

INTERSECTIONS OF THE SEX TRAFFICKING AND PORNOGRAPHY INDUSTRIES:
VICTIMS WORKING WITHIN PORNOGRAPHY

A dissertation presented to
the Faculty of Saybrook University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Human Science

by

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Approval of the Dissertation

INTERSECTIONS OF THE SEX TRAFFICKING AND PORNOGRAPHY INDUSTRIES:
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Abstract

INTERSECTIONS OF THE SEX TRAFFICKING AND PORNOGRAPHY INDUSTRIES:
VICTIMS WORKING WITHIN PORNOGRAPHY

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Sex trafficking is defined as the use of force, coercion, or deception used to make someone work in the sex trade (United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, n.d.). Sex trafficking is often associated with prostitution, but are the same means ever utilized to force or coerce people to work in pornography? The results of this research suggest this connection.

The purpose of this dissertation was to identify the intersections of pornography and sex trafficking, and more specifically, discover if victims of sex trafficking are ever used to create pornography. In other words, are adults who appear in different kinds of pornography ever victims of sex trafficking themselves? Sex trafficking is illegal in the United States, whereas the pornography industry is not. So long as the participants in pornography are willing adults, any sexual activity is legal under current laws. It is therefore critical to determine consent.

A review of literature demonstrated the need to further investigate any relation between the two industries and establish a legitimate connection. Literature relating to sex trafficking and its intersections with pornography are identified, compiled, and analyzed in order to conclude where there is room for further study. While statistics on the prevalence of sex trafficking are available, albeit unreliable, and information is also available on the experiences of trafficking victims, little has been written on the subject of victims who are then forced to work in

pornography. This dissertation addresses that deficiency. Substantial qualitative literature is available on the experiences of sex trafficking victims, which serves to explain better the systematic processes that contribute to their victimization, but there are limited academic studies available that draw a direct connection between sex trafficking victims and those working in pornography. The review of the literature indicated the possibility that those in pornography are at times victims of sex trafficking.

Six anti-trafficking and/or anti-pornography activists, some of whom were victims themselves, were interviewed for their experiences and personal stories. It was ascertained that women in pornography are at times victims of sex trafficking during the filming or shooting. Whether they are trafficked in pornography only, or other sex industries such as prostitution, varies based on the experience. Further research is necessary to determine how common this is, and to better understand the systemic structures, which allow for this to occur.

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my love, my true companion, my greatest support, my dear husband JD. I dedicate it to my ginger babies; the two most incredible little spitfire girls on the planet. What a blessing to call you my daughters. My happiness in being your mother is indescribable. To my mother, who has never once questioned my abilities, and who has shown me what unconditional love means. And to God, who guides me and continually strengthens me; allowing me to continue on my path of fighting for love, peace, compassion, and equality for all.

Acknowledgments

I am grateful for the many professors and academic advisors that have supported me through this educational process. The opportunities I have been privileged to have and the personal growth and transformation I have experienced will stay with me forever. I feel like a better mother, activist, and contributor to the world. I believe that I am better prepared to fight for social change, social justice, equality, and love. I hope I can use my expanded worldview to help others expand their own, that we may all work together to fight for a better home for everyone.

I have had the joy of working with many incredible educators. I want to give special thanks to my dissertation committee members. Dr. JoAnn McAllister, you have encouraged me and believed in me and helped me spread my wings. I value your fine attention to detail, specific guidance, and faith in my abilities. Your laugh makes me smile, and I think of it often. Dr. Robert McAndrews, you are just a delight. You make fighting for a better world feel attainable. Your happiness and goodwill is contagious, and I am grateful that you helped me feel through this process that I would succeed and all would be well. Your life experiences inspire me. Dr. Bob Flax, you did not let me get away with anything. You challenged my ideas and helped me expand my mind. You have been a valuable resource to me and have helped me improve as a researcher and philosopher.

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I am honored and enchanted by this entire experience. Going out on my own now as an academic, professor, activist, and human scientist is something I could only achieve because of the lessons and love I have received from you all. Thank you for this gift of education, of power, of empowerment.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Purpose

Are sex trafficked women used to create pornography? Are there pornography models or actors who perform in pornography in absence of consent? What is that process? By capturing the stories of victims through the narratives of activists, the systemic processes for these intersections have become better understood. The purpose of this dissertation research was to identify if there is a connection between the pornography and sex trafficking industries in regard to the trafficking victims themselves.

Background

Pornography is broadly defined as, “Movies, pictures, magazines, etc., that show or describe naked people or sex in a very open and direct way in order to cause sexual excitement” (“Pornography,” n.d.). While most forms of pornography can fit into this broad definition, there is still much controversy over what is considered pornography as opposed to what is considered art. Specifically, pornography is any still imagery or film that depicts both nudity and intent for sexual arousal. Fictional imagery, such as paintings and drawings, as well as written text, is also considered pornography if both qualifiers are present. With this understanding of pornography, a reflection on its history will follow with efforts to understand its origins, evolution, and its role in the United States of America. Before this analysis, however, human trafficking, and sex trafficking specifically, will be defined.

Human trafficking is the broader term, which refers to all forms of current slavery, namely, labor and sex (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], n.d.). Worldwide, it is the fastest growing and second largest criminal industry, falling only behind drug trafficking (Federal Bureau of Investigation [FBI], n.d.). The annual revenue from this 32 billion dollar

industry yields more than the annual revenue of Starbucks, Google, and Nike combined (Fight Slavery Now, 2010). The United Nations defines Human trafficking as:

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. (UNDOC, n.d., para. 2)

The statistics for labor trafficking and sex trafficking are often confused, as both are considered forms of human trafficking, and the act of sex trafficking is not always distinguished from labor trafficking. Ultimately, the two are forms of the same thing—slavery, and the United Nations declares that 79% of human trafficking victims are sex trafficked (UNODC, n.d.). Both may also intersect in terms of the way victims are recruited and forced to work in these industries, but separating them out is critical in terms of better understanding the structures, systems, and processes, which enable human trafficking as a whole to occur in all parts of the world.

Sex trafficking is defined as any person 18 or older working in commercial sex as a result of force, fraud, and/or coercion, or anyone under the age of 18, regardless of the presence of force (Polaris Project, n.d.).

Rationale

The pornography industry is a controversial topic, which is increasingly discussed in public discourse. An aspect of this industry, receiving less academic focus, is the pornographic actors themselves and their lived experiences. If sex trafficked victims in the pornography industry could be identified, consumers and those working within pornography production would be potentially directly supporting the sex trafficking industry. Because this interconnection has

been strongly suggested through this research, necessary legal, social, and personal steps can justifiably be examined and taken in order to better fight sex trafficking within pornography.

I have chosen to study this because I want to acquire knowledge about a phenomenon, but at the core, I am an activist and want to build a better society. With a deeper understanding of this activity, I would be better equipped to stop it, or at least reduce it, and along with that, the suffering that these women experience.

Research Question

What are the intersections of pornography and sex trafficking, and, more specifically, are victims of sex trafficking ever used to create pornography?

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter begins with a historical perspective of the pornography and sex trafficking industries. Then, literature on sex trafficking topics are thematically organized and discussed. For the purpose of this women-focused dissertation research, demographics and characteristics of sex trafficking pertaining to children and males as specialized populations are addressed separately. Complications surrounding identifying consent, and laws and regulations are discussed from both national and international perspectives. The business model of sex trafficking is analyzed, and components of various roles in the business structure and phases for trafficking a person are explored.

Sex trafficking in prostitution is explored in terms of demographics, percentages, experiences, and operational structures. After the analysis of prostitution as a sex industry used to victimize women and facilitate sex trafficking, literature on the pornography industry and the interrelation with sex trafficking is reviewed. Classifications of types of pornography are examined, as well as the organizational structure of the pornography industry. The focus is then narrowed to the crossover of pornography and sex trafficking. Neither the pornography industry nor the sex trafficking industry is in their infancy, and understanding them through a historical lens sets a strong foundation for identifying any interconnections thereof.

The History of Pornography and Sex Trafficking

Determining the origin of pornography is an elusive task, as it may date back to prehistoric times. Rock Art, or Parietal Art, dating as far back as 40,000 years and spanning over 25,000 years, is the prehistoric practice of drawing on natural stone (Pappas, 2010). It represents what may be the first known examples of pornography. Rock Art imagery has been discovered that depicts nudity and sexual intercourse, and while it could be disputed that the drawings were

meant to demonstrate the spirituality of sexuality and not eroticism, it may in fact be evidence that pornography, or at least the concept of basic sexuality in written and drawn form, has been in existence long before modern forms of media and technological advancements.

According to Pappas (2010), Venus figurines, statues created by the Paleolithic people around 30,000 years ago, were originally interpreted as early examples of pornography due to their characterization of female nudity and large breasts. However, archeologists have since determined that they were most likely meant to serve religious purposes and represent pregnancy or fertility in general, as has been true in later agricultural societies as well. In other words, their purpose was not to create sexual arousal and therefore cannot be defined as pornography (Pappas, 2010). Rock Art, on the other hand, may or may not be considered pornographic, as archeologists cannot be certain whether its intent was to represent fertility exclusively; yet, due to its depiction of nudity, it is the closest resemblance of pornography that was discovered until new forms emerged between the 1st century B.C.E. and 1st century C.E. (Pappas, 2010).

Archeologists have discovered pornographic imagery while excavating Pompeii, a city under the Roman Empire, which was destroyed by a volcanic eruption in 79 C.E. Between the 1st and 2nd century, manuals from India depict how to perform various sexual acts, known as the Kama Sutra (Burton, 1962). A passage from The Kama Sutra of Vatsayana reads, “The signs of the enjoyment and satisfaction of the woman are as follows: her body relaxes, she closes her eyes, she puts aside all bashfulness, and shows increased willingness to unite the two organs as closely together as possible” (Burton, 1962, p. 121). This ancient text describes, in great detail, intimate and sexual practices and gives advice and guidance. It is important to note here that this book and similar historical texts and imagery have been found in sacred locale and are often educational in context; they do not necessarily represent pornography in the same sense this term

is used today. Reference to the ancient text is included here due to its historical significance and its relation to the basic definition of pornography as the documentation of sexual activities with intent to create arousal.

Later, the German invention of the printing press in the 15th century significantly contributed to the creation and distribution of pornography. Known for its ability to mass-produce the Bible, the new invention was also used for a more lucrative production, pornography. Erotic images depicting sexual intercourse and publications of dialogues on instructions for receiving sexual pleasure were mass-produced on printing presses. The 1531 publication “The Errant Prostitute” and a piece in 1655 called “The Girl’s School” are examples of such titles (Tierney, 1994). Other artifacts found in the Japanese culture during the 16th century demonstrated a fondness for images depicting nudity and sex acts painted on wood blocks, which archeologists have explained as being a combination of both art and sexual instruction (Pappas, 2010). It is important to use these historical pieces as examples of both the value and difficulty of identifying and recognizing the distinction between pornography and other means of human sexuality.

Still images cannot portray detailed and progressing sex scenes; therefore, in the absence of film, books presented readers with sexual stories and played out acts. The first full-length book containing explicit language, written by John Cleland and published in 1748, was *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*. It received widespread criticism and was banned in the United States until 1966, but is now considered an important piece of literature (Cleland, n.d.).

As technology progressed, so did the realm of possibilities for creating pornography. Photography transformed drawn imagery, ideas, and fictional creations of sexuality into lived experiences and real imagery. Each photo required an actual person to be naked, and in some

instances, engaged in sexual acts. This raised the stakes and contributed to the development of a new level of pornography. The daguerreotype, invented in 1839 by Louis Daguerre, was a primitive form of photography and was quickly dominated by pornographers. As camera technology has evolved, pornographers have followed closely all new developments and have incorporated these advancements into their own work (Pappas, 2010).

Taking place after the advancement of film, but a part of still image pornography, is the explosion of male focused pornographic magazines. Playboy Magazine founded by Hugh Hefner in 1953, and Hustler Magazine founded by Larry Flint in 1974, have both been extremely successful financial enterprises (Dines, 2010). More information on these businesses will be discussed, but it would be amiss not to address this aspect of printed pornography before moving on to film productions.

The next step was the development of film technology, which allowed for a “breakthrough” in pornography. The progress from fictional images to real life stills showed the world now had moving images of sexual intercourse and actually watched it happen. Pornographers followed a similar evolutionary path as photography, and they operated frequently at the cutting edge of technological advancements. Advancements in the presentation of pornography followed the evolution of film since the early 1890s, when single shot, silent films were created. Multiple shot films with numerous scenes developed throughout the first part of the 1900s, eventually leading to audio and color between 1910 and 1930 (Pappas, 2010).

In the beginning of the film era, when silent films consisted of one scene and a single reel, pornography made its debut in what was called “stag films,” a reference to the characteristic of men going alone, or without a date, to the films (Williams, 1989). Although very tame in comparison to sexual acts that take place in modern pornographic films, the actors were in fact

having intercourse. Audiences were all male, and because these films could only be viewed in theaters, men would watch in group settings. Despite the moderate level of sexual acts and primitive technology, fallacio, ejaculation, oral sex, and anal sex were all performed. As film technology increased, so did the close-ups and multiple shot sex sequences (Williams, 1989, p. 62).

The World Wide Web, a technology that developed throughout the mid to the latter 20th century, became a staple in nearly every United States home by the 1990s (Top Ten Reviews, n.d.). This invention may be the most significant contribution to the distribution of pornography and growth of the industry, with an estimated 40 million men who view pornography online, just in the United States in 2009 (Top Ten Reviews, n.d.).

Exploitation, and slavery specifically, against minorities or groups with less power by those who hold more power is not a new phenomenon. This has been a theme throughout humanity and has taken various shapes and forms over time. Sex trafficking is one such form, and hails back to various events throughout world history. Human trafficking, and sex trafficking specifically, is deeply engrained in the history of humankind (Appiah, 2006). Karl Marx is a well-known social theorist who identified and explored this relationship between what he called the ruling class and the subject class (Marx, 1848). While he primarily analyzed the growing capitalist economic structure of his own society in 19th century Europe, his perceptions of the exploitation that often manifests as slavery is applicable dating back to the societal shift from herd and horticulture to agriculture societies, over six thousand years ago (Henslin, 2011).

The ruling class in the countries that practiced slavery during the Trans Atlantic Slave Trade (15th to 19th centuries) implemented this form of social stratification over the subject class. Landowners were increasingly in a position to gain control, as those who did not own land

had to work for those who did in order to provide for themselves and their families.

Governments and populations grew, and with the technological evolution that followed, slavery was used to increase agricultural, architectural, and military growth, as well as in domestic work (Appelbaum, Carr, Duneier, & Giddens, 2014). Conflict theory, the theory that analyzes social issues from a lens of conflicts resulting from various groups competing for the same resources (Henslin, 2011), addresses this stratification of humans based on an economic system that separates societies into two groups: those who have wealth and power and those who do not, and the former exploit the latter (Ballantine & Roberts, 2010). The socioeconomic system (SES) of slavery is found throughout world history and geography. One common theme can be identified in all cultures that practiced this form of stratification: Slave owners have predominately belonged to the social majority groups, and those belonging to minority groups were enslaved.

Ballantine and Roberts (2010) wrote:

What these human bondage situations have in common is that poor minority groups are victimized. Because many slaves are members of ethnic, racial, religious, tribal, gender, age, caste, or other minority groups and have obvious physical or cultural distinctions from people who exploit them, they are at a distinct disadvantage in the stratification system. (p. 234)

Exploitation continued through various parts of the world and during various periods, but one point in history is of specific pertinence. The discovery of the American continents in the 1400s is a symbol of more than just innovation and exploration; it is also relevant to the history of sex trafficking. Evidence of sex trafficking may be found in documentation from this historical event. Christopher Columbus (as cited in Real, 2009) may have sex trafficking reports in his journals, saying,

A hundred castellanoes [a Spanish coin] are as easily obtained for a woman as for a farm, and it is very general and there are plenty of dealers who go about looking for girls; those from nine to ten [years old] are now in demand. (para. 5)

While a provocative discovery, this isolated entry may not be a definitive example of sex trafficking. The entry is somewhat vague in terms of sexual intentions, but what we do know from this entry is that Christopher Columbus sold and allowed for the selling of girls, and therefore he participated in and facilitated human trafficking. Further analyzing this statement, the first portion leaves no question that women were sold for money in the way farms were, and the latter portion specifically cites minors. Given the age of the child and the deduction of the intentions behind this “purchase,” this document is suggestive evidence that Native Americans were victims of sex trafficking in the beginning of the colonial era.

When examining this writing in the context of another journal entry, it is evident that these purchases were for the purposes of sex and not just labor. Cuneo, an explorer and friend of Columbus, described in his own journal what happened when he attempted to have sex with a girl who was allegedly a gift paid for and given by Columbus himself, “[She] resisted with all her strength.” So, in his own words, he “thrashed her mercilessly and raped her” (Hartmann as cited in Real, 2009, para. 13). In today’s terms, this situation is not only child sexual abuse and rape, but money was exchanged, making this a commercial sex act and, therefore, sex trafficking. The negative way colonialism affected women is not unique to this example.

The effects of the abuses against women victimized during the era of imperialism in various countries continues to ripple, affecting women even today. Aboriginal women in Australia are frequently viewed as property of men or the communities they live in. Eighty percent of U.S. Native American women who sought care at one unspecified U.S. clinic in 1982 reported having been raped. In Canada, First Nation women are four times more likely to die from homicide and three times more likely to die from suicide than all Canadian women outside their culture (Stark & Whisnant, 2004, p. 113). In the absence of a money exchange, these abuses

do not obviously imply sex trafficking, but the former example demonstrates sexual abuse among Natives, the latter of physical violence, and the patterns and trends seem to contribute to the larger picture of exploitation among Native women, beginning with the colonization of the Americas. The degradation of sexual violence and the dehumanizing of women as property are trademarks of sex trafficking and these characteristics often are found together. Just as colonialism “elevated male power within the colonized community” (Stark & Whisnant, 2004, p. 113) and often led to violence against women, women being abused and sex trafficked are found in history as casualties of war.

The license to perform sexual acts with females has long been considered the spoils of war. Up through the Vietnam War, and even more recently in “boots on the ground” scenarios, referring to United States soldiers stationed in other countries, prostitution has been an ideal form of entertainment. According to a former military person I spoke with, prostitution was commonplace during her station in Vietnam, even after the war ended. Busloads of women were brought in weekly as a sort of stress release for the men (personal communication, January 15, 2015). These women were referred to as “comfort women,” and while this practice did not begin with the Vietnam War, it was and continues to be very popular among soldiers stationed in Vietnam. It was culturally acceptable for military sub-groups, but it was also encouraged and facilitated by superiors in the military chain of command (Brownmiller, 1993). It was believed that the soldiers needed a way to decompress from the stresses of military life, and having sex with the native women was an acceptable means.

As the American presence in Vietnam multiplied, the unspoken military theory of women’s bodies as not only a reward of war but as a necessary provision like soda pop and ice cream, to keep our boys healthy and happy, turned into routine practice. (Brownmiller, 1993, p. 92)

“Comfort women” were not unique to Vietnam either. In Japan, after World War I ended, this practice was common. “By the end of 1945, about 350,000 US troops were occupying Japan. At its peak...the Recreation and Amusement Association (RAA) employed 70,000 prostitutes to serve them” (“Japan Gave GIs Comfort Women,” 2007, para. 22). It is on the heels of practices such as these that modern sex trafficking continues (Leppänen, 2007).

Special Populations: Children and Men

There are two qualifiers for the determination that someone is sex trafficked. Only one of the two must be met. Either the person engaging in commercial sex is a minor, or the person is an adult who has been forced, coerced, or deceived by fraud into engaging in commercial sex. Because it is illegal for any minor to work in the sex trade, there is a growing awareness that the concept that “child prostitution” is in fact, in every instance, actually a case of sex trafficking. While certainly this is considered child abuse, the characteristic that makes this scenario sex trafficking as well is the commercial component of the sexual abuse. Between 2007 and 2012, the United States National Trafficking Resource Center hotline received 2,668 calls regarding child victims. Callers reported children in 33% of sex trafficking cases (Polaris Project, 2013). At least two million children are believed to be victims of sex trafficking worldwide (Hepburn & Simon, 2010, p. 10).

One high-risk group is runaways. Motivators and risk factors for runaways in the United States have become better understood through studies and reports. The social perspective used to lean heavily toward a belief that runaway youth simply desired to express their independence. Current thinking recognizes that risk factors are instead a dysfunctional home situation, being a high school dropout, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth, persons suffering from drug abuse, and those being sexually active (Polaris Project, n.d.). Each year, 575,000 to

one million more youth will become runaways in the United States (Thompson, Pollio, & Kost, 2003). Keeping those high figures in mind, consider also that one in six runaways will become sex trafficked (National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, n.d.). Not surprisingly, the same risk factors that can contribute to youth running away are also affiliated with sex trafficking in youth. It could be because either the youth became homeless as a result of the risk factors and were later trafficked, or they may have bypassed the runaway step all together and been recruited into trafficking because of another factor that made them susceptible. Entry into sex trafficking occurs very early. The average age in the United States at which girls first become victims of prostitution is 12 to 14 (FBI, n.d.).

Internationally, trafficking in children has some distinctive characteristics. According to activists, while parents selling children in the United States happens, it may be rare. In countries with higher rates of poverty, it is a more common occurrence (Folks, 2015). Statistics on how often children are sold in the United States cannot be determined, requiring more monitoring and research. Parents may be blackmailed, threatened, or victims of fraud. Traffickers will find reasons to financially indebt the victim to them, such as arbitrary amounts for clothing and food, and threaten families who do not work the debts off. Furthermore, traffickers lie to parents about the type of work their children will engage in (Hepburn & Simon, 2010). One mother (as cited in Hume, Cohen, & Sorvino, 2013) stated, “Selling my daughter was heartbreaking, but what can I say?...The debt that my husband and I have is too big, we can’t pay it off....What can you do in a situation like this” (para. 6)? Drug addiction may also be associated with parental debt and motives for selling their children.

Worldwide, traffickers will have their “supply,” or victims, sent to different regions or countries for work in the sex industry. This makes it even more challenging for children to

escape and return home, or for their parents or other adults to recognize the abuses they are subjected to. Transport is very dangerous, and conditions within brothels are grim:

They may be held against their will when the brothel owner or pimp refuses to give them their passports. They may be told (truthfully or not) that they entered the country on false papers and will be in trouble with the police if they report their exploitation. They are often introduced to drugs and have to continue working to obtain the substances on which they have become dependent. Violence, both real and threatened, is also a disincentive to those who wish to escape. (International Labor Office, 2009, p. 29)

These characteristics are not unique to children and can be found in other demographics, but minors are particularly vulnerable to these types of abuses.

Statistics on how many sex trafficked victims are male vary widely. This is due to differences in geographic locations, as well as methodological approaches. For example, the International Labor Organization (ILO) concluded that 98% of sex trafficked victims are women worldwide (as cited in Lillie, 2014). In contrast, The Salvation Army (n.d.) published a report in 2015 stating that 33% of sex trafficked victims worldwide are male and that 41% of victims in the United Kingdom are male. Another comparison is the Ohio Human Trafficking Commission (2012) report, stating that approximately 30% of youth who entered into sex trafficking were male. U.S. Department of State (2013) gave one reason for these conflicting numbers in a recent report:

There is a growing awareness that men and boys are also victims of labor and sex trafficking and that women and girls are also subjected to forced labor. But identification and adequate service provision remains a challenge around the world for male victims. (“Male Trafficking Victims,” para. 1)

The age of entry for males is low, ranging from 11–13 (FBI, n.d.). Boys who are part of the LGBT community are also at high risk of being targeted for sex trafficking. As identification barriers are diminishing through awareness, more attention and victim services for males are becoming available. Risk factors for males and females are virtually the same across the board; yet, differences regarding awareness and interest may vary.

Adult Female Victim Profile

While sex trafficked victim characteristics are varied and can be extensive, there are specific traits and risk factors evident in both national and international victims, and sometimes the same factors apply to both categories. For example, fraudulent recruitment, limiting or controlling movements, and threatening harm to the victims or their families are behaviors found among traffickers worldwide. Distinguishing characteristics include socioeconomic and stratification factors, such as immigration in the United States and the caste system in India (Hepburn & Simon, 2010). Demographics and risk factors of victims in the United States include immigrants, those who abuse substances, the homeless, high school dropouts, young women from foster care settings, and lesbian, bisexual, and transgender women. Further, even young women from “good families” in safe communities are recruited into trafficking (FBI, n.d.).

Risk factors for being victims of sex trafficking vary between those in developing and developed countries.

The classification of a country [developing or developed] does not only depend on its income but also on other factors that affect how their citizens live, how their economies are integrated into the global system, and the expansion and diversification of their export industries. (Emelda, 2011, para. 3)

It is important to note whether a country is developed or not when exploring causes and motives, because differing living circumstances and needs can be relevant to motives. Those from lower SES and those living in poverty are at high risk. A specific example of a group from this status, targeted by traffickers, are indigenous women from any region, “The triple force of race, sex, and class inequality disparately impact indigenous women” (Farley et al., 2003, p. 63). These women are often trafficked from rural communities to urban areas, being transported to markets where they can be sold easily. This is done either by force, with coercion, or tricking the women into believing they are being offered a great job opportunity. Facing new languages and

other social barriers, being denied visas and documents necessary to reside in a new country legally, and having no other home to go to, are some reasons why indigenous women are susceptible to exploitation by traffickers. Those who are in lower SES are also more susceptible to mail bride situations where a fake proposal turns into bondage (Office of Refugee Resettlement, 2012). Feeling trapped and financially desperate is another vulnerability that is exploited by traffickers. A lack of alternatives is what drove a mother to working in the sex industry in Thailand. When asked why she “chose” to sell herself for sex, her response was, “Did [I] have any real alternatives for survival” (as cited in Farley et al., 2003, p. 65)?

Statistics on the number of sex trafficked victims today are hard to accurately gather due to hidden venues, online solicitation, interstate movement, and police reporting errors, as well as victims’ fear of repercussion if they speak out, or due to their inability to speak out (Nichols & Heil, 2015). Another barrier to accurate documentation is lack of victim identification. Trafficked women may not recognize that they are victims, feel ashamed, or not want to leave due to common psychological problems they are faced with. In a study, Farley et al. (2003) found that 68% of their participants suffered from posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), resulting from emotional damage which can lead to psychological numbing and social distancing. Stockholm syndrome, the physiological phenomenon in which kidnapped victims or victims of abuse have empathy and deep attachment to their oppressor, is another factor why women do not report their abuses. Traffickers may manipulate their sex trafficked victims into believing that they need them, or even creating a false sense of mutual attraction and affection:

Psychological manipulation...seems to be a common feature of sexual exploitation in America. Pimps prey on vulnerable girls and women, using a cunning mix of violence and tenderness to alternately degrade and then elevate them. The result is that these girls and women become psychologically attached to their pimps, and do not turn against them out of a dependency that is equal parts fear and misplaced affection. (Kitroeff, 2012, para. 5)

This combination of abuse and love, violence and tenderness, creates the attachment described in the Stockholm syndrome (Kitroeff, 2012).

Learned helplessness is another factor why some women do not escape and report their experiences. This behavior occurs in persons trained and conditioned to believe that they cannot change or avoid a situation. They believe they must endure a painful or unpleasant experience and feel helpless and powerless to avoid it or escape from it (Hewstone & Manstead, 1999).

Feminist theory highlights the immorality of objectifying women. While specific issues may not always be agreed upon amongst feminists, the fight for gender equality and the dismantling of a patriarchal society is a common theme within feminist theories (Henslin, 2011). Sex trafficked women are a symptom of a long history of patriarchal societies. The impact of century-old gender inequality is felt heavily by women who are victims of sex trafficking. Cultural influences of gender inequality have also contributed to the psychologically flawed perspective that women are meant to serve men. The perception that women are sexually promiscuous and inferior to men supports the systemic belief that females engaging in prostitution should be held legally accountable, rather than seen as victims (Stark & Whisnant, 2004).

Moving past victim physiological barriers, a lack of training for law enforcement is a prevalent reason for failure to identify and report sex trafficking cases. In a country with such high technological development as the United States, another perhaps surprising barrier exists. Mental health and welfare professionals are insufficiently trained to recognize sex trafficking. In one report conducted by Mace (2013), none of the professionals in her study based in Colorado, had any training in the identification and reporting of victims of sex trafficking. Subsequently, incidences of sex trafficking may never be reported.

Therefore, the numbers are considered low-ball figures, but represent a baseline nonetheless. Sex trafficking numbers vary depending on the source. Currently, in the United States, up to 300,000 people are thought to be sex trafficked or at risk according to the UNODC (n.d.). Other sources state the number of sex trafficked victims worldwide to be as high as 27 million (Tatlow, 2013). The variance in these figures demonstrates the difficulty of quantifying the number of victims and lends credibility to the arguments that better identification processes are needed.

There is a misconception if one wants to get out of any sex trade industry one only needs to make this choice. The reality is, however, that there are many obstacles interfering with such agency. Combined with psychological barriers that the victims face and the lack of identification training among professionals, traffickers have specific methods and practices in place to make it nearly impossible for victims to get out of the industry. The U.S. Department of Justice (n.d.) published a detailed list of specific reasons why a victim of sex trafficking could not escape. Literal bondage, locked doors, and guarded areas are obvious physical barriers to escape. Part of what makes this industry so large is the way traffickers are able to keep their victims under their control without risky behaviors, such as bondage scenarios, that would make the public suspect foul play. The case of Elizabeth Smart, the young girl who was kidnapped from her home in 2002 and held captive for years, despite being in public spaces on many occasions, is one such example. The U. S. Department of Justice (n.d.) gives the following examples of other tactics used to keep sex trafficking victims from reporting their situation to others: (a) Threats to harm the victims or their family members, (b) creating a fear of deportation or arrest if they speak out, (c) using debt bondage to keep them enslaved while they pay off a debt, (c) taking their visas and

personal identification cards from them, (d) creating drug dependencies, and (c) language barriers.

Should a victim overcome various obstacles and get out of the industry, their next battle becomes finding ways to restore their lives. Physically, economically, emotionally, and mentally, significant restorative support is needed. Giobbe (as cited in Farley et al., 2003) described it as this:

I feel like I imagine people who were in concentration camps feel when they get out...It's a real deep pain, an assault to my mind, my body, my dignity as a human being. I feel like what was taken away from me in prostitution is irretrievable. (p. 65)

Sex Trafficking and Legislation

Laws that apply internationally have been established to address sex trafficking worldwide. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, n.d.), established in 1948, makes any form of human trafficking in violation of the values presented in the declaration. "No one should be held in slavery or servitude, slavery in all of its forms should be eliminated" (Article 4, para. 12). Additionally, slavery, including sex trafficking, is currently illegal in nearly every country in the world. The penalty and enforcement, however, vary by country. Demonstration of this uneven landscape is witnessed in the U.S. Department of State ranking of countries. The department rates countries against the comprehensive federal law passed by the U.S. Congress in 2000 to address trafficking, called the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA). The U.S. Department of Justice created a three-tiered classification system that places countries in categories based on their adherence to TVPA. The first tier means a country is fully abiding by the TVPA. The second means they are not, but they are in the process of it. The third tier is the lowest ranking, and is classified as countries not complying with TVPA and not in the process of doing so (U.S. Department of State, 2014). In other words, they do not criminalize or prosecute for trafficking, and are not working towards it. The most

recent ranking report shows 14 countries that fall in tier 3. The report states that countries reported as being in the third tier are those “which do not fully comply with the minimum standards [of the U.S. federal *Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000* (TVPA)] and are not making significant efforts to do so” (U.S. Department of State, 2016, p. 56). These countries are:

- Algeria
- Belarus
- Belize
- Burma
- Burundi
- Central Africa Republic
- Comoros
- Djibouti
- Equatorial Guinea
- Eritrea
- The Gambia
- Guinea-Bissau
- Haiti
- Iran
- Korea, North
- Marshall Islands
- Mauritania
- Papua New Guinea
- Russia
- South Sudan

- Sudan
- Suriname
- Syria
- Turkmenistan
- Uzbekistan
- Venezuela
- Zimbabwe

The issue is not necessarily that these countries refuse to adhere to international human rights laws or to create their own. Some of these countries do have legislation passed to fight sex trafficking. The problem is centered on a lack of prosecution, follow through, and priority (Rogers, 2011).

Even in countries where anti-trafficking laws exist and are somewhat implemented, that does not guarantee that sex trafficking is heavily deterred and prosecuted there. For example, in Nepal, 5,000 to 10,000 women are trafficked into India each year; it is considered the busiest route in the world (Samant, 2013). Both Nepal and India ranked higher than third tier, but sex trafficking is still famously high in those regions of the world. This does not serve to discredit the value of criminalizing the act, as it allows the United Nations and other transnational efforts to work with individual countries to stop trafficking and shine an international spotlight on their behaviors. However, it is important to critically examine these details and avoid falling into the misconception that if sex trafficking is illegal in a country, it must not be an issue there.

The United States has seen several laws passed criminalizing sex trafficking over the last century. The revelation of sex trafficking occurring in sex trades, due to those who have stepped forward and spoken out and subsequent studies, observations, and testimonials, has led to national attention and legislation. The United States has developed specific laws to stop sex

trafficking nationally. The Department of Homeland Security (2015) offers a comprehensive list of bills passed associated with sex trafficking. “Human Trafficking Laws and Regulations” cites a bill dating back to the beginning of the 20th century. The Mann Act of 1910 made it a felony to persuade, induce, entice, or coerce a person to cross a state line for the purposes of working in prostitution. It was not until nearly a century later, however, that the United States passed more legislation specifically targeting sex trafficking.

The Civil Asset Forfeiture Reform Act of 2000 holds employers who allow sex trafficking to be facilitated on their property accountable. Then came the Protection Act of 2003, which protects children from abuse and sexual exploitation, as it is “a common element of child trafficking” (Department of Homeland Security, 2015, para. 4). The Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 addresses trafficking that occurs through tourist travel (and, more specifically, tourist businesses such as spas and strip clubs) and crosses country borders. As of August 2013, 39 U.S. states have specific state laws that operate to help abolish human trafficking, including sex trafficking, in the United States (Prois, 2013).

The result of these international, federal, and state laws is an increase in prosecutions against traffickers and a greater focus on the criminal acts of those involved in the trafficking of individuals, rather than on the individuals performing the commercial sex acts. For example, as of 2006, 110 people in Vietnam were arrested for human trafficking offenses, and 50 trafficking rings were disrupted in Vietnam and China (UNODC, n.d.). From 2009 to 2011, the U.S. Department of Justice (n.d.) dealt with 29 cases of human trafficking annually, a number that has doubled from 2008. In the United States, “the FBI has made more than 10,000 arrests since 1996. The U.S. Department of Justice says prosecutions are up 40 percent since 2006 resulting in roughly 9,000 cases. In 2009, 2,315 [sex trafficking] suspects were indicted” (“Child Porn

Prosecution Soaring,” 2011, para. 5). As a note for clarification, government agencies and departments generally report labor trafficking and sex trafficking under the same umbrella; therefore, these statistics represent human trafficking as a whole. However, one can deduce that the prosecution of human traffickers as a whole has will affect sex traffickers in specific.

Barriers to prosecution are significant, as law enforcement must prove that force, fraud, or coercion is involved. The size of the issue in contrast to the amount of resources that the criminal justice system has makes the challenge enormous. In Dayton, Ohio, for example, one police officer is assigned to fighting sex trafficking in the entire city, even though this state is ranked the fifth highest for sex trafficking in the nation (Ohio Human Trafficking Commission, 2012). In addition, victims are afraid to speak out. If someone says their performance was consensual, and they are an adult, then rape or other sexual abuse charges will not be levied against a perpetrator.

Scholarly research continues to be conducted to better identify obstacles preventing law enforcement from finding and prosecuting perpetrators of sex trafficking (Reid, 2010). Efforts are being made to make reporting incidences of this abuse mandatory, as is demonstrated by the State of California (Department of Consumer Affairs, 2015). Furthermore, evidence is beginning to become more available as victims speak out.

Sex Trafficking in Prostitution

In understanding the application of sex trafficking into economic structures, in terms of profit, supply, and demand, close examination of prostitution must be explored. “The prostitution exchange is the most systematic institutionalized reduction of women to sex. It is the foundation of all sexual exploitation of women” (Barry, 1995, p. 65). Prostitution is a sex industry that is heavily intertwined with sex trafficking, as it is a mode for traffickers to sell their victims to

customers seeking to buy sex (Polaris Project, n.d.). A 2008 study shows that half of the prostitutes who begin as teenagers report having been coerced, whereas women who started prostitution at 18 or later became prostitutes because of economic destitution and the need to feed their children (Kristof & WuDunn, 2009, pp. 5–6). The challenge in quantifying the frequency of sex trafficking in prostitution is distinguishing consenting adults from non-consenting adults, or minors who are passed off as adults. This is a challenge, as consent can be difficult to determine. There is heavy debate over what is considered consent, and when a person can give it. This perspective is supported by research on rape in the United States (Krakauer 2015). The research demonstrated that the public perception of rape is heavily skewed in that a person is only considered a non-consenting victim if a significant fight takes place during the act, and if the perpetrator is a violent stranger who attacks out of nowhere. In fact, this perception is inaccurate as it only accounts for a fraction of circumstances by which rape occurs, and taints the public opinion on what constitutes consent, and how we define a victim (Krakauer, 2015).

It is speculated by some activists that all who are prostitutes are sex trafficked, based on the information that the majority of those working in prostitution were sexually abused prior to entrance into the industry (Folks, 2015). A history of sexual abuse is, in fact, a very common characteristic among sex trafficked victims in the United States. One study conducted with 854 women in nine countries concluded that 57% of prostitutes were sexually abused as children (Farley et al., 2003). While this statistic is impressive, as it represents over half of the women in the study, it is a lower figure than what various other sources show through an online search. One reason for this disparity in percentages is that when a study is conducted on prostitutes versus rescued sex trafficking victims, the answers will not always be the same. The lived experiences and current situations are different within those two groups. A person working in

prostitution may in fact be consensually working, and therefore she is not considered a sex trafficked victim. At the same time, prostitutes interviewed while still working in the sex industry may be trafficked but unable to speak out, may have repressed the experience(s), or simply because of their current job circumstances, may be unwilling to answer questions honestly. These differences contribute to different results, but even with the statistical deviances, it is evident that a history of sex abuse is a common characteristic among sex trafficked victims.

Reid (2010) argued that those who work in the sex trade are emotionally and mentally damaged from the abuses they endured. The challenge then is to demonstrate that nearly all women working in prostitution are not qualified to grant consent due to the fact that they are emotionally or mentally unhealthy. The difference between consent versus non-consent is far from black and white.

Another factor contributing to this gray area is that the average age for entry into prostitution is 12–14 (FBI, n.d.). Because they are minors upon entry, the United States and United Nations consider them to be sex trafficked, regardless of consent. And yet, after years of being in the industry as victims of sex trafficking, they suddenly become consenting adults on their 18th birthday. This perception is misguided in that it discounts the affects of years of victimization in the sex industries. Furthermore, the risks associated with the type of work make one call into question how much a women prostitute is aware and able to consent to working in a position with high mortality risks (Van der Veen, 2002).

Because of the gray areas described, combined with a lack of strong quantitative data on how many prostitutes are sex trafficked, data and studies conducted on prostitution do not always distinguish between sex trafficking victims and those who are consenting adults. Therefore, the following data pertain to studies conducted on all prostitutes; which is to say, some may be

trafficked and some may not. Understanding the day in the life of a prostitute, as well as the details of how the industry operates, is critical in recognizing where, when, and how sex trafficking can and does occur within prostitution.

Tonya Folks, Co-Founder and COO of BE FREE Dayton, an anti-sex trafficking nonprofit, said that while most prostitutes working in the sex industry want to get out, it is nearly impossible to do so on their own. She said that in her research and experience, rarely do prostitutes simply choose to get out of the industry and pursue a different career and lifestyle (Folks, 2015). The study conducted with just under 1,000 prostitutes in nine countries confirms her claim, with findings showing that, on average, 89% of the prostitutes interviewed stated the need to leave prostitution. The participants who wished to get out of the industry did not feel as though they had the option to do so. Their answers regarding other needs provide some insight into why they may have felt unable to leave, despite the desire to do so. Of the U.S. participants, 67% stated the need for drug and/or alcohol treatment, 95% of Canadian participants needed a home or safe place to live, 41% of Zambian participants admitted to needing physical protection from their pimp, and 69% of German participants needed counseling services (Farley et al., 2003). These results demonstrate the commonality of prostitutes wanting to leave the industry but feeling unable to do so. They also shed light on various needs and motives for staying in the industry.

Noted in the study are the participants who expressed a need for drug or alcohol treatment. Not surprisingly then are the findings in the study of participants who reported drug use. Overall, the study showed that 75% of prostitutes use drugs (Farley et al., 2003). Contrasting those numbers with the high volume of participants reporting a need for drug rehabilitation, it

can be deduced that for many prostitutes, drugs as a use of control, dependency, or a coping strategy are common and undesired (Farley et al., 2003).

A thorough investigation of the working conditions for prostitutes is beneficial for understanding the industry's structure and lived experiences of prostitutes. There is a myth that if a prostitute makes money, she is not being trafficked. A breakdown of the economics of the industry serves to debunk that myth. U.S. prostitutes average 7–10 paid sexual encounters (“tricks”) per week. They make approximately \$400 per week after the pimps' 25% commission, which is an industry standard (Dubner & Levitt, 2009, p. 38). However, there is no one regulating this and trafficked victims can lose any amount of the money earned to their trafficker.

A look at the next two superpowers yields some interesting statistics. China has an estimated 10 million prostitutes and India has two to three million (Kristof & WuDunn, 2009, pp. 5–6). I do suspect that, with the advancements of technology, population growth, and the nature of addiction, these numbers have increased since 2009. According to a report by Business Insider, there are 43 million prostitutes worldwide and one million of them are in the United States (Lubin, 2012). There is a significantly higher number of prostitutes working worldwide. How many of these women are giving their consent? Furthermore, how many are supposedly giving consent, but are influenced by past sexual abuses, drug dependencies, or as victims of violence?

Exposure to violence is common in prostitution, and it poses a significant safety and health risk for prostitutes (Van der Veen, 2002). While feminist theory is used as grounds to both speak against prostitution as well as support it, one side claiming that it exploits and harms women, and the other side defending women rights to use their own bodies to earn a living, if they so choose, statistics and studies demonstrate just how high the dangers on the job are for

prostitutes. A study done with 100 prostitutes in Vancouver, Canada, found that 82% had been assaulted by “Johns” or customers, and many reported being stabbed, having broken bones, and experiencing head injuries from baseball bats or crowbars (Stark & Whisnant, 2004). Another study found that a prostitute experiences about a dozen incidences of violence a year (Dubner & Levitt, 2009, p. 29). Prostitutes are six times more likely to die than women in the general population are. In the United States, 94% of prostitutes reported experiencing violence while working. Such violence, combined with sexually transmitted diseases (STD), contributes to the dangers of the job (Farley et al., 2003). “A typical Chicago prostitute could expect to have about 300 instances of unprotected sex” (Dubner & Levitt, 2009, p. 34). Fifty eight percent of the prostitutes in Burkina Faso in West Africa and 74% of the prostitutes in Kenya are HIV positive (Johnson, 2000), and those numbers do not include the prostitutes that may have HIV.

Prostitution is typically perceived to take place on street corners, in cars, and in hotel rooms. While those perceptions are largely accurate, what is often overlooked is “front businesses,” or businesses posing as legitimate operations when in fact they are establishments meant for prostitution. Massage parlors are an example of businesses that front as legitimate, when in fact their true business identity is brothels. “Happy Ending” (n.d.), a slang word used to describe massages that end in manual genital stimulation, are a cultural taboo and social joke; but, in fact, the reality of these types of massage parlors is an example of how sex trafficking infiltrates the society through various economic business fronts.

Women in brothels disguised as massage businesses typically live on-site where they are coerced into providing commercial sex for 6 to 10 men a day, 7 days a week. Fake massage businesses frequently operate in strip malls, office buildings, and sometimes, residential homes, in urban, suburban, and rural areas across the United States. (National Human Trafficking Resource Center, n.d., para. 2)

Because prostitution is illegal, and many other sex industries are not, such as pornography and strip dancing, it is often assumed that sex trafficking does not occur in these

environments. However, strip clubs and escort services may at times operate as sex trafficking hubs, with the strippers and escorts providing illegal sexual services in the backroom.

Acupuncture businesses and nail salons in the United States are also examples of front businesses.

State and federal law enforcement officials believe that the owners of some shops are engaged in illicit activities that may include money laundering and human trafficking, where women are forced or coerced to work for free or engage in sex for a fee. (Martin, 2010, para. 3)

In other words, prostitution may be operated in seemingly legal business establishments.

Distinguishing prostitution as an act of consent from prostitutes who are victims of sex trafficking is difficult and at times impossible. Identifying the process traffickers use to recruit and move a women through the stages of trafficking helps to recognize victims, but many obstacles remain in proper identification and subsequent prosecution. Establishing an understanding for the business model of sex trafficking and prostitution is necessary to better recognize how and where trafficking occurs in the system.

Business for Sex Trafficking and Prostitution

The business model for sex trafficking and prostitution is virtually indistinguishable. This makes victim identification very difficult, but because prostitution is illegal in the United States (except for an area in Nevada that allows for brothels) and many other countries, all engaged in the industry are subject to arrest as they are breaking the law. Identifying the element of consent is not a prerequisite to a police officer making an arrest in the United States. Attention in the public sector is being given to the need to identify victims, with a push for healthcare job training for public officials (Mace, 2013), but ultimately, prostitutes and all players in the industry are prosecuted as criminals.

Different countries have tried varying approaches in the quest to determine and implement the most effective way to decrease sex trafficking from a judicial lens. Legal systems addressing this are designed in one of three ways. First, making it legal to sell sex but not buy, thereby only criminalizing the buyer and not the potential victims. Second, making it legal to sell and buy, as is the case in the Netherlands, based on the argument that full legalization brings prostitution out of hiding and allows for more focus and resources on sex trafficking. Third, making it illegal to buy and sell sex, thereby allowing law enforcement to arrest and prosecute the buyers, as well as all those who sell sex, including the traffickers. There are a few countries, which take a unique approach, making prostitution legal, but pimping is not. Examples are Brazil, Chile, Mexico, France, the United Kingdom, and Italy (Farmer & Horowitz, 2013). The benefits and disadvantages to each approach are heavily debated, as few practical examples exist to work with. Sweden is currently making waves in this debate, as the country has legalized both the selling and purchasing of sex, and in Germany, it is now legal to sell sex, but illegal to purchase it ("A Giant Teutonic Brothel," 2013). Sweden has demonstrated a decrease in prostitution, but the decline also correlates with the increase in police resources and training, drawing into question, which factor more accurately caused the decline. Ultimately, examples in these practices are anecdotal at best at this point and more information and application is necessary before any definitive conclusions could be drawn. Because the model for trafficking versus pimp ran prostitution is the same, so is the breakdown of positions in the industry:

Pimp/trafficker is the head boss. He is the head boss and is well insulated by the employee structure, making it very difficult to find him. The level of that employee insulation varies based on the size of the operation. In contrast to common media representations of pimps, which are most often Black men with heavy gold jewelry, United States pimps are usually

White, upper class business men. “[They] are young people, well dressed and make a good impression using the outward signs of their wealth: clothing, car, mobile etc. and by success stories” (Gravis, 2012, p. 74). Working as a pimp has high financial benefits; the risk of being caught is low and the profit margins are high (Hepburn & Simon, 2010). The role of pimp and trafficker are nearly the same in all aspects, in terms of operation and function. The distinction between the two titles is whether the people that work for them as prostitutes are consenting or not, and whether or not they are being coerced and misled, though it can be argued that a person called a pimp is always a trafficker in that consent may never be guaranteed. There are variations in the level of power and wealth that the pimp/trafficker has based on the size of the operation and the structure. Anytime a person is sold to another person, the seller is always considered a trafficker. The discrepancy only applies to women allegedly consenting to sell sex to another person, which is not the same as selling one person to another person. The latter scenario constitutes trafficking, and thus the work of a trafficker, in all instances.

A *Madame* is simply a female pimp or female trafficker. Those at this rank can be a strip club owner running a prostitution ring behind closed doors, a parent, who traffics her child, or even a cab driver who pimps out individuals and drives them to their destination (Farley et al., 2003). While all scenarios where a woman sells another human being into trafficking classifies her as a Madame, it is important to note the stark contrasts between a business woman living lavishly off of the people she sells, and the mother in an unindustrialized country living in poverty and selling her daughter for economic reasons. If pimps or Madams use force, fraud, or coercion on the women who works for them, then they are more accurately called a trafficker. Both a pimp and Madame, or trafficker, are likely to be involved in the illegal drug industry and may have started out in a drug related job, which led to the sex industry, as the two industries are

deeply interconnected (BE FREE Dayton, 2014). Pimps, Madams, or traffickers, have a large range of income potential, depending on the quality of operation they are running. High-end prostitution is distinguished from low end in terms of the appearance of the prostitute and social grace in public settings. These types of differences determine the cost of those services. There are fewer high-end working prostitutes as compared to low-end, and women who work as high-end prostitutes are less likely to report having been sexually abused at some point in their lives. Some prostitution operations are run with a website and online transactions, with high-end sites charging membership fees as high as \$1,800 per encounter (Cherie & Frazier, 2007). Memberships aside, nearly all revenue is earned from a percentage taken from the money prostitutes earn. Even in low-end operations, significant revenue for these roles is possible by having numerous prostitutes work. In smaller business structures, a pimp or Madame may be the only players facilitating prostitutes to the market, but in larger structures, there are many other positions. While hiring a high-end prostitute can cost in the thousands per night, a low-end prostitute may make as little as \$20 for oral sex, and around \$50 for intercourse or anal sex (Dubner & Levitt, 2009).

A *Bottom* is a trafficker's right hand, often a significant other or someone he or she has worked with for a long period. They oversee recruitment, the prostitutes, and other employees. The bottom is often a former prostitute or victim of sex trafficking, and has expertise in the business and in how to recruit successfully (Gravis, 2012, p. 75).

The *recruiter* is under the bottom; this person goes out into the public and uses various tactics to lure people, usually young girls, into the industry. A recruiter is often an older "mentor" or boyfriend figure; the latter being referred to as the "Romeo Effect," which is essentially a term coined for an older man who poses as a doting boyfriend, but who has an

ulterior motive of recruiting a young girl or woman into trafficking (BE FREE Dayton, 2014). Once trust and dependency are established, a process is followed to train and ensure further dependency. In some operations, a bottom and recruiter are the same position.

A Runner and watcher are employees who deliver things such as information, money, or drugs, run the errands, and watch for police or suspicious eyes. This position is the bottom of the totem pole.

These last three roles are insufficiently studied and few details on their profiles are available. The sex trafficking and prostitution business model needs further research to understand specific economic factors, backgrounds, and demographics of employees better (Farmer & Horowitz, 2013).

The next position in this structure is the prostitutes themselves, which are called the “*Stable*.” The reason for this name is as literal as it sounds; they are considered as significant and useful as a group of cattle that the trafficker owns and transports to various locations to sell them repeatedly. Stables are transported to different areas both to evade police officers and to deliver the prostitutes/victims to regions where their demographics are in higher demand.

The last person in this hierarchy is the “*John*” or the customer (BE FREE Dayton, 2014). The term is somewhat misleading in that it portrays only men as customers; although it is much more common for men, females also purchase sex. Limited research is available on this demographic minority, but there is a market for women who buy male prostitutes, or “*Juggalos*.” There are also lesbian escort services catering to women who want to buy female escorts or prostitutes. So prevalent, however, is the male market that even lesbian escort services market to both lesbians and men.

Lesbian and bisexual escorts can create as much fun for a women’s party as they can for the bachelor and his friends. There is nothing like having one soft body do a lap dance for

another soft body. Couples just love to share this experience. We can help provide you with the perfect entertainers whether it be one girl for one girl, or 3 girls for an entire party. (Las Vegas Escorts, n.d., para. 2–3)

Due to the prevalence of males in the market, customers are generically referred to as the male name of “John.”

According to Guinn (2006), research and media attention has been primarily focused on the prostitute and pimp or madams. He highlighted the need to focus on the Johns and the way in which their sexual exploitation of prostitutes plays into the issue of sex trafficking. Economically speaking, where there is a demand, the supply will follow.

The Johns, or customers, are not nearly as finite and specific as many myths or assumptions may lead one to believe. While men in certain careers and demographics are more commonly tied to prostitution, such as drug dealers and white-collar professionals, the diversity among Johns is incredibly varied. Economic background, while perhaps relevant in small sample sizes and locations, are in fact not strong indicators as to who is likely to buy or not buy sex. Statistically, 14% of men in the United States under 30 buy prostitutes, and that number rises to 30% when all ages are accounted for. These numbers exclude visits to strip clubs (Milrod & Weitzer, 2012). A study done with nearly 500 Johns, for better understanding the consumer side of prostitution and sex trafficking revealed a variety of other demographics. Eighty four percent were White, 41% had a graduate degree, 80% worked full time, and 66% were married or had a partner. Ultimately, it was concluded that the demographic make-up of “Johns” varies significantly and includes men from all social economic statuses. The results also demonstrated a variety of motives for buying sex (Milrod & Monto, 2012).

Whether Johns are aware that they are purchasing sex in the absence of consent is difficult to document, as admitting to purchasing sex outside of consent is not something men are likely to admit (Farley et al., 2003). One interesting discovery in the study by Milrod and Monto

(2012) was that 84% of the men surveyed bought sex because they liked women who really enjoyed having sex. This is interesting in that it serves as evidence against a claim that Johns always know when the prostitutes they hire do not want to have sex or are being forced.

Other motivations for buying sex are as varied as the demographics of those who buy it. Motivators include loneliness, social and peer pressure, the desire to experience sexual things they cannot get from their partner, and sex addiction. A study of over 900 Johns found that the primary motivating factor was an impatient desire for sexual gratification:

The most common reason why men said they bought sex was to satisfy immediate sexual urge; 21 percent of time men wanted to select women with certain physical, racial, and sexual stereotypes such as being submissive; 20 percent went to prostitutes because they were unsatisfied with their current relationship; and 15 percent went to prostitutes because there was no emotional connection or commitment. Only 3 percent of the responders in the survey said they went to prostitutes because of a sex addiction or because they were drunk. (Cox, 2010, para. 12)

In this study, men who purchase sex are categorized by frequency as follows: zero purchases, one timer, a few times (three or less) and the hobbyist (the John who ascribes to the “addict” motivation factor). This distinction is important because there is a cultural perception that all men who buy sex are addicts, when in fact studies show that usually just one category of Johns, the hobbyists, are sex addicts (Milrod & Monto, 2012). Issues of emotional involvement also vary:

In one survey, 32 percent of customers arrested for soliciting a prostitute said they bought sex because they “didn’t have time” for a conventional relationship, 28 percent did not want “the responsibilities” inherent in such a relationship, and 18 percent said they would “rather have sex with a prostitute than have a conventional relationship with a woman”). Even so, nearly one third of the men from this study admitted to buying sex from a prostitute with the hopes of having an emotional connection or relationship, something called (GFE), or “The Girlfriend Experience.” (Milrod & Weitzer, 2012, p. 452)

Flores (2011) stated that the men she was forced to sleep with had no idea that she was both a victim of force or that she was in fact a minor. Though she never stated her age to the men, she never challenged the age presented by her trafficker to the customers, which was 18.

She spoke of a time when a customer asked her what her name was, and she realized that he had no idea that she was not a consenting adult. Fear of harm from the trafficker, against herself or her family, kept her silent.

Those who work in the sex industry are often made to look younger than they are, and according to human rights activists, victims of sex trafficking are threatened and told to look as if they are enjoying themselves (Derr, 2014). This makes it nearly impossible for Johns to distinguish whether those they hire are working freely or because of sex trafficking.

I will reiterate that the model described above applies to commercial sex acts inclusively; victims of sex trafficking and those who are consenting adults working in prostitution will all see similar structures in terms of hierarchy, positions, and chains of command, so long as they work for a pimp or Madame. The following descriptions of the stages of sex trafficking, however, are about those who work in the sex industry in absence of their consent.

In sex trafficking, there are specific steps, tactics, and protocols established to transition victims through the process and ensure that they can produce a sustainable form of revenue. The four stages are recruiting, grooming, seasoning, and trafficking. The characteristics of each stage will be addressed, not just to demonstrate how the process works from a business model standpoint, but also to serve as red flags and indicators for family, friends, and healthcare professionals to recognize potential victims of sex trafficking.

The recruiting stage is where the bottom or recruiter first lures a victim in through tactics such as friendship or “The Romeo Effect,” promises of great income potential, and/or blackmailing. This is where Stockholm syndrome can start—victims becoming attached and loyal to their abuser—with victims receiving nice gifts, significant attention, and a perceived strong relationship of loyalty and care. Individuals, who are homeless, were victims of abuse, or

who suffer from low self-esteem, are targets for recruitment. Their vulnerabilities are exploited to begin creating dependencies. Recruitment may take place in a school, a mall, a park, or a workplace. Phony modeling casting calls may also be set up to recruit (Hunt, 2013, para. 9).

Next, the grooming stage includes steps to prepare the victim for the next steps; it serves as a transitional period. In this stage, the older friend, modeling connection, or boyfriend will begin to isolate them from others, control their behaviors, manner of dress, and time, will encourage them to watch pornography, get into modeling, or try sexual activities, and will introduce drugs or alcohol to create dependencies. They will play on the victim's weaknesses and needs to create that dependency. Perhaps they shower them with compliments and manipulate them into believing other people in their life are not good for them, they will provide needs otherwise unmet, such as a phone, a place to stay, or food (BE FREE Dayton, 2014).

The victim now enters the seasoning stage. Once dependency, trust, and control are established, the victim will be sexually, physically, verbally, and/or emotionally abused. Victims will be conditioned with things such as gang rape, forced drug use, and beatings (Office of Refugee Resettlement, 2012). They may be forced into sexual education, such as viewing pornography or even practicing sexual acts, put in confinement, threatened or blackmailed to keep quiet, given a new name, removed from familiarity, and the trafficker will use the dependencies established by the recruiter during the grooming period to take full control. These tactics are somewhat universal, but different ones will be used based on the country and intent. U.S. women may return home each day and be subjected to sex trafficking at random, whereas a woman in a country that requires a passport, she does not possess, may be forced to stay under the traffickers control at all times. Control techniques are intended to create a product that produces controllable and repeatable revenue (BE FREE Dayton, 2014). The tactics used to

exploit and oppress victims is often universal, although, as is pointed out with this visa example, the process and application for victimizing women in sex trafficking can vary within domestic to international operations. Internationally, deception in terms of what a job will entail and promises of a better life in a new country are tactics used to lure in and then trap women into the sex industry (Chakarova, 2011).

In the last stage, the victim is sex trafficked to customers. The signs of this are going missing, frequently running away from home or disappearing from social circles, lying, missing school or work, exhaustion, extreme fear or anxiety, withdrawing, being overly submissive, having signs of abuse or trauma, or avoiding eye contact. They will have things like cash or hotel keys on hand, secret cell phones that the recruiter provides, will be addicted to drugs or alcohol, and if a minor, may have a fake driver's license (BE FREE Dayton, 2014).

Types of Pornography

There is no specific industry standard by which pornography is categorized. If it fits the definition in the Merriam Webster dictionary, that is, "if there is nudity with intent to arouse or actual sexual acts occurring" ("pornography," n.d.), then it is pornography. That definition allows for an incredibly wide variety of sexual acts and imagery, from a photograph of a naked woman lying alone on a bed of rose petals, to a film scene where a woman is having sex with three men who are simultaneously penetrating her vagina, anus, and mouth. For the purpose of this study and to understand the varying levels and types of pornography, three widely used categories of pornography are used. These categories are common terms, and I have organized specific acts and pornographic experiences under the appropriate category.

The following three categories serve to define levels of pornography, which are assigned to works that are specifically intended for that purpose. It is important to know that these three

categories are not mutually exclusive; there is often a crossover in these categories. Pornography is a continuum, with many levels and degrees. While creating clear definitions within this continuum is difficult, acknowledging the different levels is important to understand varying levels of abuse and situations where force may be a factor.

Eroticism

Eroticism is a term used to describe pornography that is created with what is considered a more tasteful approach. Soft porn is a term used interchangeably with eroticism to represent a softer or less vulgar depiction of pornography (Lederer, 1980). Containing nudity and a clear intent to cause sexual arousal, this type of pornography is typically void of the crudeness of more extreme forms. Both terms are used liberally to describe any type of mild imagery depicting nudity and sexual intent. This category contains a wide variety of depictions, including sex scenes from R-rated Hollywood films and Victoria's Secret models in advertisements. Eroticism and soft porn are subjective terms concerning the variety of media they can be applied to, but identifying their boundaries is important in establishing a distinction between the types of nudity and sexual intent it describes and the hard and violent pornography that will be discussed in later sections (Lederer, 1980).

The category of eroticism should not be mistaken as synonymous with romantic pornography; commonly referred to as "female friendly" pornography, although the so called female friendly pornography is included under the umbrella of eroticism. Eroticism includes romantic pornography, most lesbian pornography (but not all), solo fetish pornography, and so forth. Soft porn or erotic porn is best thought of as being associated with foreplay activities by the actors. It has intimate and often emotional characteristics (Giddens, 1992). It is meant to set the tone and begin the process of sexual climax. The tone is much softer and the variety of

accepted sexual acts in eroticism is limited. Traditional, duo intercourse takes place in this category. Anal sex, fetish solo acts, and threesomes are accepted, but not much else is considered acceptable in eroticism. Ejaculating on the women's face, perhaps thought of as more vulgar than what would be expected in this category, does occur frequently. This is a popular practice that seems to cross all boundaries on the continuum (Dines, 2010).

The romantic style of pornography is not produced as frequently as other types. However, this is not due to less demand as this is a popular type of pornography (Dines, 2010). Instead, it is more difficult to produce this type of pornography as it requires better writing, better acting, and better production quality (Williams, 2004).

To categorize this type of pornography by medium, the Internet must be examined in depth. This is the hub where all types of print, illustrated, and filmed pornography come together. Webcam sex is also addressed. While the mediums discussed can house all categories of pornography, I will examine them from the context of eroticism first.

The Internet is filled with webpages representing eroticism. An Internet search of the word "eroticism" on the Yahoo search engine in 2016 (<http://search.yahoo.com>) retrieves nearly two million results, with countless images of women or men, posing nude, and making some sort of sexual gesture. Eroticism in pornographic videos found online or at adult video stores depict the types of sex acts previously described.

Many advertisements found online can be considered soft porn or eroticism as well. Although, the cyber location of the erotic or soft porn is relevant in terms of determining what other content may be seen by the viewer. A lingerie marketing website with soft porn images of models displaying merchandise is not likely to lead the viewer into more "hard porn" imagery, a type of porn which will be analyzed later. In juxtaposition, amateur pornography sites will

engage in less effort to draw distinctions between soft and hardcore porn, and the two may become one before the viewer realizes a transition has occurred (Bray & Reist, 2011).

Pornography is often discussed in a generalized way in public discourse, but an intent to sell sex as the product must be identified to determine what may be encountered on various sites, and to establish what types of companies fall into which category of pornography. In other words, to assume Victoria's Secret's website is the same as an amateur porn website, because both display eroticism, is an inaccurate categorization. While some may argue that the imagery is pornographic, the business itself is selling clothing products, not sex itself.

Webcam sex, which is a mixture of pornography and prostitution, represents another part of the online sex industry. The creation of pornography is legal in the United States so long as the viewer is not paying the individual to have sex with the actors or models directly; rather, they are paying to observe. In webcam sex, the customer is paying to interact with the sex worker in real time, but because they are not in the same physical space, and if the activity involved consenting adults only, no laws are being broken. Luring young women to work for webcam companies presents fewer challenges than other sex industries for producers, filmmakers, and sex trade businessmen and women, given the safety and distance of being behind a computer. Hire ads on specific webcam sites depict a glamorous and safe job environment (My Free Cams, n.d.). Webcams are growing in popularity and present a potential threat to pornography studios (Foster, 2015), much like YouTube and music recording computer software have become a threat to record producers.

Print pornography (magazines and books), once the primary medium for pornography, no longer dominates the industry as it once did due to the popularity of the online sites, but it is still a very successful industry (Top Ten Reviews, n.d.). Finding a Playboy or Hustler magazine

under a parent's bed is less likely to happen now than it was a couple decades ago, but even so, it is still a medium contributing to the roughly 15 billion dollar annual earnings for the pornography industry (Top Ten Reviews, n.d.). The value of the Playboy company dropped from one billion in 2000 to 185 million in 2011, but even so, its annual revenue in 2014 was over 1.5 million (Statistic Brain, 2016). Similar to newspapers, pornography magazines are in a transitional battle to find a place in what is called convergence or the converging of all platforms into one location: The Internet.

The expectations for physical beauty and physique are higher in print pornography than in film. This is an example of economics in the industry, as there is a higher supply of women interested in a career in pornographic print modeling than in pornographic film acting (Derr, 2014). Even with the higher standards and competition in print pornography, social taboos still apply to these models. Society is much more forgiving of men in nude images and Western culture normalizes its viewing. In contrast, women who pose for nude images receive public judgment and, at times, are punished for their behavior (Appelbaum et al., 2014). This double standard can be observed in the 2015 season of the reality show "The Bachelor," produced by ABC Studios. The discovery that a final contestant posed nude for Playboy led to harsh public criticisms. She was not asked to return for the next season of the female led reality show, and it was heavily speculated that her history in nude photography played a role in that decision (Clark-Flory, 2015). Another female contestant was heavily persecuted by the public, including receiving death threats, for having intercourse with another contestant. This contrasts male contestants who engaged in the same sexual activities on and off the show and received significantly less criticism (Fleiss et al., 2015). Although some especially crude acts can be depicted in extreme publications of pornography, the *still image* presents limitations and is

generally used to portray what may be considered tasteful and even classy images of nudity for the purpose of sexual arousal. In other words, eroticism is the primary category of pornography found in print.

Books are very popular mediums for eroticism due to the ability to create robust and intricate storylines and character development. In 2012, romance novels grossed 1.5 billion dollars (about 55% of the revenue for all fiction books), and they are the fastest growing part of the ebook market (Raphel, 2014). Statistics for revenues from pornography usually do not include pornography in written form. The volume of material available and the magnitude of the industry for sex in book form are impressive; with women readers identified as the primary contributors to that market (Smith, 2007).

The book, *50 Shades of Grey* (James, 2011) is an example of the success of pornography in book format, having sold over 5 million copies in the first two years after publication. The trailer of the subsequently released movie was one of the most watched trailers in the history of cinema (Taylor-Johnson, 2015). The book's success serves as a strong example for the demand of erotic pornography in written form, particularly to a female audience (James, 2011).

Interestingly, there are some who argue that erotica and pornography are separate from each other, the former being a matter of free human expression and love, and the latter being about violence. "Until we untangle the lethal confusion of sex with violence, there will be more pornography and less erotica" (Lederer, 1980, p. 39). In addition, the separation of both aspects is not black and white; eroticism holds its place under the umbrella of pornography.

The next two categories deal with the more common types of pornography, and can be very difficult to read. Caution and care is advised as this information may be disturbing and warrants a warning to the reader.

Gonzo

Anti-pornography activists, concerned parents, and angry wives, addressing the harm pornography causes for individuals and society, are most often referring to hardcore pornography, also called gonzo. It is the most common form of pornography based on popularity and ease of creation (Dines, 2010). Filmmakers can quickly produce gonzo films at a very fast rate. The demand is high, making for an economic incentive. About every half hour, a new porn film is made. Most of these fall into this middle category of gonzo, or hardcore pornography, with over 13,000 hardcore films being released worldwide in 2005 alone (Top Ten Reviews, n.d.). Gonzo pornography is defined as “pure or plotless succession of sex acts, with emphasis on more extreme activities, pornography is documented prostitution, prostitution that has been technologized” (Dines, 2010, p. 23). The lack of a storyline simplifies the production of these films. Gonzo films that do include storylines are less common and are not classified separately.

Examples of sex acts found in this type of pornography, as well as common advertisements describing the movies, are included here. Some who work in the industry, or those who critique it, divide hardcore pornography by separating it from more “extreme” hardcore pornography, which is somewhat arbitrary in distinction and subjective to the person’s opinion. For the purposes of this study, all acts that would be considered either “regular” hardcore or “extreme” hardcore are included in this section. Examples of popular hardcore or gonzo pornography acts are as follows: Vaginal sex, anal sex, oral sex, group sex with three or more men on one woman, double anal or double vagina (two penises penetrating a buttocks or vagina simultaneously), gagging and vomiting from oral sex, and multiple men ejaculating at the same time on a woman’s face, eyes, and mouth, called bukkake. Common website advertisements for this level of pornography may read like this:

We make them gag till their makeup starts running, and then we get all other holes sore, anything brutal involving a cock and an orifice,” “Join us now to access complete degradation,” “Gag the Babysitter,” “Naughty babysitter knows what she’s good for: sucking cock and drinking cum,” “Every week we’ll bring you a new suffering slut. Weak, destroyed, agonizing in anal pain,” “Chicks being ass fucked till their sphincters are pink, puffy, and totally blown out. Adult diapers just might be in store for these whores when their work is done. (Dines, 2010, p. xviii–xxi)

Popular acts include a woman with a penis in her mouth, anus, and vagina, gagging/chocking/puking, orgies (Dines, 2010). Although hardcore porn and gonzo have violent attributes and a reputation for pushing beyond limits, there is an even more extreme and niche type of pornography, extremely violent pornography, which requires its own category.

Films between couples, meant to depict an emotional connection between lovers, can also include sexual acts that would be considered hardcore pornography. The literature does not seem to distinguish this from the gonzo, but it is worth noting that this type of pornography does exist.

Extreme Violence

The intent of this type of pornography is to cause harm or depict harm against women (Dines, 2010). Though some of the acts described here could also fall under the previous category, some of the violent acts are so extreme that they warrant separate discussion. A defining element of this type of pornography is the fact that the women in these videos are not necessarily instructed to consistently act as if they are enjoying what is being done to them. In fact, sometimes they might be instructed not to act in that manner (Derr, 2014). Usually, the viewer pays for this type of pornography, as it is niche and rarely provided free of charge as other types might be. Exceptions exist, primarily when an amateur, seeking an online following, created these films. In general, viewers know exactly what they are purchasing. Those who pay for this material want to see people suffering (Derr, 2014).

Specific examples of this type of violence in pornography include the perception of, or perhaps actual act, of rape, and physical abuse such as hitting, whipping, and choking, and

peculiar acts of violence such as causing puncture wounds and drowning. A victim of domestic abuse shared that her husband forced her to watch an online film of a woman whose nipples were nailed to a piece of wood with a nail gun, and another whose face was forced into toilet water while she was penetrated from behind (Derr, 2014). Many violent acts stretch across all types of pornography, such as the popularity of ejaculating on a woman's face and forcing her to choke on it, or verbal abuse. However, it is within this extremely violent type of pornography that the most grotesque acts of physical injury take place.

This level of violence and depiction of extreme harm, often with an emphasis on unique fetishes, is more challenging to locate. It is less in demand than gonzo, and requires a niche audience. It is a controversial form of pornography. Even the pornography industry speaks out against these acts of violence or sex by means of pressure or force (Foster, 2015). Consent becomes questionable where pain and suffering appear to be involved. The issue of consent in pornography is an extremely undocumented and little understood process; therefore, it warrants substantially greater attention (Guinn, 2006).

Some anti-pornography activists acknowledge this distinction in acts of violence. There are arguments that pornography, which reaches this level of violence, should be considered lynching, as the two qualifying elements are evident: violence is premeditated and is inflicted by a mob (Bray & Reist, 2011). Another element that needs to be included here is Bondage Domination Sadism Masochism (BDSM), a sexual practice involving torture and pain. The degrees to which BDSM is executed vary widely based on the characterizations of pornography outlined above. "The process of normalizing violence through the ever-escalating desensitizing effect of pornography makes even torture 'sexy'" (Bray & Reist, 2011, p. 109).

Dines (2010) conducted an analysis of pornographic films she found online and discovered:

Pornography increasingly merges sex with violence and degradation, from spitting and choking to ass busting and gangbanging, as well as of course the ever essential facial [because] today's pornography consumers are no longer satisfied with regular old ordinary male-dominant sexuality; there has to be an extra kick, an extra charge, and that comes from women being pushed to their limit. (p. xiii)

Although there can be a crossover with erotic and violent acts occurring in hardcore porn, Dines (2010) specified that 90% of scenes contain an average of 12 aggressive acts per scene. Those numbers represent a crossover from gonzo into the type of extreme violence described in this section. The type of violence that takes place in the fringe pornography productions leaves the porn stars with scars. Some have stepped forward to share their regrets for choosing to enter into an industry that left them living a life of horror (Juzwiak, 2013). Further research into this niche pornography may do well to shed light on the processes of recruitment and pornography practices, which may involve sex trafficked victims.

Anti-Pornography Arguments

Following the literature review of pornography and the breakdown into characteristics and types of each category, it is important to recognize the arguments against pornography. The most common arguments against pornography, expressed by both advocates and researchers focus on the harm pornography can inflict upon the viewer and to any marital or romantic relationship that the viewer happens to be in.

Pornography Harms Viewers

The primary argument against pornography is the damage that it does to the viewer. Children are exposed to pornography on average by the age of 11, primarily via the Internet, and it has been claimed that this is detrimental to them emotionally, mentally, and psychologically (Top Ten Reviews, n.d.). Being exposed to hardcore pornography at such a young age can lead

children to a curiosity about repeating the things they witnessed, believing the things they see are normal, and in desensitizing them in a way that leaves them needing more extreme forms of sexual experiences as they grow (Bray & Reist, 2011). It negatively affects their evolving understanding of sexuality, their ability to experience satisfying intercourse, and it can distort their perception of women and expectations for sexuality. A pornography consumer turned activist called this inability to connect with women in an emotional way, the experience of the “Pornographer’s Gaze,” connecting to women only as a sexual object. He explained:

A sexualized gaze—seeing beauty only in sexualized terms that in turn were linked to my access. Pornography had taught me not only to notice and appreciate women’s beauty, but to sexualize it—and by sexualizing it, I made “it” something that I had the right, or at least should have the opportunity, to claim. Once sexualized, a woman’s beauty became something that I was entitled to—to look at, make comments about, touch, have sexual release to, etc. (as cited in Stark & Whisnant, 2004, pp. 341–342)

Addiction

Another negative effect of pornography is that of addiction. Studies have shown that pornography may cause addictions that alter the brain in the same physiological manner as drugs, such as cocaine (Pappas, 2012). The disastrous effects of drug addiction are widely understood in society, but what is less recognized is that a similar kind of addiction may develop to pornography. The National Council on Sexual Addiction (as cited in Wekesser, 1997) concluded, “The sexual addict is unable to control his or her sexual behavior and lives with constant pain, alienation, and fear of discovery. The pornography addiction progresses until sex becomes more important than family, friends, or work” (p. 19). Self-help and AA style therapeutic groups for sex addicts are growing in number as sex addiction and diagnosis increases (“Porn Changes the Brain,” 2014). A man stating he was diagnosed by a psychiatrist as being addicted to pornography, who I recently spoke with, compared his situation to an alcoholic who has a drink

poured in front of him at every stage of his life; he cannot escape it (anonymous, personal communication, July 12, 2014).

As with drug addictions, addiction to pornography may also destroy marriages. The addiction itself is not the only factor; it is often accompanied by feelings of betrayal, dishonesty, and the disrupted sex lives described in the pornographers gaze. Articles and personal accounts demonstrate a strong argument for how frequent pornography consumption affects “real” relationships and causes an inability for users to connect with people in their lives (Wetzstein, 2014).

Pornography Promotes Violence Against Women

An argument against pornography is that it promotes violence against women, leading to both physical and psychological harm. Testimonials shed light on how this harm is caused directly to the women who act in pornographic films and images (Sex Trafficked Women, 2014). There is also the controversial argument that pornography can harm women in a second hand fashion; meaning, men who watch violent pornographic acts go out into the real world and physically harm women. Studies have not definitively proven causation, however (Henslin, 2011).

As discussed previously, actual violence occurs in pornography. Other men have come forward and shared their personal stories of why they have chosen to stop watching pornography, and often it has to do with the recognition that it is harmful to the women involved (Gavrieli, 2013). One man reported that he stopped viewing pornography upon realizing that he had no way to confirm whether the women he was watching were actually being harmed or not. He compared pornography to coffee, stating that he can ensure his coffee is free trade and slave free, but not the pornography he was watching (Derr, 2014).

Films depicting behaviors such as hitting, whipping, and choking can easily be found through Internet searches.

Beyond these direct effects, pornography may prompt those who view it to act out the violence they witness. Reports of “date rape” and “campus rape” now regularly appear in the news. One woman shared a story of how her husband would force her to behave like various animals and perform unnatural acts while he physically harmed her, because he had seen it in a pornographic film and wanted to live the same experience (Derr, 2014).

Prostitutes report that their customers, or Johns, instruct them to perform various acts that they previously viewed in a porn film. A John may become violent towards them, causing various forms of abuse, after witnessing violent scenes depicted in pornography (Farley et al, 2003). A former escort reported severe verbal abuse she repeatedly endured by a John who enjoyed shaming and degrading her during their interactions (Derr, 2014). In some extreme cases, convicted killers, such as Ted Bundy and Thomas Schiro, defended their horrendous acts of violence against women saying, “pornography made me do it” (Wekesser, 1997, p. 37). That is not considered a legally defensible argument, however, and as has been noted, causation has not been proven (Henslin, 2011).

Pornography objectifies women and normalizes violence toward them. This creates a culture of treating women like a commodity (Jones, 2015), where no deviant act is off limits. An important clarification must be made here: It is certainly not the case that all men who watch pornography buy prostitutes or act out harmful sexual acts on their partners at a high rate. In fact, most men who view pornography do not buy sex from prostitutes (Wekesser, 1997, p. 40). The percentage of men who buy the services of prostitutes in the United States, or have at one point in their lives, is under 30%. In contrast, nearly 70% of Christian men ages 18–30 view

pornography, and those numbers are even higher when the general population is considered (“2014 Survey: How Many Christians,” 2014). It is evident from the statistics available that the argument that most men who watch pornography buy the services of a prostitute is an exaggeration.

Of course, this clarification does not mean that the argument of violence against women has been diminished; it is still *an* example of a potential factor in influencing men to harm women who do not actually appear in pornography. Already established is the harm women may experience while appearing in pornography. Defending an industry that harms women, in any capacity, warrants investigation.

Some argue that pornography negatively effects many aspects of women’s lives, beyond only physical harm. For example, feminist activist Andrea Dworkin stated:

A defense of pornography is a defense of the brute use of money to encourage violence against a class of persons who do not have—have never had—the civil rights vouchsafed to men as a class. The growing power of the pornographers significantly diminishes the likelihood that women will ever experience freedom of anything—certainly not sexual self-determination, certainly not freedom of speech. (as cited in Lederer, 1980, p. 258)

Pro-Pornography Arguments

Pornography has its defenders as well as its retractors. Freedom of sexual expression as is discussed in feminism theory, a realistic female body image, and sexuality being considered “natural,” are reviewed through the scope of literature and common social pro-pornography arguments.

Feminist Theory

Feminist theory has evolved through what is considered three stages or “waves”; first wave (women’s suffrage), second wave (the civil rights movement era), and third wave (1990s to the present). In addition, different categories of feminism have been established, such as liberal feminism, social feminism, radical feminist, and eco-feminism (Appelbaum et al., 2004).

Pornography is a divisive topic in feminism. Shrage (2012) stated:

Feminist theorists are divided on the question of whether markets in sexually explicit materials and sexual services are generally harmful to women. Accordingly, some feminist philosophers have explored and developed arguments for restricting sex markets, while others have investigated political movements that aim to advance the rights of sex workers. (para. 1)

Whereas earlier waves of feminism were largely against pornography, many third wave feminists take a more positive view. They see the issue as one concerning power and sexual liberation, not pornography. “For some women, pornography may actually de-objectify women because they can use it to validate their own desires and pleasures” (Wekesser, 1997, p. 32).

Realistic Female Body Image

A frequently overlooked, positive perspective that pornography brings to the social table is that of a healthy female body image. The curvy and more realistic female body images often found in pornography can be juxtaposed to the women in fashion marketing, who are 23% thinner than the average women (Appelbaum et al., 2014). Appealing to what consumers want, pornography works in direct opposition to media and marketing campaigns which project an unhealthy and unrealistic body image that women are pressured into obtaining. Casting directors are interested in what their viewers want, and men (their primary target audience) prefer curvier women. There is less emphasis on unrealistically slender physiques and more on giving men a natural, curvy, and realistic woman to fantasize about (Brooke & Diesel, n.d.). Porn star Monica Foster (2015) stated, “Porn fans are making it known that they find beauty and sex appeal within women of ALL types” (p. 18). That aspect of pornography gives some credibility to those who support the industry in terms of its impact on women’s self-perception.

Sexuality is Natural

Sexuality is natural and, therefore, some argue that pornography is but an extension of this natural human expression. With this framing, arguments have been made in support of

pornography in that it can sustain marriages that would otherwise struggle due to a women's lack of sexual interest (Stoller, 1991), as over 5 million women reportedly experience low sex interest just in the United States (Parker-Pope, 2004). Some women claim to enjoy their partner's pornographic usage, as it educates their partner on things that may bring sexual pleasure into their own sex lives (Stoller, 1991). In addition, not only is masturbation and sexual release considered natural and healthy, but some argue that with the increase of pornography, men have easy access for sexual release. According to Wekesser (1997), greater access to pornography may have contributed to a decrease in sexual crimes.

A study concluded that viewing pornography increases sexual functionality and desire to have sex with a partner (Prause & Pfaus, 2015). This finding contrasts with the argument that frequent pornography use may cause a male to become unable to experience an erection and a fulfilling sex life with his partner ("Porn Changes the Brain," 2014).

Some believe that the tutorial or educational aspect of pornography contributes to a more fulfilling sex lives. Demonstrated in the instructional style of the ancient Kama Sutra, pornography can be used to teach various sex positions and increase sexual pleasure through its guidelines and examples. Similarly, fertility clinics offer pornography to excite men to the point of ejaculation in order to provide the necessary specimen for artificial insemination (Grebowicz, 2013). A new academic area of study called "Porn Theory" is opening the dialogue and leading conversations in a way that pornography is becoming a part of cultural studies (Grebowicz, 2013).

The pro and con debate is aggressive, with each side providing evidence to support their claims. The focus must therefore be on regulating the industry in a way that provides for reliable

methods for viewers and pornographers to determine that sex trafficking is in no way involved in its production.

The Business of Pornography

The pornography business is vast. It is growing in numerous media industries; print, film, and most notably online. Currently, there are 4.2 million pornographic websites, making up 12% of total websites. At least 25% of daily search engine requests are for pornography, nearly half of Internet users view pornography, with 1.5 billion pornographic downloads each month, and worldwide, 72 million Internet users visit adult websites each month (Top Ten Reviews, n.d.). Those are compelling figures making pornography big business. Pornography may not be new, but these numbers prove the significant role the Internet has played in the increase of consumption of pornographic content. Easy access also both drives and feeds the demand and the size of the consumer audience.

DVD and online piracy are considered a primary factor in the decline in pornographic film productions in the United States:

It's hard to say exactly how much piracy costs the adult industry, since companies aren't required to make yearly revenues public...however, you can see the decline in production where fewer companies are shooting new content and there's less work for performers. In 2009 when I was working for studios we saw about a 50 percent drop in DVD sales over the course of the year; that's when the slide really began. (Morris, 2015, para. 4)

While figures are not specific, the financial toll of online and DVD piracy is said to have reached a few million dollars per year (Morris, 2015).

The legal push for pornography actors to be required to use condoms has further caused the industry financial distress. The "condom law" proposed in 2014 in California was designed to criminalize film companies that do not require actors to wear condoms during filming. This law would have had a negative effect on the United States porn industry, as 60–70% of pornography films are produced in California, and was hitherto rejected by voters. Interestingly,

Los Angeles County voted yes, but the state did not wish to interfere with the pornography business (California Secretary of State, 2016). Despite this climate of potential strain on the way the pornography industry operates in California, the industry has stabilized its growth and finances and 2015 has been a turnaround year; financial gains are improving for the U.S. pornography industry (Morris, 2015).

The process by which pornography companies utilize the Internet to broadcast their images and films must be understood to better conceptualize the economics of the industry. There are two broad approaches to online pornography distribution, paid and free. The difference is simply due to the size of the company and the chosen path for revenue generation. In the case of free Internet pornography, advertisements are the primary source of income. Start-up companies and amateur filmmakers also use free pornography to establish a reputation and attract customers.

On the other hand, paid pornography is more controlled, is usually of higher production quality, has better equipped studios, and frequently offers more particular sexual acts and unique options. Sometimes, the larger companies will post clips on their website of no-name pornography producers in exchange for payment. While the ability to publish videos online and to capitalize off it draws a significant number of amateurs, most online pornography is professionally produced (Williams, 2004, p. 110).

Taking this business model a step further, some websites are hubs for other pornography companies to get together in the cyber world and post in a common area in order to attract a wider audience. An example of this is Pornhub (<http://www.pornhub.com>). The company offers free videos to viewers but upgraded memberships are for a fee. They partner with numerous

pornography companies and categorize the types of pornography available for easy viewer access. Pornhub explains the purpose of this partner program:

The Pornhub Content Partner Program has a global reach of over 30 million daily users with world-leading, high-quality adult traffic and has been a proven program for hundreds of studios/content producers who are taking advantage of the Content Partner Program. We have helped to boost the branding and exposure of content partners from all niches that have turned our traffic into monthly earnings! (Pornhub, n.d., para. 1)

This sort of networking and support within the industry is what allows the players to interconnect, grow, and ultimately become a robust industry. The Internet simply serves as the ultimate vehicle for pornographic films, which have been popular in xxx shops and mail order for decades, as is evident by the hundreds of industry interviews conducted and recorded by McNeil and Osborne (2005).

While the list of pornography film companies is long—a simple Internet search on Craigslist will demonstrate the magnitude of people looking to audition and cast people in their adult films—there are certain names in the industry known for being top pornography studios. These are the top 15 organizations based on revenue: Evil Angel, Jules Jordan Video, Wicked, Digital Playground, Private, Digital Sin, Devil’s Film, Vivid, Adam & Eve, New Sensations, West Coast Productions, Alpha Blue Archives, Hustler, and Zero Tolerance. It is interesting to note that not all pornography film companies, web channels, or even studios are run by producers, filmmakers, and so forth, who hire the actors. Instead, pornography actors themselves operate some of these sites.

Another important element is the verification of age. Anyone working in commercial sex under the age of 18 is considered sex trafficked, as child pornography is illegal. Yet, what steps are taken to ensure a pornography actor is an adult? Perhaps smaller companies may take them at their word, while more profitable studios have more to lose and will take measures to verify age via requiring forms of ID.

Taking things further, however, some pornography producers create their own identification card forgeries to get away with using minors in their films (McNeil & Osborne, 2005). It is not easy to decipher age simply by viewing a film because often the pornography actors are still teenagers, albeit 18, who are made to look and act even younger. Websites will usually have a statement on the main page claiming that all the girls in the films are legal adults. There is no such thing as “fair trade” pornography; the viewer must take their word for it. In 1985, Traci Lords launched her own pornography company, and in 1986, she was charged with providing fake driver’s licenses, passports, and birth certificate for a minor who she employed as a porn star for her company (McNeil & Osborne, 2005, p. 418). The frequency of this type of event occurring is unknown.

Routes Into the Pornography Industry

Behind the camera, various film crews, editing, and production positions contribute to the creation of these films. Starting a pornography studio, or working for a studio as part of a film crew, is similar to the process for getting into the Hollywood film scene. There are independent film companies, operating with a wide variety of budgets, as well as production companies. In all instances, there is a process for starting a business, networking, having education and training on producing, acquiring funding, directing, casting, and engaging in all the tasks of camera and editing operation. It is a business like any other business, it just happens to involve sex.

Job titles reflect the same types of positions one would see advertised for any production company. Examples are writer, talent agent, content sales, video editor, director, set designer, casting director, photographer, makeup artist, public relations agent, video camera operator, press agent, website developer, graphic artist, and production manager. Typical job requirements for these positions within the pornography industry closely mirror the requirements for the same

job position with other production companies. Although producing and getting behind the camera of pornographic films is similar to its mainstream counterpart, getting in front of the camera is not.

Aside from going the casting route, which is to say responding to an audition call and attending the live audition, one can record an amateur video of themselves and post it online. In fact, Pubnet (<http://pubnet.com>) highlights a tab for people who want to become porn stars. The site gives information regarding the steps involved for posting personal pornography videos on their site and making a profit from a percentage of the ad revenue. Backpage (<http://backpage.com>) and Craigslist (<http://www.craigslist.com>) are examples of online listing services that have ads recruiting individuals to audition for adult films, promising hundreds of dollars per scene. The CEO of Backpage was charged with sex trafficking in October 2016, though the website has not discontinued operation as of yet (Vasel, 2016).

For the more impressive studio auditions, the stakes are a bit higher. The audition will usually require that the actress or actor participate in intercourse or oral sex. They suggest that men who are auditioning bring a sex partner with them. The demand for the man to be in great physical shape is a bit higher than for the women, who are allowed a bit more flexibility as long as they are willing to engage in certain activities (Brooke & Diesel, n.d.). All are expected to be well-groomed and have great hygiene. In terms of types of sex acts that a pornography actor should be prepared to do on screen, a porn star has this advice:

It's very important to keep an open mind onset. You're going to do things you never thought you would do normally, and still probably wouldn't do normally. But that's all part of the balance you should maintain separating work from your day-to-day lifestyle. (Brooke & Diesel, n.d., para. 17)

The older or less attractive an actor is, the more likely they are to be expected to engage in less desirous or even painful sex acts (Brooke & Diesel, n.d.). Another common route is for girls to

book nude magazine photo shoots, meet and sign with an agent or agency, get booked for more work, and essentially work her way up until she is offered a contract with a pornography studio.

Whether through independent or agent casting calls, or creating individual videos and self-promoting, working in the sex trade in any capacity can position someone to know the right people and have the right resume for the job. Examples of this are working as a webcam girl or strip dancer. These are job positions that can connect a person with pornographic filmmakers and can lead to auditions and castings. Dancing at strip clubs is also a way to step into the adult video industry (Foster, 2015, pp. 2–4).

For some, pornographic modeling and acting is not a means to an end, but rather, a career in itself. Stag Films introduced pornography into films in the early 20th century, yet, decades passed before “porn stars” developed. Linda Lovelace, as her fans knew her, has been dubbed the first porn star (Lovelace & McGrady, 2006). Since her time on stage in the 70s, and her iconic film, “Deep Throat,” numerous porn stars have achieved fame, and “porn star” has become a relatively common cultural term.

Some, like Lovelace, have gotten out of the industry and become anti-pornography activists, sharing tales of force, fraud, coercion, abuse, rape, and drug addiction they endured during their time in front of the camera. “After Porn Ends” (Wagoner, 2012) is a documentary film with interviews and accounts of former porn stars who share their negative experiences in the industry and what it is like having gotten out of it. Some reported money, glamour, and fame, others the excitement of having multiple partners and exotic experiences. All expressed relief and gratitude, however, to be out of the industry. Some became activists against pornography, others have cited turning their life over to God, others started families and became traditional

stay at home wives, and there are some “aged out” and no longer received enough work (Wagoner, 2012).

Not all porn stars resent their directors, producers, managers, co-stars, and the structure of filmed pornography. Some, such as Jameson, praise the liberation brought on by pornography and continue to contribute to the industry. Others tell the press of their excitement, liberation, and financial well-being (Derr, 2014). While still others, such as Monica Foster (2015), have written tutorial books on sexual technique. Foster (2015) wrote a guidebook for young girls who want to get into the industry. There are numerous other accounts of pornography actors stepping into the public realm and proudly state their profession.

Breaking into the Hollywood film scene sometimes requires a detour, or rather, a gateway, through the pornography industry. Certainly, pornography is not a prerequisite for starting a career in the entertainment industry, but online databases abound asking for girls willing to pose or act in pornography in order to strengthen their resume. A popular way for pornography companies and producers to recruit talent for their films is to focus on actors or models who are trying to “break into” the industry (Foster, 2015, pp. 2–4).

The pornography industry has emerged in U.S. society to be something not only hated, but also loved, defended, and represented in the public business sector. With their own awards ceremonies and annual adult expo in Las Vegas, the industry has made its imprint on culture and various economic systems (Grebowicz, 2013).

Possible Relationships Between Pornography and Sex Trafficking

Three arguments support how pornography connects to sex trafficking:

1. Pornography creates a culture of objectification of women which leads to the normalization and promotion of sexual exploitation,

2. Viewing pornography stimulates the viewer to seek a prostitute, thereby fueling the demand for sex trafficking, and
3. Those who appear in pornography are themselves victims of sex trafficking.

This final argument stating that some of the performers in pornographic films and pictures are doing so involuntarily through sex trafficking is lacking empirical research and is the focus of this study.

Trafficking as an Entry Into Pornography

Pornography is legal in the United States for consenting adults. The processes for recruiting, filming, and retaining pornography actors provide many opportunities for sex trafficking to occur. As was described earlier, acts of violence, including rape and other acts of painful sexual intercourse and anal sex, are popular in mainstream pornography. Combined with the question of age authentication, the question is posed: What is the likelihood and frequency of actors in pornographic imagery and films being victims of sex trafficking? That is, are these persons performing because of force, fraud, or other methods of coercion?

Linda Lovelace revealed through interviews and a biography that, although she seemed to enjoy herself in her movies, she was in fact abused and forced into pornography (Lovelace & McGrady, 2006). No one was prosecuted for the crimes against her, but her story was depicted in a film about her life (Epstein & Friedman, 2013). Other women have spoken out upon leaving the pornography industry on the abuses they endured.

Another, more recent example, is one of an anonymous victim speaking out through Internet communication. She claims to have been forced into the pornography industry using various drugs and threats, and she had to participate in numerous pornography scenes as a victim of sex trafficking (“Sex Trafficked Woman Reveals,” 2014). Without identifying herself or the

specific films and pornography companies she was a part of, the police cannot investigate the claim. Another woman, Ana Malika (2014), published a webinar sharing her story as a victim of sex trafficking forced into pornography. No prosecutions have ensued, but her testimonial serves to draw attention to this issue.

Human Rights Activist Danielle Palmer stated that she worked with women who explained they were assigned a pornography shift each week. Most days, they sold themselves to Johns and performed sex acts, but once a week they were required to have sex in front of a camera. In this way, their trafficker could make money off the same sex act repeatedly (Derr, 2014).

There are other specific accounts of men prosecuted for creating and distributing pornography without consent of those involved, such as the case of a man who conducted a “sleeping test.” While his participants were unconscious, he raped them and filmed it. Pornography companies then bought the films from the man and distributed them online (Lacey-Bordeaux & Ripley, 2015).

These stories are frequently told on social media sites, and yet, because of lack in evidence and the unwillingness of many potential victims to speak out due to fear and shame, prosecution is difficult. Despite the challenges of documenting the prevalence of this crime in the United States, arrests are made. “The FBI has made more than 10,000 arrests since 1996 and...The U.S. Department of Justice says prosecutions are up 40 percent since 2006 resulting in roughly 9,000 cases. In 2009, 2,315 suspects were indicted” (“Child Porn Prosecution Soaring,” 2011, para. 5). The interconnections become more complicated with sex trafficking in pornography, however. Prostitution is illegal; therefore, it is easier to focus primarily on that crime. Because pornography is legal, further resources and training to identify abuse are required

to differentiate consensual pornography from instances when it is not; a process that is even more daunting and a path greatly uncharted. Contributing to the cloud around this issue is the limited number of studies available concerning this connection.

For the past several years, I have searched for studies specifically on this topic, and although I found ample literature on pornography and on sex trafficking, there were few studies on their intersection. Claims are frequently made about how “common” it is for women in pornography to be sex trafficked, but these claims are anecdotal, not the result of scholarly research. Assumptions are made based on testimonials, but in the absence of scholarly investigation, this position is somewhat unsupported and causes uncertainty.

In a noteworthy study, Farley et al. (2003) surveyed nearly 1,000 workers in the pornography industry in over two dozen countries. Among the United States participants, just over half had also worked in prostitution. Although this is significant as it is suspected that sex trafficking happens in pornography, this information alone leaves gaps in the literature due to the limited geographical region of the United States participants, as they were all from San Francisco. Deductions could be made based on the “bread crumb” trail from sex trafficking to prostitution to pornography, but more information is needed (Farley et al., 2003). Indeed, there continues to be a deficit in scholarly material on this interconnection.

Conclusion

Women have come forward, stating that they have been victims of sex trafficking and forced to perform in pornography. In other cases, these testimonials exist anonymously. Yet, this issue has not been studied empirically. What is the prevalence of this crime? How are women lured into, abducted, and forced to participate in these acts? What are the experiences of women caught in these situations? Lastly, what can be done to prevent it? The research conducted did

not answer all of these questions. With this study, I was not able to establish prevalence from a statistical perspective, but it laid out ideas and a foundation for what the experiences are, what can be done to prevent or decrease it, and I presented justification for continued exploration in qualitative as well as quantitative research on the topic.

The “If, when, who, how, and how often” of the phenomenon of pornography actors being victims of sex trafficking should be explored empirically. If indeed studies and evidence confirm a significant connection, then the next step is to determine what needs to be done to stop this from occurring. Various legislative and social proposals are regularly presented in public discourse, but the paths to resolutions must be produced through a clear understanding of the issue.

This literature review on the pornography industry, sex trafficking, and their intersection, demonstrates the need for further research. While the evidence available is not enough to draw broad conclusions, what can be acknowledged is that there is evidence leading to this connection. However, at this point a connection can be established that prostitutes are frequently victims of sex trafficking and that they at times work in pornography.

The following question needs to be asked: Of those prostitutes working in pornography, how many were forced, coerced, or victims of fraud? Are there pornography models or actors who have not worked in prostitution, but who perform in pornography in absence of consent? What is that process? The research better answered questions pertaining to the process, and did indeed establish that sex trafficking can occur in pornography exclusively. The percentage of those working in pornography and also experiencing sex trafficking in that industry is unknown.

Through narrative research, capturing the stories of various players involved, such as pimps, pornography producers, and sex trafficked victims, the systemic processes for these

intersections could be better understood. Ultimately, research focused on the intersection between the two industries may lead to a better understanding, and henceforth, preventative measures for the protection of victims of sex trafficking in pornography could be developed.

CHAPTER 3: METHOD

Choice of Method

A narrative research approach was used in this research study. The narrative research method, known for employing interviews and analysis of biographies, journals, poetry, and performing arts, is a qualitative research approach regarded as instrumental in better understanding the human experience. The objective is to uncover a deeper understanding of research subjects' feelings, thoughts, biases, experiences, and lenses by which they view their world. As Polkinghorne (1983) wrote, "In the present climate of renewal of methodology, researchers are called upon to understand the 'why' of their designs as well as the 'how' for carrying them out" (p. ix). He went on to explain the benefits of using interviews as a method for gathering information which serves to better answer the questions of why and how as it relates to the human science field. "The exemplar of data collection in human science is the face-to-face interview....The face-to-face encounter provides the richest data source for the human science researcher seeking to understand human structures of experience" (Polkinghorne, 1983, p. 267). Robson (2011) echoed Polkinghorne's position on the benefits of using interviews for data collection:

The interview is a flexible and adaptable way of finding things out. The human use of language is fascinating both as a behavior in its own right and for the virtually unique window that it opens on what lies behind our actions. (p. 279)

He claimed, "Face-to-face interviews offer the possibility of modifying one's line of enquiry, following up interesting responses and investigating underlying motives in a way that postal and other self-administered questionnaires cannot" (Robson, 2011, p. 280).

Narrative work can be analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Yin (2011) defined the difference between quantitative and qualitative work when analyzing data derived from narrative work, "In quantitative research, a typical strategy would be to collect numeric data and

present statistics about individuals' collective features...the essence of your [qualitative] study would be its focus on specific people in their real-world settings, not any statistical profiles" (p. 235). Furthermore, he stated that it is just as significant to demonstrate participants' real-world experiences from their own point of view. This can be accomplished by representing their voices through direct quotations. More specifically, in terms of concrete actionables in narrative inquiry, the gathering of information from the field, such as stories, autobiographies, journals, letters, conversations, interviews, and even photos can be used to better understand personal lived experiences and find qualitative answers to human focused questions (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Participants

Six participants were a part of this study, based on my networking reach and the opportunities and limits of who will be willing to speak with me. The selection criteria for participants included anyone working in anti-trafficking and/or pornography as an activist. Participants ranged in age from late 20s to the late 50s, and were an equal balance between male and female. One was a victim of trafficking; all were United States citizens, and their years of experience in activism ranged from 10–30 years each. The intention was to gather various pieces of the narrative on the intersections of sex trafficking and pornography, to best develop a story of what is or is not happening amongst victims of sex trafficking and pornography, and how it is happening.

Selections were based on availability and willingness of participants, as well as their credibility. All participants were activists against sex trafficking and/or pornography. Bias is inevitable, but participants chosen demonstrated vast experience and education in the fields of activism and the sex industry as a whole, and some had experience working in the sex industry

themselves. I vetted my participants through respectful and subtle investigative research by considering who was referring them, what organizations they are affiliated with, searchable online verification, and the tangibility of any work said to have been created by them in the pornography industry. Participants received a recruitment letter through their private email addresses.

Research Setting

Interviews occurred either in person, via Skype, or by telephone. Locations for in the person interviews were in their private offices.

Research Design

The resources needed were the participants who work as activists against the pornography and sex trafficking industries. Semistructured and open-ended questions were used and tailored to the background and work experience of the person interviewed, and questions were often impromptu based upon what the interviewee said throughout the interview. Time allotment for each individual was flexible and varied depending on the participant, but was approximately one hour. Information learned in each case varied based on the participants' work and background in the pornography and sex trafficking industries, with emphasis on their specific roles. Emphasis was placed on invoking honesty and openness from the participants through sensitivity, compassion, and respectful approaches in order to build rapport. Stories and narratives were carefully documented and transcribed, analyzed through rearrangement, deepened observation, and comparative analysis (Riessman, 1993).

Instruments

A recording device, pen and paper for documentation, and computers for transcribing have been used.

Procedures

1. Identified possible participants
2. Contacted participants via email with recruitment letter;
3. Scheduled interviews via phone, Skype, or in person, based on their location and preference;
4. Obtained consent;
5. Conducted interviews with semi-open and open questions;
6. Conducted any relevant investigative work into information provided by participants; namely, verify stories and information shared when possible through online research-news stories, company websites, and so forth;
7. Collected all data and began analyzing through thematic coding;
8. Evaluated findings and defined areas for further research.

Data Analysis

I transcribed and analyzed qualitative data from the interviews through memoing, constant reflection, comparisons, and study of underlying experiences (Yin, 2011). Data were manually coded and reviewed thematically. Creswell (2013) said, “The process of coding involves aggregating the text...[then] taking the text or qualitative information apart, and looking for categories, themes, or dimensions of information” (pp. 184–186).

It is through memoing and note-taking during the data collection process and then carefully sifting through all interview transcripts and aggregating information that I discovered prominent themes. Certain concepts and categories were a thread throughout all the experiences shared, and it is through this qualitative analysis process that they were identified.

Narrative researchers are encouraged to avoid strict restraints while structuring their research analysis; experimenting with form and being flexible with writing structures is urged (Creswell, 2013, p. 220). Discussion in the findings section is formatted around the experiences I had with my participants and the dialogue and narratives they shared during our interviews. As is suggested by Creswell (2013), the organization and structure of the data analysis below was centered on quotations and themes found within what participants said (p. 220).

Limitations and Research Issues

Potential bias on my part as the researcher may be a weakness and must be avoided. Prior to completing this dissertation, I engaged in personal narrative research in an effort to better identify and understand my bias and blind spots as a researcher. In this way, I was better prepared to approach this dissertation research with an unbiased perspective. Though it still crept in at times, I managed to recognize it and focus on keeping the interviews free of leading questions, and the tone of the academic voice in this work neutral.

Bias on the part of the participants is not something a researcher can completely defuse. They may be so heavily dedicated to their activism that they see their experiences and stories they hear through a biased lens. In other words, anecdotal experiences and bias toward assuming those are the standard could be a challenge. Being aware of it and acknowledging it in the data analysis steps is essential.

Verifying information received may become problematic due to structural elusiveness and evasion within pornography companies, and illegal behaviors by those interviewed from other sex trades. Sex trafficking and understanding its involvement with pornography was the primary focus.

Only activists were interviewed who are already sharing their stories and experiences of their professional lives with the public. This alleviated risks involved for victims speaking about their experiences who may not have done so publically and may not yet emotionally be prepared to share. Investigative online work was conducted with the intent of verifying various pieces of information received during interviews, with consideration that the human science focus of this research supports an open-minded approach to story gathering. Participants' titles and work history were viewed on company websites, and news stories and articles that corroborate various stories shared by participants were read.

In June 2016, Saybrook University's IRB approved this research project. Upon the completion of the data collection, the process for data analysis was somewhat daunting initially. I began with the mental process of pondering and considering the things I heard in the interviews over the course of a few months time. I began to recognize themes, but held off on writing down anything conclusively until I collected all my data. At that time, I began the process of manually analyzing and documenting my discoveries.

After transcribing my interviews by listening to the audio recording and typing them out individually, I printed them all out. I will note here that after I completed the data analysis, the printed interviews were shredded and discarded for privacy purposes. I spread out the pages of the transcripts, organized by the person I spoke with, and began combing through the pages and tagging data that I identified as potential themes with a pencil. I reviewed the themes by listing them on a separate paper, and then went through each interview transcription again, with those themes in mind. When I was certain I had pulled out the most prominent themes, I used highlighters on the quotes that matched up with the identified themes. The themes were assigned their own color, and each time quotations reflected a theme, I used that color to highlight that

section. I repeated this process by color-coding the themes as they continually presented themselves.

A few outlier concepts and comments were identified and have been mentioned in the final chapter, but they were not categorized as their own theme, either because they were not discussed by each participant, or as an effort to keep the focus on those themes that seemed most pertinent to the research question.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted in 2014 to demonstrate how interviews and surveys might be utilized for this research question and executed. The study was conducted with the intent of testing proper research protocols, permission forms, and expectations for how specific methods might be effective in a broader application during the dissertation. It also assisted in establishing if the research focus for the dissertation had substance and if there was foundation there to continue exploring.

Methods

For the pilot study, interviews and a survey were chosen as methods to gain experience. Two interviews were administered, one with an individual with experience as an activist in anti-sex trafficking, and the other with a participant who had experience working in the sex industry as an escort. Furthermore, 10 individuals anonymously completed the survey using SurveyMonkey (<http://www.surveymonkey.com>). Questions pertained to their understanding and views of the porn industry, the sex trafficking industry, and any way they perceived a connection between both.

Participants

Participants for the interview included two White American women in their 30s; both had unique insights and experiences in the sex trafficking and sex trade industries. The first participant worked for years as an anti-trafficking activist in the position of development manager for an international nongovernmental organization. She has and continues to work for various non-profit organizations, fighting for human rights related issues. The second interview participant came from the opposite side of the issue; she worked for a couple of years in the sex trade industry as an escort and dancer. She currently works as a model and has close ties and relationships with women who work in the porn industry as models and actors.

Those who completed the survey hailed from various demographic backgrounds, including Republicans and Democrats, Christians and agnostics, male and female, and a variety of age ranges. They were from both European and Latin American origins, and all were American citizens.

Results

Qualitative data gathered during the interviews provided valuable insight into the perspectives and experiences of individuals from different sides of the issue of sex trafficking. The interview with the individual with experience as an anti-trafficker demonstrated high probability in finding a viable connection between these two industries, that is, identifying victims of sex trafficking who are used in porn. She stated that she has met with victims who described the way they were forced to carry out shifts that are filmed for the purposes of porn distribution. She also shared conversations she has had with men who previously viewed porn, but upon learning that the women they watched may in fact not be performing consensually, chose to stop watching any porn. She said that it is quite impossible to distinguish those girls

who have consented from those who have not. This difficulty is caused by makeup techniques that camouflage minors to look like adults, the threat to females to make it look like they enjoy themselves or else receive negative consequences, and the ease of access for all Internet users to distribute pornography at their whim.

The interview with the individual who has experience working in the sex industry contrasted the other interview quite a bit. She was defensive initially, claiming to be good friends with many who currently work in the sex trade. She said that everyone she knew was working consensually, had a good life, and that she saw no connection between the porn industry and sex trafficking. As she continued speaking, however, she said things pertaining to the likelihood of pornography videos using victims without the viewer knowing, due to the ease of Internet use and film production in response to increasing technology. She then stated that in her past, she worked in the industry due to consent and free will, and it had nothing to do with her own past abuses. She said she was not ashamed. She later said she did feel ashamed at times, but that she reminded herself that her past abuses in her childhood led her to working in the sex industry. This second interview demonstrated many layers to this issue, a need as a researcher to be very respectful and unbiased, and the complexity of the effects of the sex industry on an individual.

All results from the survey were usable; however, a larger sample size would allow for broader results. More participants would allow for stronger quantitative results from a survey. Nonetheless, results demonstrated valuable insights and interesting views on the issues in question. As a researcher, I gained practice and insight into asking open-ended and non-leading questions in an interview, as well as recognized areas where bias and assumptions seeped into initial findings. Every participant knew someone who uses porn frequently. Nearly 43% were neutral on whether or not they believe porn creates a demand for sex trafficking, and nearly 44%

believed that if a strong connection between sex trafficking and porn were known, people would still view porn. Only 28% view sex trafficking as a major problem in the United States and 14% believe that if a woman is paid, she is not a victim. Indeed, this survey displayed varying views and interesting social perspectives on a small scale.

Discussion and Limitations of the Pilot Study

It was invaluable to hear the voices and narratives of individuals, who either worked in the sex industry or were activists against it. It gave them a voice and added qualitative value to this research that in turn has the potential to demonstrate strong evidence for the public and specifically those who currently condone pornography (Yin, 2011). Interviews for this research study provided substantial qualitative information, as was demonstrated by the two conducted in this pilot study. Furthermore, there was an initial indication based on the details gathered from the pilot study interviews—that conducting case studies on sex trafficked victims who were forced or coerced to work in the porn industry is plausible. The results from this preliminary pilot study demonstrated a connection between the sex trafficking industry and porn industry via sex trafficked victims forced to perform in pornographic films. The survey results are valid in demonstrating public perception of pornography. A larger sample size is needed to draw accurate statistics for larger populations. However, the survey process uncovered valuable alterations that could be made to questions, identified questions and approaches that worked, and was a strong practice of the logistics of creating and administering a survey, which was beneficial for replicating the process on a much larger scale. In addition, this survey demonstrated a likely strong social response and conflicting perceptions on these topics that may also be recognizable when applied to a larger sample pool. The interview portion of this study helped me better design neutral and open-ended questions.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The core purpose of this research was to determine if sex trafficking does indeed occur within the pornography industry. As a researcher, recognizing personal bias in the assumption was a challenge. Effort was made to remain neutral during the data gathering by avoiding leading questions and using follow-ups. The results from the interviews and narratives gathered demonstrate a unanimous belief that sex trafficking does occur in pornography. Other themes were identified, to include areas of inconclusive knowledge and henceforth a need for further research. The following are commonalities among the participants regarding their perceptions and beliefs based on their knowledge and experiences.

Theme 1: Sex Trafficking Occurs in Pornography, Either Through Being Forced, Beaten, and/or Coerced Against Their Will

The six participants in this study believe, based on their various experiences as activists—some of whom are also sex trafficking survivors—that there is no question as to whether or not sex trafficking occurs in pornography. Participant 1 shared,

I had no idea that pornography was in any way connected or linked to prostitution, to sexual exploitation, to child pornography, and to sex trafficking. As we have gone out and done this [anti-pornography activism], we have now been reached out to and received tens of thousands of emails, perhaps at this time even hundreds of thousands, by people that have told us their story. People that were once in the [pornography] industry, telling us a lot of what they experienced, and it was not what people think. Some of the stories are very chilling to read; to see what is really going on there and see that whole category of harm. What people need to understand is that on camera, it is not like these individuals are noticeably trafficked, obviously [acting] against their wills. Many of them are coerced, beaten, bruised, forced into agreeing with whatever their trafficker or pornographer says in order to, you know, stay alive... We have seen that kind of trend where they feel forced to make it look like they are enjoying it in order to avoid physical harm, whether by direct threats or implied threats. Many women, who show up on set agreeing to a certain scene or scenario, find that those details are changed on them upon arrival. Based off of that coercion, either implied or direct, or based off of other monetary needs of supporting a family, they do not feel like they can back out or stand up for themselves in these moments. So they are forced into very undesirable, many times illegal, unethical, degrading, violent situations. Just so they can produce porn that many watch on a daily basis.

Participant 2 stated,

What we have found is that there are instances of coercion, of fraud, of deception, and if you use the United Nations definition of trafficking, it is a little bit more broad than the U.S. definition, but it includes exploitation of a person's vulnerability. We definitely have seen in our experiences, in interviews, that it appears that [trafficking] is something that is taking place in the porn industry.

Participant 3 stated,

Technology has changed the face of pornography so drastically that it can be created right in a person's bedroom. Someone being forced into prostitution may be filmed during the sexual act, and therefore, they were used to create pornography. In every community I have been to, as soon as they are recruited, they are put online. Some never walk the streets. It allows the trafficker to convince them that what they are doing is not really prostitution. It is harder for cops to find them, and it is cheaper. Pimps know they can set up sex cam sites and make their girls create porn.

When asked if sex trafficking occurs in pornography, Participant 4 responded,

Oh, absolutely. There was a guy that we helped arrest that brought a camera to a sex party and his stash of porn, where he thought he was going to have sex with a nine year old. This is not rare.... Victims for pornography films are kidnapped, bought, or rented for a day from other traffickers. There is a wide variety of what can happen [among minors and adults].

And finally, Participant 5 explained, "I saw a porn being filmed and I guarantee you that trafficking was going on. I remember seeing these weird rooms of people filming, it was like a warehouse."

The participants' belief that force, fraud, or coercion play a role in making pornography was coupled with their belief that a viewer could in no way distinguish a victim from a consenting participant. As explained by Participant 3, "When someone watches porn, they do not know if that person is being trafficked." Participant 4 echoed that sentiment, "You could not know if you were watching porn if the person in it was a victim or not."

Theme 2: Paid Websites and Professional Studios do not Guarantee Consent – Violent Porn Crosses Into all Types of Pornographic Operations and Internet Locations

A justification I often hear for watching pornography without the guilt of potentially supporting sex trafficking is that the production studio make quality films, and films that cost money to watch must surely be produced under high standards of consent by the women in the scenes and in images. The assumption is that high-end companies follow strict rules and demonstrate transparency. This is relevant to the research question in that I am trying to ascertain *if* sex trafficking occurs in pornography, and if so, the follow-up question is, *how?* Henceforth, knowing whether paying to watch pornography or only watching professionally created pornography are assurances that sex trafficking is occurring in those films, or not, is pertinent. Participant 1 explained, why these things are not differentiators in whether or not sex trafficking could be occurring:

So much pornography is done underground and by amateur filmmakers, and in situations and in environments where illegal drugs are kind of like on a cocktail table for anyone to use during filming. So, their observance of adhering to laws is not at their highest possible level. I can't speak to the details of what they are required to do and what they are not doing. I am simply speaking to a general theme that we see within that particular industry [which is] that they try to be as obscure and as hard to tack down as possible because it benefits the lifestyle and business model they have chosen.

[As for pornography that costs to view guaranteeing consent] No, I would not say that at all, because when you say paid for or free, you are not necessarily speaking to the quality, it's speaking to the duration. So, when they say free, it's usually like a five minute preview to the hour and half feature film. Of course, to a 12-year-old, who doesn't have a credit card that is enough time for him or her to get what they need, to reach that climax and satisfaction. Whereas, an adult might kind of need a full experience, or get to the point where they are collecting as much as they can and they want a subscription to get the newest, fastest, longest content as possible. So, when they say free, yeah, some of the content that is free is free because it is just really low end, but a lot of it has to do with that it is just the preview.

Participant 2 expressed the same position,

I don't think necessarily that paying or going to a "more high end or studio-based porn film" and watching that is any guarantee that the women in it aren't being coerced. Forced is kind of a delicate term to use when you are talking about pornography

because...there is a specific definition of what force means in the context of our U.S. law and trafficking, [but what I think is happening more often is] deception, fraud, coercion and kind of those trafficking tactics more than force. I don't believe that you can say because you are going onto a paid website or studio-produced video that those girls aren't experiencing some of those indicators of trafficking.

Lending more information on how violent films can be released to the public and accepted as mainstream, Participant 4 explained,

They distribute the films on the dark web, [they can be removed and] distributed in multiple different ways [on the regular web]. Paying for porn absolutely, doesn't matter. Porn is porn.

Participant 1 also explained how violent pornography, paid for or not, is now available on mainstream internet sites, not just the dark web,

Studies show that 88% of the most mainstream pornography that is consumed by the general public was found to be aggressive and, in many places, violent to women. So, this is 88%, this is the mainstream content that was found to be aggressive to women. What we are finding is that there is a major shift in the trend of what is considered mainstream. It used to be mainstream was playboy. It was a naked body in a cornfield, posing in erotic positions, and that was like whoa, shocking, extreme. Many individuals [now] don't even consider that to be pornography. What we consider mainstream today is a lot different than what was considered mainstream 10 years ago, 15, 20 years ago. Two men were just arrested about a year, maybe two years ago in Miami for doing a 7-year operation where they would lure women in for a modeling ad [for beer]. They drugged them, raped them, and filmed that experience. They sold [the footage] to mainstream porn sites. Not the dark web. People think that well yeah, if you go to the deep, dark edges, for like, rape porn, violence, if you search that kind of stuff, you are going to get that kind of stuff, what if I just look at the normal stuff? But again, those films are being sold at very mainstream sites.

Theme 3: Awareness is More Important Than Policy; Pornography Should Remain Legal but Should be Safer

Although policy and prevention are beyond the scope of the research question to determine a connection, this theme was evident in each participant's interview and lends support for further research. It is also noteworthy to assess solutions as perceived by the activists who believe there is a connection between sex trafficking and pornography.

The question of what should or should not be done to prevent and punish illegal activity within the pornography industry is far from simple. Ultimately, the first amendment covers pornography as free speech, and the participants agreed that it should not be illegal. Public awareness and education were touted as the strongest tools available for fighting sex trafficking within pornography. Participant 2 said, “We work on changing mindsets.”

As explained by Participant 3,

Sex trafficking is illegal. Does it still happen? Without controlling the Internet, you are not going to control sex trafficking with regulation. Unless technology changes and something is created, there is no way to enforce anything. I can make the U.S. government think my IP address is in some other country where prostitution is legal. We do not control other countries. We cannot even shut down child porn in America. Policy is important, but in the big scheme of things, it does not matter. People do what they think is right.

Participant 4 took the issue deeper by explaining his or her take on the core reason for society’s draw towards pornography:

You have to look at what the root of the problem is. The reason we have over two million children being sold for sex is because there is a demand for it. What is the demand? Lust, addiction, and what is driving that? Pornography. It is like any other drug, you have to get harder and harder, and eventually, you break. I would hope people would have enough common sense to say, “I do not want to participate in anything involving a child or woman being raped.” But addiction makes it really hard to stop and turn around and not get your high. People need to learn how to control their mind and emotions and get help and therapy, or it is almost an impossible battle to win.

In addition to public awareness and education, Participant 2 supported government involved in policy changes to protect women, and Participant 1 believed that further regulations on types of pornography filmed and distributed, and access minors have to it, is also essential. Participant 1 shared,

Science catches up with truth, and then society catches up with science. Well science has caught up with the truth about pornography, but society is still catching up. So, rather than passing laws, rather than banning anything, what I hope to happen first is sort of a groundswell of knowledge and information where we can share and discuss and dialogue around what is healthy and harmful. We hope to see a lot more research come out. We hope to see a lot more public discussion and dialogue occur which we are trying to

institute in a lot of ways and other groups are as well. We are nearing a time where I would like to start to see, once we have created that ground swell, policy makers and legislators start to follow suit. They will see what the people are demanding and they will start to make adjustments accordingly. And those adjustments aren't about banning. [When we saw the harms of] tobacco, that's not what happened. What we saw with tobacco was more restrictions with access to minors. You used to be able to put a quarter into a little machine as a 10-year-old and buy a pack of cigarettes right across the street. Today, to buy a pack of cigarettes, I have to go to the counter, I have to prove that I am of age, and I have to ask for the guy to get it for me from across the counter. The barrier of access to minors is a lot higher and, therefore, limits their ability to get hooked at a younger age and to get addicted, which is proven to lead to more healthcare costs and more early deaths in society. What we would like to see in pornography is more restrictions to minors, but again, after the groundswell, more restrictions for 8, 9, 10-year-olds to be seeing violent pornography, totally skewing and changing what they love and how they love and how they think about those they love and how they express that love. And so, to really preserve that, we would also like to see stronger regulations around the type of pornography that can be produced, recognizing certain types of pornography that lead to very damaging results for individuals. I think for adults that choose to view pornography, there should be a lot more warning signs and solutions offered to those that are struggling, offered at the point of purchase. So even if they are on that pornography site, they can say hey, here are some solutions, recovery solutions, and other information you might need. It is not about restricting or stepping on first amendment rights, it's about really kind of empowering the public to know how to navigate this massive struggle and challenge in our society.

Theme 4: Uncertainty – The Connection Between Sex Trafficking Within Pornography is Certain, the Direct Pathway(s) is Not

While the findings demonstrate that the victims and/or activists in this study believe without a doubt that sex trafficking occurs in pornography, they cannot affirmatively detail the exact process for someone being victimized. There is not one path into being sex trafficking in pornography. The participants in this study shared areas of uncertainty. Participant 2 stated,

What we kind of have seen and heard from people in the industry and other advocates who study the industry or those who were in the industry and left and are now advocates against porn is that many women who are being prostituted in pornography are also being prostituted in traditional prostitution. Usually they are not just being prostituted on screen, but usually it is happening off screen as well. Whether they were in prostitution first or porn first and crossed over, the answer is not clear. But I do know that a lot of times they are simultaneously being prostituted both on screen and off screen.

Not a single person that Participant 3 or Participant 6 helped rescue from the sex industry was also currently forced to create “traditional” (studio) pornography that they knew of. Participant 5

said, “It seems there are more people who are trafficked in porn, than who were trafficked on the streets and were in porn.”

Participant 6 went on to explain,

It seems like they go from pornography to strip clubs to escorting to prostitution. A lot of people, who are in porn, do not necessarily see themselves as stuck or see themselves as victims. Very rarely do we get an individual [in our facilities] from porn, it is usually that they started in porn 5 years ago, but the reason they are calling at this point is because they are now in such an abusive situation in a sex industry that they need help. Porn seemed like it was a gateway into sex work that continued on but got harder and harder and harder to the point that they were getting controlled and becoming trafficking victims.

The process by which a person is forced into a specific sex trade and when, is not a clear path. It is only understood that it occurs.

The themes, in summary, demonstrate that the participants all believe that sex trafficking in pornography happens, and that there are no definitive means for a viewer to tell the difference between a victim and a consenting adult. That pornography should remain legal but fought with better policy and education, and that we need to know a lot more about the pathway(s) that allow for sex trafficking taking place in pornography.

In the process of this data collection, a few specific stories stood out that deserve notice and consideration. They are shared below in the words of the participants.

Specific Stories Gathered

Participant 1 shared,

One woman e-mailed us and told us that...her husband was actually the one who trafficked her. She did not know that it was her husband that was doing it. Her husband took her to a party with a lot of her friends, and at that party she was drugged and then trafficked. And she was so ashamed of that, and she thought that her husband was unaware of it, that she kept it to herself and then she went back to her husband. And then a month later, her husband dropped her off with those same friends, and she was drugged again, and the same thing occurred. And this went on for three years, where every two months she was forced into this thing. She was so beaten down emotionally through her prior life and through other things, and she felt too trapped to say anything. Apparently, her husband was the one editing the movies she was in, all those years. But she did not

know that until much later. She is a very timid, very broken person. And apparently he saw that in her and groomed her for about a year before he proposed marriage. So, it was always his intent to force her into it.

Participant 4 said,

We had a kid one time in one of our operations who asked for cocaine from one of our operatives because he said he was usually given drugs before sex to help with the pain. He was an 11-year-old little boy.

Participant 5 shared this narrative,

My father molested me, he trafficked me from the Bible belt in South Carolina. My mom was crazy and it was a perfect scenario for my father because he was starting to groom me from the time I was 8-years-old and saw my body changing. For his delight. And he told me this in later years so that's how I know. [He was a cartoonist for pornography magazines], and I was used in over 3,000 pornographic cartoons. My body, thoughts about me, you know, his little sick thoughts, because that is what the character from [cartoon publication] did, he lured little girls and later on boys into his sick twisted perversions. So, my father would dream them up using me.

Participant 6 shared the narrative of a woman he works with,

I know a lady who shot porn for ten years and ended up becoming somebody who went from being a porn actress to recruiting others for this. She was not being raped and filmed, but the trauma of her childhood rape is what she would say led her to become involved in pornography. Her parents forced her to watch pornography as a child and she got involved with a distributor and went around the country.

Participant 1 also shared,

Another woman told us that there was a gun off camera, pointed at her head, and they were telling her that if she did not make it look sensual, and that she was agreeing to whatever occurred, that they would kill her. And so, she was forced to put on a smile and she was forced to make it sound like, or make it look like, she was in complete rapture and pleasure in what was occurring, so that she would not be physically harmed.

An important element in narrative research is hearing stories and understanding them.

The above examples shared by participants are pertinent in that they better articulate lived experiences of victims and help those of us on the outside to begin to understand. The stories may help others, to some degree, to experience empathy for the victims of sex trafficking. Upon

hearing numerous stories and experiences, I have created a fictional and intuitive story that I would like to share here to help illustrate and bring to life the lived experiences of these women.

Fictional Vignette

written by Monique Derr

I combed my hair, careful not to yank at a tangle too hard. It was the first shower I had had in weeks, and the soap and water matted down the snarls. But, I had to fix it, my hair. I had to smooth out the lumps and make it silky. It had to be perfect. I put on my costume, the one he set out for me. The silk material felt cold against my damp skin, the room was freezing. At least the truck stops we frequented on the way here kept the rooms warm. But, I was glad to have a bed, at least. My very own, no one to share it with. Not last night, anyway. My cell phone lit up and buzzed, the one he gave me. "5 minutes." I squished the red lipstick on my face as fast as I could, and slid my feet into the shoes that rubbed against my fresh blisters.

"Lay on your side" he demanded. I squinted in the light to see who said it, but all I could make out was the silhouette of a camera. The men next to me though, I could see them. They were older than me, serious, ready to get to work. I was hoping for just one, this time, it always hurts more when there are more of them. All of them, at one time, inside of me. I try to listen to what the man behind the camera says; I try to focus so I am sure to follow the orders. "Scream, hit him, yell at him to stop." I'm shaking, trying to keep my breath so I don't faint. That would make them very mad at me. So I breathe, in and out, focusing on keeping my head, shaking, breathing, locking my jaw, focusing on feeling the lights and trying to block out the pain piercing from all sides. "I told you to scream girl!" Oh, yes, I forgot. I can cry out, I don't have to pretend I enjoy it this time. I yell, I scream for them to stop, I beg. It is easy, to wail a sob, it is what my body wants to do. And so, I let it. I let myself shake uncontrollably. I let myself cry out in pain. Over and over. The men are laughing, their sweat is dripping on me, and then one begins to groan. I know what is next; I hate this part the most. I try again to focus on the warmth of lights, to not anticipate the coming fear of not being able to breathe, the smell, the wetness. I squeeze my eyes and mouth closed. I think of my hair, smooth, even as it is yanked now, I smell the soap, it smells clean.

Summary and Discussion

The memoing as data were collected, and the ensuing thematic analysis and coding, supports the assumption that sex trafficking occurs in pornography. It is concluded, based upon the narrative work conducted with these six participants, as well as the literature review, that not only does sex trafficking take place in the filming of some pornography, but that the viewer has no way to know with certainty whether they are witnessing sexual experiences that are resulting

from consent, or force, coercion, and fraud. The pathway for sex trafficking within pornography seems both similar to and as complicated and complex as sex trafficking in prostitution. The pathway for the intersections between pornography and trafficking and prostitution and trafficking, is not always the same, though it can be. We know that when a minor is used to make pornography, he or she is always a victim of sex trafficking. For adults, in absence of proven consent, nothing is certain. An adult may be forced into pornography or prostitution as a child and continue in one or both sex industries as an adult. Henceforth, they began as a victim and a point at which consent was evident is unknown or unverifiable. An adult may start out as a model, be coerced into making pornography, and then to engage in sexual acts beyond what she initially understood or agreed to. A woman may be forced into prostitution, and if the encounter is filmed, pornography has just been made using a victim of sex trafficking. A woman may start out in pornography as a consenting actor, and be coerced or threatened to engage in more and more violent and painful scenes as her career progresses. As these examples demonstrate, there is not one clear way by which a person may be sex trafficked in pornography.

Furthermore, there is often overlap with victims being trafficked in multiple sex industries, often at the same time because of technological advancements allowing for simplified recording procedures and distribution outlets.

Violence, abuse, and drugs were common threads in all of the interviews, as far as elements in the experiences of victims. Activists experienced, witnessed, or heard narratives from victims about the use of drugs used to numb the pain during the filmed rapes, as a personal coping method, or as a tool by the trafficker to keep the victim under his or her control. It can be ascertained from experiences shared in these interviews that violence in pornography is real, common, and on mainstream internet sites. Violence may be used to intimidate or threaten actors

and models in pornography and it may be an indication that consent was not given; there is no definitive way to know. Furthermore, violence or threats of physical violence often occur off camera to force women to engage in sexual acts with a facade of consent and enjoyment.

Childhood abuses predating involvement in pornography also played a primary role in a person's involvement in pornography because they were easier to exploit and manipulate due to psychological harm done.

The belief that consensually created pornography should remain legal is one held by all of the participants. The expectation that public education and social awareness would play the most significant role in fighting trafficking within pornography was shared by all participants. All participants also campaigned for better policy to help keep trafficking out of pornography by improving regulations verifying consent and restricting types of violent sexual acts permitted on camera.

The stories shared by the participants in this research point to the need for further research to better understand how and when a person is trafficking in pornography, how often, and how to stop it. There are no systemic safeguards within the pornography industry to ensure that a person being watched in a film is not being forced or coerced to perform. The only thing that is certain is that there is no way they can be certain.

CHAPTER 5: RECOMMENDATIONS

Further Research Recommendations

The results of this study suggest that sex trafficking does occur in pornography. However, further research is needed to establish this conclusively. In addition, social scientists need to explore this connection further to understand the routes taken by victims, and their experiences. In this way, there would be greater understanding for how to interrupt of the economic flow between sex trafficking and other sex trades, including pornography, by equipping law enforcement with information and society with awareness.

Narrative work of this nature should be conducted with a larger and broader pool of participants. The information that could be gathered would strengthen what has been learned here by providing richer and more substantial data via a variety and depth in participant numbers and backgrounds. Building upon this research would assist in putting together the blueprints for how and where trafficking occurs within the pornography industry. In addition to gathering stories from victims of sex trafficking in pornography, narratives need to be gathered from a variety of players in the pornography and trafficking industries; namely, traffickers and pornographers. Participants should be from amateur production companies as well as the larger ones, and focus should be placed on those who have been prosecuted for their crimes and are thus willing to be open and share details of their activities.

As qualitative work continues to build the case for how sex trafficking occurs within the pornography industry and the full picture becomes illuminated, research focus should then take a quantitative focus. This kind of data collection and analysis will require not only significant qualitative understanding of the process for how trafficking takes place in pornography, but also significant numbers in participants who are polled and surveyed. To be able to quantify how

common force, fraud, and coercion are involved in pornography will be a trying task. Identifying prevalence—whether this is a rare phenomenon, or an epidemic, or somewhere in between—is a critical piece of this issue. However, as with generalized sex trafficking statistics, numbers may be somewhat uncertain and never quite definitive, but approximations allow for better understanding of the scope and where focus for prevention should be. Research should also be conducted on public education and awareness, and on how much that plays a role in deterrence for demand for pornography.

Recommendations for Policy Changes and Laws

The analysis of the data collected here by professional activists against sex trafficking within pornography, and prevention thereof, suggests that there is value in advocating for harder regulations on pornography production. Regulating the Internet is nearly impossible, as pointed out by Participant 3 and, therefore, amateur work may continue to operate as portal for trafficking. However, focus can be placed on regulating what types of acts are legally permitted by prominent pornography companies, and consequences should be attached to sites and companies that distribute forbidden acts. This cannot guarantee consent, but it may help decrease the amount of abuse and pain inflicted against women who may or may not be in a mentally stable place to offer consent. Drawing that line is constitutionally complicated, but anything physically harmful, such as many of the specific activities listed earlier under the pornography category labeled as violent (such as activities that leave physical bruising, cause damage to a woman's anus, or that disrupt breathing) could be considered illegal for distribution. Consent forms and processes should be mandatory, monitored, and enforced. More effort should be placed on regulations for ensuring legal age of consent, that is, 18 years and above, and effort

could be placed on restricting how certain materials are distributed and where, in order to prevent minors from seeing visually distressing scenes.

Recommendations for Social Awareness

Private organizations and the public can also create and advocate for programs, campaigns, and initiatives to educate youth on the dangers of viewing or getting involved in pornography, as well as the connection between pornography and sex trafficking. Many nongovernment agencies and nonprofit organizations engage in this work already, but more awareness of the harm involved in the pornography industry, as well as more support for those who become harmed by it, would serve to help fight the sex trafficking that takes place in the pornography industry.

Educational programs could be transformative when offered in school systems, prison systems, and therapeutic/treatment programs and these could be used to warn, prepare, educate, and support individuals involved in the sex industry or who may know someone who is being victimized. This would also be beneficial in preventative tactics; both for those who may be considering getting into the sex trade industry, or those who would be interested in watching pornography unless being educated on the harm involved. Finally, education and awareness could turn the trend in social acceptance and public appeal to pornography, and instead encourage society to turn away from it rather than continue the demand for it.

Final Reflections

As someone who has spent over a decade working as an activist and humanitarian, my interest areas have always been in human rights issues. I contemplated what the focus of my research and subsequent dissertation would be as I entered my doctorate program, and came up with a long list of interest areas. Upon introspective questioning and outside discussion with

others on the issue, coupled with my own activism experience in anti-sex trafficking and new motherly instincts to defend victims of it, I felt led to this topic. The more I learned about the vulnerability and abuses of those in sex industries, the more the value of researching this connection crystallized. What, if viewers watching pornography are actually watching a person who is being raped? What, if viewers are supporting the trafficking of the very person they see on their screen? Were this to be a reality were viewers to know it, would they turn off the TV; close the webpage? I knew that establishing this connection would prove powerful for many reasons, and decreasing the demand through awareness, in particular, would have a transformative affect on the sex trafficking industry.

As I have unwrapped this heavy and layered issue and dug deeper and deeper, I have recognized the level of female objectification and patriarchy in our society that is all a part of this climate, and I now see that this is personal to me as a woman in ways I did not even realize. The lens by which women are perceived as sex objects and the blind eye turned by so many to the treatment of daughters, mothers, sisters, and friends, in day-to-day experiences, is part of the foundation that permits the continued existence of sex trafficking and violent pornography. Our culture is so sexualized, and it is the women who are at a disadvantage through sexually and gender-based social norms, expectations, and values. Fighting sex trafficking in pornography is a monstrous task, but we can individually be a part of that fight by recognizing some of the core problems that are feeding the beast, and we can step back, person by person, and say “enough.”

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