly imbue a racial bias when compared with the white women dangled, who do not have similarly Asian features. The pictures on the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons website confirm this depiction, showing traffickers cloaked in darkness approaching a young victim, who sits in the light.

Such blunt images, designed to capture the public’s attention and sympathy, invoke familiar binaries of evil/good and dark/light. In doing so they reaffirm the good/bad, male/female, dominant/subordinate, trafficker/trafficked divides discussed above.

In line with the post-colonial theories (Spivak, 1985; Said, 1979), there is a discursive suggestion that trafficking happens in dark, exotic, dangerous places, and thus generally is something that happens outside of America. It is even suggested that traffickers engage in voodoo rituals and other “dark” arts to support their trade, implying that the trafficker is both religiously and ethnically different in his practices.

Since he is ethnic, the trafficker is supposed not to fit in in “traditionally” white places. He is an external threat to white American privilege, which is imagined in terms of its civility, efficiency, sexual control, and morality (see Hubbard, 2005). When white men are pictured, they are



Nigerian authorities raided voodoo magician Gooday Akhimiona's shrine and found a register containing the names of young girls sold into prostitution using juju/black magic. (State Department, 2006, p. 16)

located in places with black or Asian women, and are instead demarcated as “sex tourists,” as set out above. The effect is therefore to locate trafficking as something done by “alien” men or something done in overseas places. As Robert Moosy (2008) informed the National Institute of Justice, Department of Justice, and Office for Victims of Crime:

Trafficking is in some respects a hidden crime, perpetrated in alleys, brothels and illicit massage parlors . . . Because offers . . . are not made to outsiders . . . officers must identify and recruit people who operate at the fringes of these sex trafficking ventures . . . . The success of this approach hinges, of course, on an agency's ability to identify potential confidential informants.

Traffickers undertake their crimes in seedy or dubious locations. They are dark and they operate in the darkness, which makes them invisible and insidious. Many of the assumptions about black/white interactions made during the colonial period and by the eugenics movement are implicitly reaffirmed, and dark men are discursively marked out as troublesome and risky (Aradau, 2004).

In this view, the trafficker is a “bad” force that can be revealed or illuminated only by good men. The Anglo man is understood to be a civilizing force (Spivak, 1985; Said, 1979). The capacity of America to spread

goodness becomes particularly evident in the 2005 and 2006 TIP reports, which suggest that the media “shines a light on an issue typically shrouded in darkness” (State Department, 2005, p. 7; see also State Department, 2010, p. 1) and claim that the “report probes even the darkest places” (State Department, 2006, p. 44). It marks out America as, to use Ronald Reagan’s infamous quote, “a shining city upon a hill whose beacon light guides freedom-loving people everywhere” (cited in CFACT, 2008, para. 1). However, because light can be corrupted by darkness, border controls that regulate the flow of black men into white places emerge as necessary (see Said, 1979). Because the trafficker is a “challenge to our conscience . . . hidden from view . . . a special evil” (Bush, 2003, para. 27), and a “scourge” on society (Obama, 2010, para. 4; Clinton as cited in State Department, 2010, p. 1), there is a suggestion that he is omnipresent and insidious—a plague that must be kept out and eradicated.

By suggesting that the trafficker is a plague, such sources imply that he is diseased and therefore also causes illness. As one who engages in abnormal and extreme violence (including rape), he is not simply an offender, but also defective and unwell. Indeed, “rape” is mentioned 156 times in the 2009 *TIP Report*, for example, and often is not used simply to describe sex trafficking, but as reference to one of the ways in which traffickers dominate their victims, who may be being sold for labor. As Republican Congressman Chris Smith suggests, the trafficker is “one sick individual” who is willing to use “the physical gain of another [which] is tragic” (as cited in Burns, 2008, para. 2). In this formulation, the trafficker’s acts are anomalous manifestations, attributable to a perversion or a sickness. While motivated by greed, the trafficker also is driven by his perverted desire to violently, often sexually, dominate his victim. Although male dominance of the feminine is encouraged and authorized by the state, the trafficker diverges from the norm in that he does not gain consent through soliciting tacit agreement, but instead by placing the victim’s body in pain (Young, 2000, 2003; see also Stiehm, 1982). He is unsympathetically brutal, which evidences his failure to assume the proper protective masculinity. As Young (2000) notes, those who deviate from the white, straight, “tame,” and cognitively unimpaired notion of sex are generally placed outside of mainstream society and politics and have difficulty accessing it; they are clearly discriminated against. The trafficker masculinity is both dubious and irregular, and like sex tourists and sex offenders more broadly, he is positioned in ways that incite particular condemnation and repulsion (Schulz, 2005). He engages in, as the Congressional Record suggests, a “monstrous practice” (Lantos, 2006, p. 9), and thus he is to suffer both theological damnation and social segregation. Although the concept of the monster has clear biblical

and historical foundations as a unnatural deviant (see Davidson, 2001), in modern times, as Foucault (2003) suggests,

Monstrosity . . . is no longer the undue mixture of what should be separated by nature. It is simply an irregularity, a slight deviation, but one that makes possible something that really will be a monstrosity, that is to say, the monstrosity of character. (p. 73)

The trafficker, in enjoying causing others pain or harm, is inhumane and different from persons of good character, and therefore a deviant.

Because of his bad character, the trafficker is always at risk of recidivism, and thus he must be isolated and treated. His violent and sexual conduct diverge considerably from normal expressions of sexuality, and therefore he becomes deserving of disgust and segregation, as his illness disturbs American “identity, system, order” (Kristeva, 1982, pp. 358-359). The manifestation of his illness—trafficking—is enough to justify his exclusion, with no further interrogation needed. Indeed, the image of the monster elicits immediate “disgust,” while suggesting a possibility of contamination to “us” (Nussbaum, 1999). Disgust, although a universal human emotion (see Miller, 1997; Rozin, Haidt, & McCauley, 1993), is here also a social expression (Nussbaum, 1999). It is not simply a physical manifestation, but also a social response. As William Ian Miller (1997, pp. 8-9) suggests, disgust has “intensely political significance. . . . [It] work[s] to hierarchize our political order. . . . The world is a dangerous place where the polluting powers of the ‘low’ are usually stronger than the purifying powers of the high.”

The suggestion is implicit that anyone can be tainted by the slave trade or the sexual deviancy of the trafficker. USAID (2008, p. 3) makes explicit this proposition, stating that trafficking is “a *stain* on the humanity of us all” (emphasis added). Any entity that comes into contact with traffickers has its “purity” disrupted. The touch of the trafficker is a blemish that remains, perhaps even permanently (Nemeroff & Rozin, 1994). Applying Nemeroff and Rozin’s (1994) research on disgust, most North American research subjects expressed a belief in the transferability of the harmful and disgusting characteristics of disagreeable people (through contact with their possessions and objects), and suggested that their harmful characteristics could be treated through washing or sterilizing, especially where “interpersonal-moral contagious entities” were involved (p. 178). Physical or symbolic purification is revealed, in this study, to be deemed insufficient to remove the stain of the moral contagion, and thus nothing short of isolation or destruction of the contagion can suffice. With trafficking, the moral stain is particularly irremovable from the psychologically or physically affected

victim, who must be treated and assisted (see the TVPA, s. 102). Anything or anyone that the trafficker has come into contact with is indelibly contaminated, and therefore quarantined and treated to prevent further spread.

This treatment regime requires the participation of experts who can diagnose and remedy the defect. Law enforcement officials, psychologists, and doctors are needed to direct intervention, isolation, and therapeutic care. Foucault (2003, p. 56) highlights this point, observing, "When the monster violates the law by its very existence, it triggers the response of something quite different from the law itself. It provokes either violence, the will for pure and simple suppression, or medical care or pity." Indeed, the trafficker's deviance attracts the outright condemnation of law and hefty penalties, while those whom he has touched become the concern of public health bodies who must correct the damage he has done.

The involvement of public health bodies affirms that trafficking is a pathogen that is spreading. The trafficker, as a disgusting individual or thing, says Miller (1997, p. 89), "is marvellously promiscuous and ubiquitous," and thus will ignore boundaries and controls. As Condoleezza Rice stated in the 2008 *TIP Report*, "Trafficking and exploitation plague all nations, and no country, even ours, is immune" (p. 1; see also, *TIP Report*, 2004, 2005, 2007). Trafficking is then a global threat, existing in epidemic proportions worldwide. Even from the early stages of the United States government's discussions of trafficking in persons, statistics were produced (that is, they were often "estimated") that suggested that the crime was widespread and growing (see discussion in CRS, 2010). Despite a lack of concrete data on the phenomenon, traffickers were said to be "rife" and operating globally (USAID, 2006, 2007; CRS, 2010). This rhetoric again reinforces that no one is safe from contamination by trafficking.

Repeated suggestion that the trafficker employs technologies that traverse borders emphasizes his reach. Not only does he use transportation developments to his advantage, but he also uses the internet to recruit victims and to distribute pornography involving slave subjects or children. For example, the PROTECT Act s. 501(8) states that "child pornography circulating on the Internet has, by definition, been digitally uploaded or scanned into computers and has been transferred over the Internet, often in different file formats, from trafficker to trafficker." The internet thus acts as a network where traffickers can both communicate and drive up their profits. It also evidences their truly global reach and marks the capacity for their insidiousness to reach into any home, workplace, or even school. Herein lies a fundamental belief about the core characteristics of the trafficker: the notion that he is sneaky, shapeless, omnipresent, and always lurking.

The trafficker is, therefore, also "predatory." For instance, in Repre-

sentative Chris Smith's (Republican) speech to the House of Representatives on May 1, 2007, traffickers are described as

new mobsters, many of them former KGB operatives, . . . on the scene buying and selling young women as commodities. . . the prospect of making billions of dollars has enticed some of the most unsavory and cruel individuals, including and especially organized crime, into this nefarious trade. ("Observing the 200th Anniversary of the Abolition of the British Slave Trade (H. Res. 158)," paras. 11, 16)

This account focuses on traffickers as fundamentally different and therefore outside of normal, civilized society. As Representative Smith suggested, America must then wage a war on traffickers to ensure their exclusion, the end of trafficking, and therefore the (supposed) assurance of American values such as liberty (see discussion in Berman, 2003; Jeffrey, 2004). Law enforcement, consular officials, and lawyers must work at the international, national, and local levels to address the multi-tiered, cross-border complexity of trafficking and coordinate efforts to bring traffickers to "justice" (TVPA, s.102). Ending trafficking in the United States, therefore, is about heavily regulating the movement of all foreign men across American borders.

#### V. A MUSCULAR PROTECTOR: THE STATE AS DEFENDING THE NATION BY KEEPING THE "OTHER" OUTSIDE

By pursuing legal intervention as the core method of preventing and addressing trafficking, the state places itself at the heart of the anti-trafficking framework. The inclusion of provisions in the TVPA that require the Executive Branch to implement, the Legislative to re-appropriate or reauthorize, and the Judiciary to prosecute and review, all act to reinforce the predominance of the government in responding to exploitation. The state projects itself as the ideal authority to prevent the abuse of the victim, because its laws are supposed to provide for equality and rights through a coherent logic that is transcendent and divorced from the social world and the market (Smart, 1989, pp. 12-13). The government suggests that, through implementing the rule of law, it can objectively intervene to mediate belonging, and thus prevent trafficking. As Mark Lagon, then-Director of the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, summarized:

In order to fight human trafficking we need democratic justice—fully enforced. And we must replace corruption with rule of law so that officials "on the take" all over the world stop enabling those exploiters . . . Human trafficking represents the antithesis of the women's empowerment needed to make democracy whole . . . It shouldn't be regulated or

merely mitigated; it must be abolished. The exploited should be treated as victims to be helped, not as criminals or illegal aliens. Exploiters must be stigmatized, prosecuted, and squeezed out of existence. (2007, paras. 32, 34, 35)

Following this formulation, a hard-line, institutionalized approach, centered on specifically the courts, is required. Claims in tort and the confiscation of assets allow the state to directly remove any benefits and proceeds the trafficker may gain, and penalties act to increase the costs. As CdeBaca suggested in the 2010 *TIP Report*, "Enslaving someone still carries too little risk. Remediation, fines, or warnings are too small a price to pay—those who would profit by stealing freedom should lose their own" (p. 2). The state can dissuade traffickers from exploitation if it makes the risks outweigh the possible profits of the activity.

However, the authority of governments to direct anti-trafficking efforts is not universally applied. Certain countries are rendered as complicit with traffickers and therefore are positioned as "evil" and incapable. Instead of holding the authority to dictate the response to trafficking, these states are regarded as illegitimate and therefore are the rightful targets of American intervention and sanctions. What emerges then is a distinction between capable/incapable, us/them, here/there: binaries that are engaged in such a way as to place the United States in a position of superior ability. As Professor Laura Lederer (2000) suggested to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations:

Trafficking often originates in countries with poverty and few opportunities for women. But regardless of the root causes, it is important for countries to draft, pass, and enforce strict laws prohibiting trafficking and its surrounding activities . . . The United States is perhaps the only country right now that can play a leadership role in encouraging countries to address the problem of trafficking. U.S. leadership is important not only because of our interest in promoting basic human rights, but also because it serves the American national interest . . . We are the people who can help young women and girls. . . by drawing attention to their plight, helping nations strengthen their laws to catch and prosecute traffickers, and finding the ways to prevent and protect young women and children from commercial sexual exploitation. (Conclusion)

In this formulation, the American government is the nucleus of international measures because of its special capacity for global outreach, dedication to human rights, and expertise in identifying victims and traffickers.

Such a role empowers the United States to engage in a "civilizing mission," through which certain rights are afforded to those who comply and enact American-authorized performances of race, gender, religion, ethnic-

ity, and so forth (Grewe, 2000, p. 457). Both the trafficked person and the trafficker are characterized and conceived from the perspective of the government, as opposed to being given a voice, as evidenced by the use of authored testimonies in the TIP reports rather than authentic victim accounts. This categorization erases the complexity of the individuals, placing the authority to determine belonging and to incarcerate or expel “Others” with the government. Indeed, those individuals deemed to belong, including both citizens and certified victims, are repeatedly compelled to enact proscribed cultural and social norms through the threat of sanctions. These sanctions are, however, rarely enacted on citizens and remain largely reserved for outsiders, including guilty migrants and traffickers (Kapur, 2002, p. 1). This process of creating and reinforcing categories in binary form makes law’s distinctions and borders appear as natural and even immutable, and the government’s place in regulating the human trade appropriate and beneficial even in the neoliberal space wherein government is supposed as separate from the market. The denial of rights to foreign men appears acceptable because the United States government is a good masculine protector, and thus a properly civilizing, democracy-spreading, liberal force.

In eliciting citizens’ consent to reduce rights, theories around the mobilization of fear provide some insight. These theories argue that to create the need for citizens to give up some of their freedom in exchange for safety, the state must invoke a sense of alarm in citizens. The protector requires a sense of being needed to hold a position of authority and a sense that law must be invoked because otherwise citizens would be at risk or in a position of danger (Young, 2003). But as Young (2003) points out, such a construction fundamentally erodes many of the democratic values that these societies espouse. She points to John Keane (2002), for instance, who suggests that democratic societies frequently utilize and incite fear, but observes that

fear is indeed a thief. It robs subjects of their capacity to act with or against others. It leaves them shaken, sometimes permanently traumatized. And when large numbers fall under the dark clouds of fear, no sun shines on civil society. Fear saps its energies and tears and twists at the institutions of political representation. Fear eats the soul of democracy. (p. 235)

By creating a sense of urgency and danger, anti-trafficking is thus not about questioning, exploration, and enquiry, but instead about action (Butler, 2008). The public are told to suspend their critical skills in order to be safe. Questioning racialized notions of insecurity is therefore essential not only to reinvigorate the anti-trafficking project, but also to explore the promises

and limits of democracy and security themselves (Aradau, 2008). In engaging the logic of protectionism, there is quite notably an eroding of many of the values supposed to underpin the Western legal system and whole classes of unequal persons are created, largely conceived along the lines of race and gender (Berman, 2003). This marks violence in our thinking about trafficking, rather than the end of violence proposed in anti-trafficking accounts.

As a result of exposing this narrowing of our understandings of trafficking and describing the unstated assumptions around masculinities, there is an opening up of the possibilities for reconsidering patterns and relationships of power. If we depart from narrow assumptions about the rightfulness of robust borders, new spaces for debates and new possibilities regarding the ending of trafficking may be identified. Changing our angle to more fully explore the multiplicity of identities interacting in the trafficking space, including avoiding racial and gender stereotyping, will reveal novel approaches that can promote broader social change and empowerment.

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