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HUMAN TRAFFICKING: AT RISK POPULATIONS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

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Human Trafficking: At Risk Populations in Rural Communities

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The fight against human trafficking is probably the most important social justice issue of our time. The battle to end this modern day form of slavery has brought together with the federal government, diverse groups and organizations, in an attempt to educate the public about the evils of human trafficking, methods for intervention, rescue of victims, and to create and support legislation to punish those who participate in and profit from the enslavement of men, women, and children.

A new voice is rising across America creating a movement of abolitionists not seen since the mid 1800's when abolitionists rallied to end the enslavement of African Americans in the United States. The internet and mass media has replaced Harriet Beecher Stowe's, Uncle Tom's Cabin, as the call to arms, in this modern day fight against an evil that is robbing society of the hearts, minds, and souls of this generation. The new coalition of abolitionists includes a wide range of NGO's, Christian organizations, the Salvation Army, and national and international missionaries. Other organizations such as the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, NOW, and the Feminist Majority have joined forces with organizations such as Focus on the Family, the Family Research Council, and Concerned Women for America (Bernstein, 2007).

In my rural community we are seeing many groups and organizations seeking to understand human trafficking and how local communities can intervene and protect their citizens. Church groups and local women's clubs are requesting speakers on human trafficking. The domestic violence organizations have become involved in educating themselves on human trafficking and watching for potential victims. Other organizations, such as Voices for Children,

Be Free, and Volunteers of America, are involved. The State Legislature passed a law prohibiting the trafficking of persons. A local Senator has taken an interest in researching and moving forward state legislation to protect children, by increasing the age of consent for sexual activity, in our state, from 16 to 18.

Until a few years ago little data was accumulated on domestic human trafficking as it manifests in the United States and placing U.S. citizens and nationals at risk. In a review of literature conducted by Clawson, Dutch, Solomon, and Grace (2009), it was noted that research was limited to qualitative and quantitative studies on the scope of the problem. Limited information was available concerning the needs of victims and services provided. The authors expanded their search to include publications in related disciplines on victim populations, and utilized personal communication to supplement the literature review. Even with the expanded scope, a significant gap in the literature was noted concerning the needs of victims and available services.

A little known, yet untapped resource for understanding the treatment needs of victims of human trafficking are missionaries who have worked with victims internationally in third world countries for over 30 years. World Missions and Project Rescue in countries such as India and Nepal began working with victims after a Teen Challenge ministry in the Bombay red-light district found prostituted children and adolescents were enslaved to brothel owners. In collaboration with the Faith Alliance, a text book and training manual for caregivers has been published, and an account of the 30 year experience with Project Rescue has been authored by David and Beth Grant (2009).

Parameters of Human Trafficking

The most frequently quoted definition of human trafficking is the definition adopted by the United Nations:

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power, or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at minimum, the exploitation or prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2000, p.42).

More directly, human trafficking is the actual process of enslavement (Ramey, 2009). The process of enslavement and being enslaved includes the deprivation of basic entitlements and human rights, and limits the ability of the victim to achieve a meaningful life (Ramey, 2009). Those who fall victim to traffickers live their life without choices that are fundamental rights in a civilized society. They are deprived of the rights of citizenship. They are not free to choose an occupation and the work they will do. They are not free to quit the job they have been assigned. They do not have the choice to marry, have children, or to worship God. They are not free to select the clothing they wear, socialize with friends, or to have their labor recognized as worthwhile and worthy of fair wages. They are deprived of basic living needs such as adequate food, medical care, dental care, and a way to secure their own feelings of safety (Logan, Walker, and Hunt, 2009).

Mandated Responsibilities of the U.S. Government to Report on Human Trafficking

The Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005 requires biennial reports on the scope and characteristics of human trafficking within the United States. Responding to the federal mandate a *Human Trafficking Reporting System* (HTRS) was developed through the collaborative efforts of the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), Northeastern University (NEU), and the Urban Institute (UI) (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2011). As a result, 42 federally funded Human Trafficking Task Forces were created across the country to investigate reported incidents of human trafficking, and to record their activities and findings to the HTRS. In 2011, the HTRS has reported information on 42 jurisdictions in the U.S. covering approximately 25% of the U.S. population (BJS, 2011). As with many new systems, time is a factor in effective functioning. Even though attempts were made to collect data from all the task forces, many task forces were only beginning to collect data, and able to provide partial counts of trafficking cases (BJS, January 2009).

What We Know

The most recent report from the Bureau of Justice Statistics (2011) provides information on an 18 month period from January 2008-June 2010. This report provides some insight into the depth and breadth of the gap between what has previously only been estimates of human trafficking and the actual number of confirmed cases of human trafficking.

Standards for confirmed cases of human trafficking require that 1) cases must have led to an arrest and been subsequently confirmed by law enforcement, or 2) victims in the case must have either a *continued presence* request on their behalf or an endorsement for a T or a U visa application¹.

¹ The T nonimmigrant status was created to provide protection to victims of severe forms of human trafficking. The U nonimmigrant status was designated for victims of certain crimes who had suffered mental or physical abuse and who were willing to assist in the investigation of human trafficking activity.

Statistics. Statistical reports from the Bureau of Justice document the limited knowledge we have on human trafficking that takes place in the U.S. There is a wide gap between what have previously been estimates of human trafficking, and confirmed cases. For example, early estimates suggested that 50,000 individuals were trafficked *into* the U.S. each year. By 2003, the Department of State estimated that number to be approximately 18,000 – 20,000 annually. And, in 2005 and 2006 those numbers were estimated to be 14,500 -17,500 (Clawson, Dutch, Solomon, & Grace, 2009). These statistics did not include the number of American citizens, adults and children, who are trafficked.

In 2001, Estes & Weiner estimated that between 244,000 and 325,000 American children were at risk for sexual exploitation each year, and that 199,000 incidents of sexual exploitation of minors occur each year in the United States. Those minors fall into various categories such as homeless, runaway, or throwaway youth. One of the difficulties currently encountered in the collection of accurate data is the perception of the police regarding the status of the youth they encounter. When encountered or arrested the police are not consistent on whether minors are victims or criminals (Clawson, Dutch, Solomon, and Grace, 2009, Cooper, 2010). We live in a culture where public opinion stigmatizes prostitution as voluntary, and prostitutes as criminals. Society has yet to be educated to understand that most prostitutes enter into the sex business as adolescents, are coerced through violence and fraud, not developmentally capable of making a life decision of that magnitude, and not free to decline the demands of a boyfriend/pimp. As a society, we need to recognize the parameters surrounding the nature of force, coercion and fraud when human traffickers or pimps are involved.

In reviewing the literature there is clearly a discrepancy in the categorization of data collected by the U.S. Department of Justice and professionals who have been working with

victims of human trafficking. This discrepancy skews the data of those identified as having been trafficked for sexual purposes. The U.S. Department of Justice acknowledges three categories of human trafficking, 1) sex trafficking 2) labor trafficking and 3) unknown. In this unknown category the Bureau of Justice Statistics has categorized mail order brides. The professional literature and those who have been working with victims categorizes women trafficked for the purposes of marriage, such as mail order brides, as sex trafficking victims (BJS, 2011; Clawson, Dutch, Solomon, & Grace, 2009).

The following provide a look at the data that has been collected by the U.S. Department of Justice from 2004 – 2008 on the number of juvenile arrests and the number of juveniles arrested for prostitution.

Juveniles Arrested for Prostitution and Commercialized Vice

Juveniles Arrested for Prostitution and Commercialized Vice				
Year	Estimated Number of Juvenile Arrests	Estimated Number of Juvenile Arrests for Prostitution and Vice	Percent of Total Juvenile Arrests	
			Female	Under Age 15
2004	2,202,000	1800	72%	12%
2005	2,143,700	1600	74%	14%
2006	2,219,600	1600	74%	14%
2007	2,180,500	1500	78%	13%
2008	2,111,200	1500	76%	11%

U.S. Department of Justice (2008, 2007, 2006, 2005, 2004)

The Bureau of Justice Statistics has also provided some insight into the number of human trafficking cases that were opened for investigation. The data available for a period of 18 months beginning in January 2008-June 2010 is as follows:

Cases Opened for Investigation between January 2008 and June 2010

Human Trafficking incident cases opened for investigation between January 2008 and June 2010, by type of trafficking and task force location.						
Type of Trafficking	Total Incidents		Task force located in...			
	Number	Percent	Vice Unit		Another Unit	
			Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Incidents	2,515	100%	1,377	100%	1,138	100%
Sex Trafficking	2,065	82.1%	1,230	89.3%	835	73.4%
Labor Trafficking	278	11.1%	92	6.7%	186	16.3%
Unknown	172	6.8%	55	4.0%	117	10.3%

Bureau of Justice Statistics (2011)

Summary of Human Trafficking: January 2008 to June 2010

Summary of Human Trafficking between January 2008 and June 2010		
Incidents of Human Trafficking	Number	Percent of Total
Reported incidents of human trafficking	2,515	
Confirmed Cases of human trafficking	389	15%
Number of Suspects (Perpetrators)	488	
Number of Victims	527	
Victims trafficked for Labor age 25 or older		62%
Victims trafficked for sexual purposes age 25 or older		13%
White Sex trafficking victims		25%
Black Sex trafficking victims		40%
Percent of Sex trafficking victims U.S. citizens		83%
Labor trafficking victims found to be Hispanic		63%
Labor trafficking victims found to be Asian		17%
Number of Arrests in cases investigated for one year	144	

Bureau of Justice Statistics (2011)

Characteristics of Victims.

Victims Characteristics in Confirmed Human Trafficking Cases			
Victim Characteristics	Total	Sex Trafficking	Labor Trafficking
Sex			
Male	49	27	20
Female	477	432	43
Age			
17 or younger	257	248	6
18-24	159	142	17
25-34	68	46	22
35 or older	27	12	15
Unknown	16	12	3
Race/Hispanic Origin			
White	106	Q02	1
Black/African American	167	161	6
Hispanic/Latino Origin	129	95	34
Asian	26	17	9
Other	35	23	11
Unknown	63	61	2
Citizenship			
U.S. Citizen/U.S. National	346	345	1
Permanent U.S. resident	6	6	0
Undocumented alien	101	64	36
Qualified alien	19	1	15
Temporary worker	2	0	2
Unknown	50	41	9
Number of victims identified	527	460	63

BJS, 2011

Characteristics of Suspects/Perpetrators

Suspects/Perpetrators characteristics in cases opened between January 2008 and June 2010 and confirmed to be human trafficking.			
Suspect Characteristics	Total	Sex Trafficking	Labor Trafficking
Sex			
Male	368	314	54
Female	88	71	17
Unknown	32	25	7
Age			
17 or younger	11	10	1
18-24	147	145	2
25-34	114	105	9
35 or older	100	65	35
Unknown	116	85	31
Race/Hispanic Origin			
White	24	22	2
Black/African American	224	219	5
Hispanic/Latino origin	119	89	30
Asian	28	18	10
Other	20	5	15
Unknown	73	57	16
Citizenship			
U.S. Citizen/U.S. National	276	269	7
Permanent U.S. resident	12	2	10
Undocumented alien	44	39	5
Qualified alien	8	2	6
Unknown	148	98	50
Number of suspects identified	488	410	78

BJS, 2011

Victims and Suspect outcomes: January 2008-June 2009

Victim and suspect outcomes in incidents opened between January 2008 and June 2009 and confirmed to be human trafficking.			
Type of incidents	Total	Sex Trafficking	Labor Trafficking
Number of selected confirmed Incidents	257	218	39
Victims in confirmed incidents			
Foreign victims identified	87	43	44
T or U visa status			
• Yes	21	9	12
• No	20	8	12
• Pending/unknown	46	26	20
***Domestic Victims (added by author)	170		
Suspects in confirmed incidents			
Suspects identified	343	279	64
Suspects arrested	144	139	5
• State arrest	114	114	0
• Federal arrest	21	16	5
• Both	9	9	0
Suspects not arrested	19	13	6

Unknown	180	127	53
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BJS, 2011

***Category has been added by the author using BJS statistics

Progress

The fact that the federal government has funded human trafficking task forces and created a data base to monitor the number of cases reported and confirmed suggests that progress is being made in this battle for social justice. Even though there is a large gap in the knowledge of the actual number of victims and the extent and scope of the problem in the U.S., steps are being taken to begin assessing the problem, collect actual data based on facts, and close the gap that has existed, limiting education of the public, intervention, services for victims, and prosecution of perpetrators. We are a long way from bringing this issue under control and protecting our citizens and those who are trafficked into our country. But, we are at least moving in the right direction.

Human Trafficking and its Manifestation in the United States

Public interest in human trafficking has increased over the last ten years as a result of the attention given international human trafficking through the media, and multiple films and documentaries identifying the problem to the public. Many people continue to believe that human trafficking is an international issue and are surprised to learn that the United States is second in the international list of destination countries. Most members of our society are unaware that more U.S. citizens are victims of sex trafficking than are foreign nationals (Kotrla, 2010).

The Polaris Project reports that the average age into prostitution in the U.S. is between the ages of 12 and 14. Daily, the estimated number of men that sex slaves are daily required to service is from 1 to 15. The standard earning quota per night per slave is between \$500 - \$1000 (Polaris Project, 10-7-2011).

Culture

As social workers, we are keenly aware of cultural issues and the interface with mainstream American life. As an issue of social justice, society needs to take a look at the culture of human trafficking in the U.S., how the culture manifests, and why this issue is easily hidden, even though it occurs in plain sight.

Poverty. Poverty remains the common threat across all cultures. What has been found in Eastern Europe is pervasive poverty driven human trafficking. After the fall of the iron curtain the economic conditions in the former Soviet occupied countries created a desperate need for money for survival. In order to find work and provide money for their children and families, young women sought employment abroad. Some women were tricked into believing that they would have a job as a waitress, a maid, nanny, and stripper or as a dancer. When they arrived at their destination they learned that they had been sold into slavery and forced into brothels. Many of these victims were young women and mothers; some were adolescents.

In the United States, poverty is also an underlying issue in human trafficking. Poverty among adolescents and children lures them to traffickers. Children who have run away from the child welfare system, run away from home, and those considered throw away children have become vulnerable to traffickers. These children are often found lost at bus stops, living on the streets, and looking for food or a place to sleep. Hungry children are easy prey for a traffickers of human flesh. If children are hungry enough, they will do almost anything for food.

Sexual Abuse. The sexual abuse of children is a common characteristic that places female children and young women at risk for being prostituted. Research on prostituted women has shown that between 33% and 84% of women sexually exploited through prostitution were

sexually abused as children (Raphael, 2004). And in a study of 106 adult women incarcerated for prostitution, 68% reported being sexually abused before the age of 10 (Norton-Hawk, 2002).

Drugs. The culture of illicit drugs has contributed to human trafficking in the United States. Many adolescents who fall into the hands of traffickers are introduced into drugs by friends or a boyfriend. Once addicted, the adolescent is talked into prostituting as a way to earn money to pay for the drugs needed to maintain his/her habit.

Some adolescents fall into the hands of pimps/traffickers based on their need for food and shelter. They are lured into using illegal drugs. Once addicted they are prostituted. Other adolescents are tricked, kidnapped, gang raped, and drugged by their captors for control. Drugged out of reality, they are gang raped and prostituted. Once addicted the pimp has control and prostitutes them for profit.

There have been incidents when parents have sold children, as young as 9 years old, for sex, in exchange for illicit drugs (Cooper, 2010).

Pornography. The culture of pornography has infiltrated our society. Once considered a taboo in American society, pornography has become normalized. Men have grown to expect that they have the right to view pornography. One might question, whether or not the men, who view pornography, know that many of the women and children they see are forced into compliance, and have been enslaved. And, one might question whether or not they care.

Media and Internet. The media fosters an illicit shopping mall for sex. Buyers are offered a variety of women and children to choose from (Cooper, 2010). There is variety in age, sex, race, color of hair, and expertise in sexual activities. Multimedia and the internet are thought to be the single greatest facilitator driving the growth of pimping (Polaris Project, 2011). Prostitution and pimping is glamorized in popular music, films, videos, and video games

identified as appropriate for youth. Prostitution is normalized and treated like recreational activity (Cooper, 2010, p.19, Polaris Project, 2011).

In Theresa Flores's book, the contact with the man who prostituted her was maintained through a cell phone provided to her by her parents. In my rural state, pimps have been able to establish businesses comprised of youth who are seeking to earn spending money, or feed their drug habits. Initially the money is good, but as the demands increase, the youth realizes they have been entrapped and are not able to rationally think through the manipulation or threats used to hold them as slaves.

Social Stigma. Social Stigma is an international issue that exists in many of the eastern countries such as India and Nepal. Children sold into prostitution are shunned by their families and not welcomed home, even when it was the family who sold them. In the United States, there is also a social stigma associated with prostitution. The negative stigma associated with prostitution is often used to exploit and control victims, and to prevent them from revealing the ways in which they are being abused and hurt. Survivors of street prostitution have recounted instances where the public and their families have treated them differently. This limited their ability to find help and access services in a non-judgmental environment (Polaris Project, 10-7-2011).

Cooper (2010) reports a conversation with an adult woman who had been trafficked as a young woman. This woman indicated that she ran away from home at the age of 17 and was befriended by a couple. They drugged her and began prostituting her. Eventually she escaped. However it took her 25 years to tell anyone of her ordeal due to the shame and stigma of victimization.

Under the Guise of Legitimate Businesses. Often traffickers hide in what is presented to the public as legitimate businesses such as massage parlors, escort services, clubs with strippers and nude dancing (Polaris Project, 10-7-2011). Many communities have allowed the establishment of adult stores where pornography and sexual paraphernalia are sold. When the morality and legitimacy of these businesses are challenged they are protected by a twisted interpretation of freedom of speech.

The Culture of Trucking. Truck stops have long been a haven for truckers in need of a hot meal and a few hours rest. Pimps often move their sex slaves from one truck stop to another, hoping to avoid detection. They also move their victims into massage parlors located near truck stops. Massage parlors can be found advertised on bill-boards locating them near truck stops. Victims are advertised over CB radios. Special codes are used to indicate that a prostitute is available, or that a john is seeing a prostitute. Flashing lights or signs, placed in windows, are used as signals (Polaris Project, 10-7-2011).

Strip Clubs, Men's Clubs, and Nude/Topless Dancing. American society has allowed the integration of lewd behavior into the culture of cities and in rural communities. Clubs catering to the sexual needs of men offer strip dancers, lap dancers, and nude or topless dancing. They are legal businesses with licenses.

Language. There has been a change in the language that is considered acceptable. Some of this began with popular culture and music. In some popular hip-hop music, pimps and violence against women, name calling, and the use of derogatory names for women such as bitch and whore are glorified.

Tattoos and Other Body Decorations. Tattoos and body piercing are very popular among today's youth, and frequently women in their 20's and 30's. Even young children use wash off

tattoos during play, and often as part of regular dress. The tattooing, branding, and marking women for ownership are common practice among pimps. The normalization of this type of body decoration helps to hide illicit practices.

Dress. Popular fashion allows for the wearing of clothing portraying words and pictures that devalue women. These fashions are available in all sizes, from newborn to adulthood. A recent documentary on talent shows for children provides a segment for comments and discussion on a mother who dressed up her 4 year old like Julia Roberts, when she starred in the movie *Pretty Woman*, glorifying prostitution. The child wore a wig, a blue mini-skirt, top, and thigh high boots. Then the child strutted back and forth across stage to the music of “*Pretty Woman*.”

Loss of Christian Values in Society. There is clear loss of Christian values in our society. Christians must advocate for the same rights granted to followers of Islam and other religious groups. Christianity seems to be oppressed even in communities where the population is largely comprised of Christians. In some environments in the U.S. Christians are persecuted.

Family. The family has been devalued. The traditional family comprised of a mother, father, and children is no longer the norm. Divorced families and families with parents who have never married have become the norm in our society. These cultural changes in the family have changed the face of parenting, and the overall integration of the values that have traditionally been identified as American Christianity. Fathers are no longer appreciated as the head of the family, and in many families, there are no fathers, and no paternal leadership. Children are growing up under the guidance of mothers, without the benefit of the male role model, and creating a gap in knowledge on how to be a father in society.

Entitlement. Many men and boys seem to assume that they are “entitled” to prostitutes and pornography.

Religion. The growth in our country of Islam and other religions has brought a culture of diversity to the U.S. that devalues women in society. In many cultures and religions, domestic violence is acceptable and expected. In many countries, freedom of movement is limited for women. In some religious cultures, women are murdered, and honor killings are common. These cultures are pressing in on American society. The gradual abandoning of the strong Christian foundation, upon which the country was established, is allowing the unhealthy components of other cultures and religions to negatively influence the long standing moral and value system of our country.

Long Term Consequences. The literature on prostitution and human trafficking indicates that women who enter into prostitution often die within 8 years. They are at risk of sexually transmitted diseases, infections, cervical cancer, and other diseases that have an impact on their health. Psychological consequences are long-term. Because this is still an emerging problem in American society, professionals have yet to discover the depth and breadth of trauma victims experience, and the time necessary for recovery...if ever.

Rural Communities

For many years those who study human trafficking have said that traffickers are 20 years ahead of those who would attempt to intervene and stop the trafficking of women and children. The gap in knowledge about the practice of human trafficking is getting smaller. Still, human trafficking is spreading across the U.S., and is occurring in large and small cities and in rural communities.

Rural women and children are increasingly becoming victims of human traffickers. In my rural state, human trafficking is alive and well. There are two very prominent venues where human trafficking has emerged. The state is known for its seasonal hunting. Hunting lodges nestled across the state in isolated rural settings are ideal locations for such discrete activities. Small towns cater to hunters during hunting season. Bars featuring topless dancers provide entertainment, and young women are lured into this seasonal business. Women prostitutes are trafficked into the hunting lodges to service men. Dancers and prostitutes readily are available in some local communities and bars during the outdoor sporting seasons.

The Sturgis motor-cycle rally has been a large community event for more than two generations. Thousands of motorcyclists wait in anticipation of this annual rally. They fill all the hotels and camp grounds for miles around. They fill local parks with campers and tents. The roar of motor cycles is a constant humming throughout the community day and night. In these small rural community families are known to rent out their homes during the Sturgis rally. Often the rental of one's home for a period of two weeks provides enough money for house payments for the entire year. Most of down-town Sturgis is owned by vendors who open their doors once a year, for two weeks, to the rally participants. Campgrounds also come alive during the rally, and cater to families, outlaw motorcycle gangs, and those who come for ride.

In the summer of 2010, I volunteered at the local domestic violence shelter along with a ministry that provides services to trafficked women. The director of the shelter indicated that women were frequently brought in by the police during the rally and that for a month after the rally they were inundated with women who had been abandoned in the campgrounds. Often these women came to the rally with a boyfriend or an acquaintance. For the two weeks during the rally, the women were gang raped and held captive, then abandoned when the rally was over. A

local church in a nearby town would help the women by paying for their transportation home. Nudity was common in the campgrounds. The campgrounds were on private property. The police were not welcomed, so lawless ruled day and night. We were warned not to go to the campgrounds once the rally began. A roster of activities was posted on the website, including perverse contests for women participants.

Thousands of motorcycles lined the streets day and night. One was pressed to find a souvenir without a lewd picture or statement. Public nudity is illegal. Yet the standards defining nudity are minimal. For a woman to meet the minimal standards of dress, her nipples and genital area must be covered. A woman, wearing a thong and pasties on her nipples, is considered to be dressed.

At night the party crowd emerges. Tattoo parlors hire young women to encourage customers. They stand on the street outside the doors of the establishment and dance and pose for pictures with customers and men passing by. The young women are dressed in mini-skirts. They are nude from the waist up, except for the pasties the covering her nipples. Women bar tenders are also in various states of nudity. They appear to be nude except for the thongs to cover their genitalia and pasties on their nipples. Sometimes they wore a raccoon tail, or a bunny tail.

One afternoon we went to an open bar across the street from a camp ground. The bar looked more like an old wooden fort. There was standing room only at the bar. A woman, nude from the waist up, was standing, in the hot sun, in a small booth, with a sun-umbrella shielding her from the rays of the sun. Her job was to stand there all day, greeting customers and giving directions to various places in the barricaded fortress. The women bar tenders wore minimum covering, thongs and pasties. We talked to several of the women who stated that they work the rally every year and earn enough money to cover their expenses for the entire year. They obtain

those jobs through the website. They must submit a resume and a picture of themselves. Next to the bar a space was set up for body painting. A woman stood before the man as he painted winding vines on her nude body. The woman appeared to be an adolescent, possibly 16-18 years of age.

Walking through the array of vendors in town one could observe women, who appeared to be prostitutes, leading men through the streets. There were also those who appeared to be coerced. Sitting in a vendor's tent was a young woman sewing leather jackets. The man with her seemed to be keeping a close eye on the crowd and on the woman. The woman was sitting in a chair pushed up as close to the sewing table as she could be. She was wearing a tank top with thin straps, and fabric that resembled a shear sleeping attire. There was a large crowd standing around the tent watching her sew. She never looked up, and never looked to the right or to the left. Her expression indicated that she was lost in her work. She seemed to have tuned out the crowd around.

We saw a young woman walking with an older man. She was angry. The man was trying to engage her. Although they were clearly together, she did not appear to be happy to be going somewhere with him.

Another young woman was walking along with her boyfriend. She was wearing a bikini and hiking boots. He was holding on to her forearm guiding her as they walked. A man stopped to talk with them and inquired about the large tattoo on the back of her left shoulder. The tattoo was a picture of the boyfriend that had been etched into her skin. He told her to hold her arm out so the man could see the tattoo better. On command, she held her arm straight out to the left of her body, and stood there while her boyfriend pointed out features of the tattoo. He said that he

was not totally happy with his image, and was thinking about having the tattoo re-done so his likeness would show better.

Another young woman we encountered was working for a motorcycle gang in the gang's vendor tent. She told one of our team members that she and was from Florida. She was on a summer tour with the gang, going from one event to the other. She described working long 12 hour days, with only two breaks. They gave her room and board, but she did not have the income that she was promised. Arrangements were made to meet her the next day. While the two women were talking I could see that a man in the tent was watching her closely. After the others left, I stayed, pretending to look at merchandise. He did not know that I was with the others. He began questioning her about the conversation that had taken place. Apparently he thought she had spent too much time talking with a customer and had become suspicious. The woman did not meet the team the next day. She was not working in the vendor tent that day or during the next four days the team was in town.

A young woman was brought to the shelter where we were assisting. She had a job in a hotel in a near-by town. She said that her employer had attempted to take half of her salary to give to another woman who "needed money." She said that he was the owner of the hotel, and he owned a bar in another state. He told her that he brought strippers in from Europe every year because it was difficult to find American women willing to strip. The young woman described activity that caused us to suspect that the employer was grooming this young woman to go to Colorado with him and become employed as a stripper in his bar. We notified authorities of the situation.

Walking down a dark street the last night I was at the rally I was separated from my group, and was about a half block behind them. Suddenly, around a corner and coming toward

me were two young girls. At first I thought they were nude, but as I got closer to them I could see they were wearing flesh colored thongs and high heels. They were carrying little gift bags with tissue paper protruding out the top. They were the same height and almost looked as though they were twins. They passed me and went through a gate onto a private lot where 4-5 large campers were parked. They had decorative body paintings across their buttocks. I called to them. Knowing that their pimp might be close by, I did not want to seem as though I was doing anything other than asking directions and only for a few seconds. When I called they turned and came back toward me. Once they were close I was able to hand them a book-mark size flyer with the trafficking hot line phone number. Quickly, I said that if they or someone they knew were in trouble they could call that number. After I walked away, we notified the authorities. The girls look about age 15.

Arrests for Human Trafficking. There have also been arrests for the trafficking of human beings in our rural state. In August 2010, just before the rally, a local doctor was arrested and charged for paying for the sexual services of underage girls with prescriptions for drugs. The doctor, a 35 year old married man with children, ultimately pled guilty and received a minimal sentence. This arrest was in conjunction with an FBI sting in a neighboring small town. In this town a local man was running a brothel and prostituting young adolescents who had been trafficked. The brothel was surrounded by a tall chain-link fence with guard dogs free to run in the yard. The pimp ultimately cut a deal with prosecutors for a guilty plea. He agreed to 30 years in prison. However, the federal judge did not accept the plea bargain and sentenced the man to life in prison.

Local Activity. There have also been other incidents of human trafficking in the community. Some have not been reported because the adolescents do not want their parents to find out, and will not provide any identifying information. Contact is anonymous by telephone.

One situation that we know of is of a young adolescent who had an argument with friends, went to the local mall alone. Sitting in the food court, thinking about her situation, she was approached by a young man, older than herself, who appeared interested in her as a girlfriend. He dated her for a week. After a week he lured her to his apartment where she was gang raped and drugged. He kept her drugged until she was addicted then prostituted her. Her family thought she had run away. One evening her grandmother was driving through town and saw her standing on a street corner. She got her into her car, essentially rescuing this young woman. Her family put her in a hospital for the addiction and got counseling for her. She has never told her parents what actually happened.

The local ministry has had several calls from young girls who have revealed a prostitution ring in the community where the pimp communicates via cell phone. He provides the cell phones to the adolescents. When he has work for them he phones them and tells them where to meet the customer. Those who have called indicate that initially the money is good, especially for a teenager. And, often the drugs are freely shared. Once addicted, the money is confiscated and they must prostitute themselves to feed their habit. Others are blackmailed with threat of revealing their activities to their parents.

The Church. Christians are becoming more involved in the anti-human trafficking abolitionist movement, and, in fact, appear to be among the most vocal leaders. Congregations are becoming more active in educating themselves on human trafficking, and leading campaigns to educate the community and protect children. Christian organizations are freer to provide

needed services than secular agencies. They are free to provide the that counseling victims need, and to address their spiritual needs. Cooper's report suggests that "it might not be God's plan that the government do [sic] more, but that the church do more" [sic] (p.19). Many former victims of human trafficking are making life long commitments to follow Jesus, and reaching out to others as they exit slavery.

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