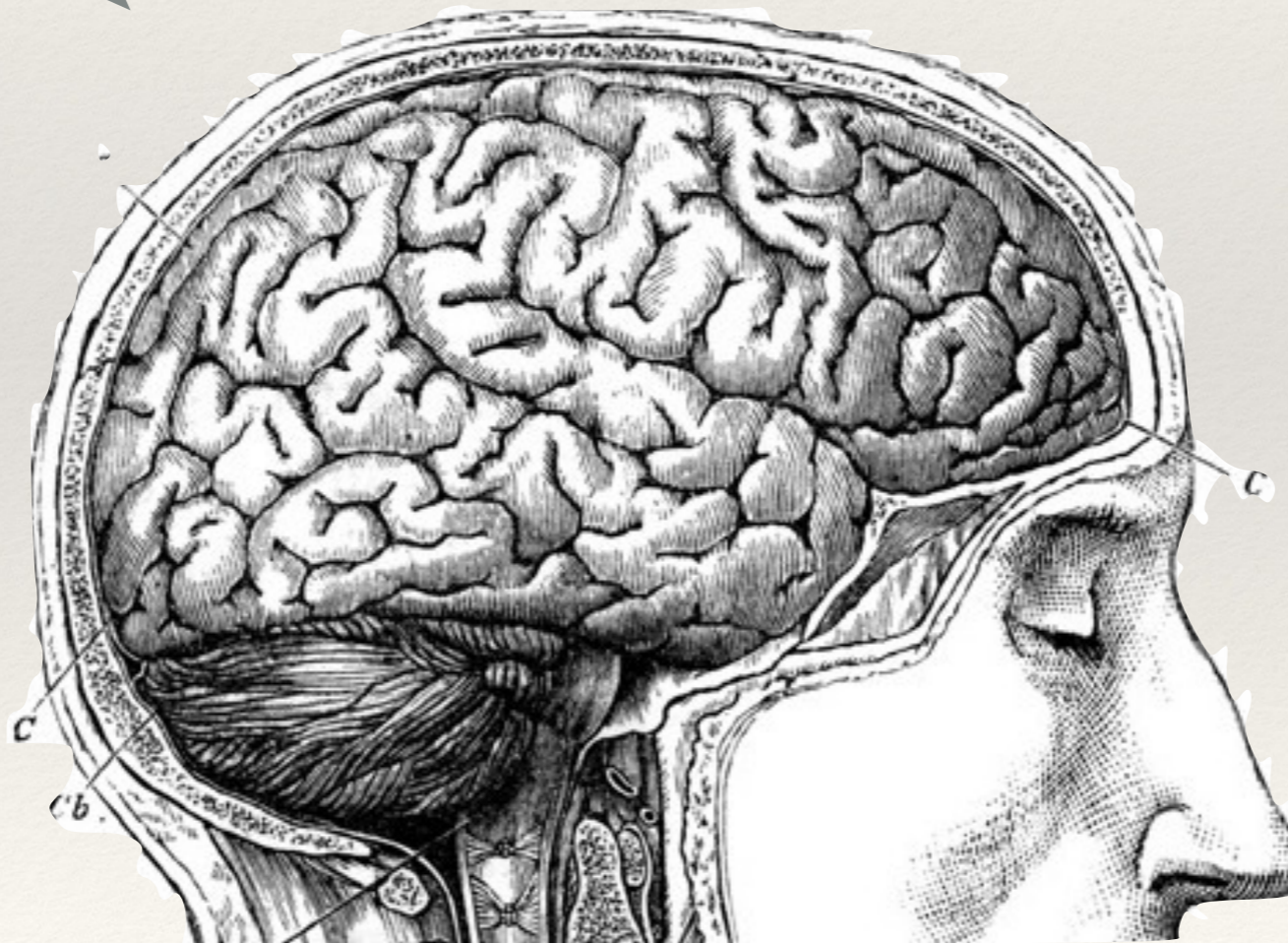


GLENN MILES PhD

Where are the Boys? – the Missing Agenda

Bangor Interdisciplinary Conference on
Childhood and Youth, Bangor June 2017

Each culture has similar stereotypes for **masculinity**, which influence behaviors, **attitudes, beliefs, and values** surrounding male vulnerability



Gender roles



“A **girl** is like a piece of **fine linen**; if it is stained then it is spoiled forever, but a **boy** is like a piece of **pure gold**; if it is dropped in the mud then it can easily be washed clean again.”

— Cambodian Proverb —





For example the story of **Sleeping Beauty** verses **Aladdin**
Vulnerability vs. Resilience

Comparing Genders

Boys are seen as strong, **resilient**, able to survive in difficult circumstances thrown at them.

Girls are seen as fragile, **vulnerable**, in need of protection and with little agency.



Comparing girls and boys

- ❖ 4th World Congress on Women in 1996 in Beijing
- ❖ “Girls are more vulnerable than boys to all kinds of violence, including rape, sexual abuse and exploitation, trafficking and forced labor”
- ❖ Stop Violence Against Us!’ (2005-6)
- ❖ In a national survey I conducted in Cambodia boys reported more violence than girls in every category including sexual abuse, rape, witness of rape and child sale.

WE SEE WHAT WE
EXPECT TO
SEE

WE SEE WHAT WE
EXPECT TO SEE

So what are we looking for?

In a review of 166 scholarly articles on the global sex industry, 84% exclusively discussed female sex workers and made no mention of males. 79% simply assumed that sex workers are always female. (Dennis, 2008)

When males were mentioned:

Males —

“Sex worker”

Chief Danger: HIV

Females —

“Prostituted”

Chief Danger: Violence

(Dennis, 2008 — “Women are Victims and Men Make Choices”)

In research in Cambodia violence experienced by boys more than girls in every category

Table 1. Children's experiences of violence (Tearfund, 2005)

Experiences of violence (lifetime prevalence)	Response		By gender			
	Number (total)	%	Boy %	Girl %	χ^2	<i>p</i> <
Direct experience of peer bullying	475 (1271)	37.4	40.6	34.5	4.95	0.03
Direct experience of physical punishment by parent	552 (1277)	43.2	50.5	36.4	25.83	0.001
Direct experience of physical punishment by teacher	369 (1294)	29.2	34.7	24.1	17.175	0.001
Direct experience of genital touching by an adult (after age nine)	177 (1099)	16.1	18.9	13.5	5.81	0.02
Direct experience of child rape by an adult	15 (1289)	1.2	1.8	0.6	3.69	0.06
Witnessed rape of another child by an adult	290 (1297)	22.4	23.5	21.4	—	NS
Direct experience of child sale	39 (1297)	3.0	3.7	2.4	—	NS
Knowledge of child sale in community	607 (1291)	47.0	45.1	49.1	—	NS

NS = not significant.



18.9% boys aged 12-15yrs said they had been sexually touched on the genitals by an adult since they were nine years.
Miles & Thomas (2005)

What about **boys** as victims of sexual abuse?

Globally,
ONE IN SIX

males are sexually abused before the age of eighteen

Men and boys are also sexually exploited but culturally men and boys are not seen as vulnerable.

The statistics are not as diverse as we might think:

1:4 girls sexually abused
1:6 boys sexually abused





Emphasis on the 'Girl Child'

One of the recent foci of the UN has been the “girl child”

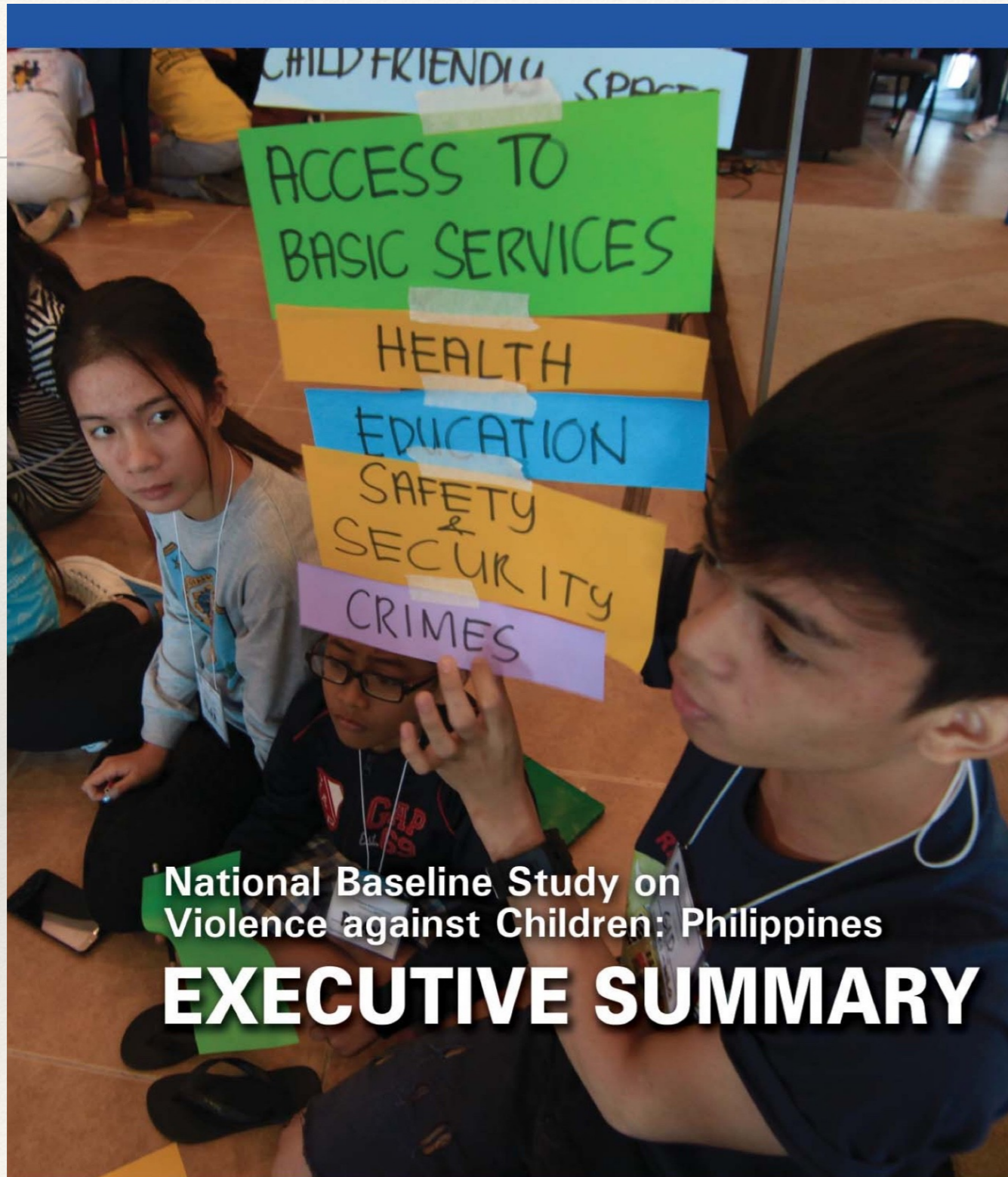
- ❖ Feminists have welcomed the attention
- ❖ Donors have developed selection criteria that focus on girls
- ❖ Int'l NGOs have developed policies and programs for girls



COMMERCIAL
SEXUAL
EXPLOITATION OF
CHILDREN IN
CAMBODIA

*A name-based
application of time-space
sampling to measure
prevalence in Phnom
Penh, Siem Reap and
Sihanoukville*

But it was actually
Commercial
Sexual
Exploitation of...
Girls
and NOT Children



National Baseline Study on
Violence against Children: Philippines

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UNICEF VAC Report Gender Differential



Council for
the Welfare
of Children

in partnership with

unicef  for every child

The current, prevailing understanding of **Trafficking & Exploitation**

- Hinges on **stereotypical constructions** of the social roles of men and women.
- Predator vs. Prey. **Sex is a male right** and entitlement; Women and girls are sexualized commodities functional to that male right.
- As a result of this emphasis there are hundreds of NGO's dedicted to **rescuing and helping girls** and young women but only a handful dedicated to assisting boys



Web

Images

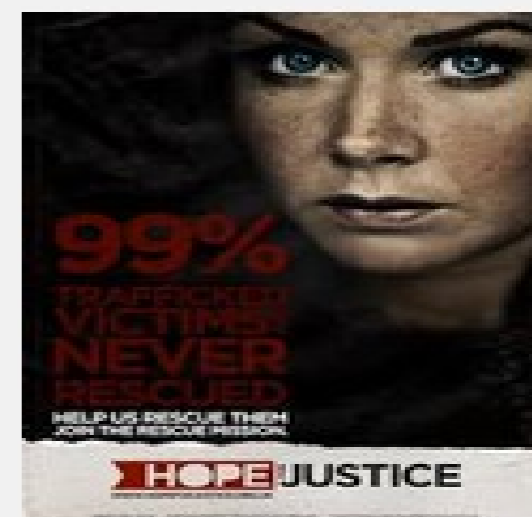
News

Videos

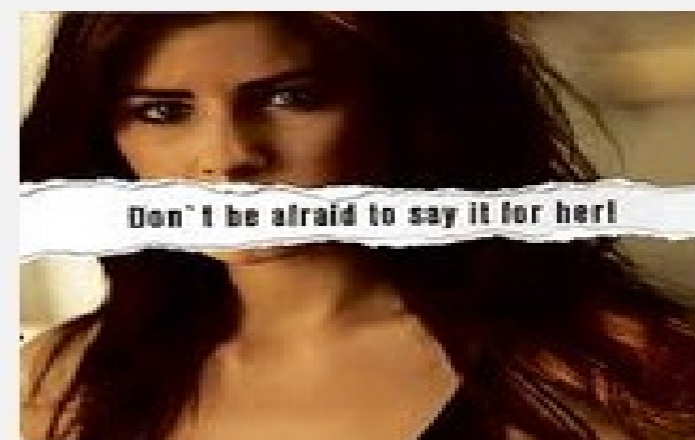
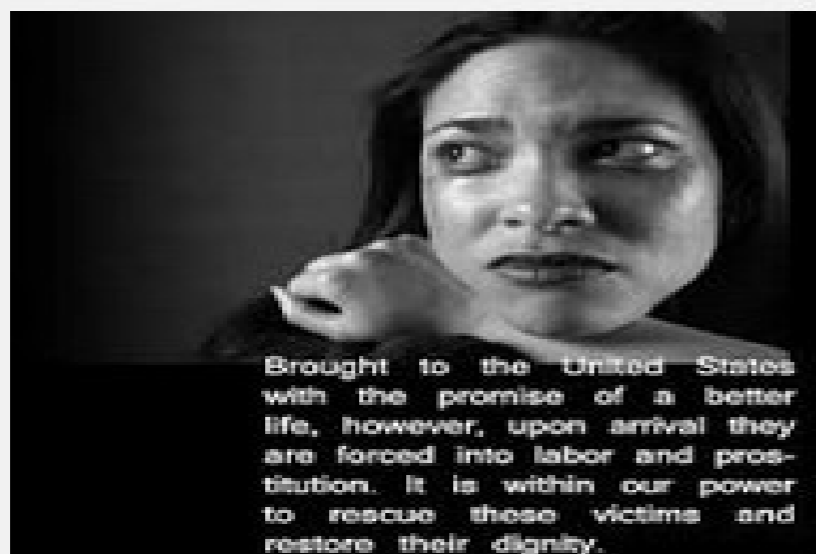
Shopping

More ▾

Search tools



1280 x



BBC Wales Report **The students who turn to sex work to make ends meet**

By Lucy Ballinger BBC Wales News 27 March 2015. Although only a third of those researched were men, of those taking part in the survey, **5% said they were involved in sex work, compared to nearly 3.5% of the women.**



A 2008 STUDY ESTIMATED THAT
AS HIGH AS

50%

OF COMMERCIALLY
SEXUALLY EXPLOITED
CHILDREN IN THE US

ARE **BOYS**



What are some of the **misconceptions** about sexual exploitation of boys?

- Boys are not seen as **sexual objects** and are not targets of sexual exploiters.
- Sexual exploitation of boys is perpetrated only by **men of homosexual** orientation.
- Exploiters are mostly **foreigners**.
- Boys **consent to have sex with women** therefore are not victims when women are buyers.
- Sexual exploitation of boys **is limited to more 'open' societies**.
- The magnitude of the problem is **small**.

Males are seen as having more agency and more choice.

- ❖ The invisibility of men and boys in scholarly discussions of the global sex trade was analyzed through a sample of 166 recent articles published in social science journals.
- ❖ Most failed to acknowledge the existence of male sex workers at all. When male sex workers were discussed, they were assigned considerably more agency than female sex workers, the chief danger ascribed to them was HIV rather than violence, and the question of their sexual orientation was always addressed, whereas female sex workers were always assumed heterosexual.
- ❖ The results are discussed in the context of world system theory, Orientalism, and heteronormativity.
- ❖ *Source: Dennis, J. (2008). Women are Victims, Men Make Choices: The Invisibility of Men and Boys in the Global Sex Trade. Gender Issues, 25(1).*

Victims or Oppressors?



Men are more likely to be the victims of violent crime. And yet resist the label of “victim”.

Men are conceptualized as the sexual aggressor.

(R. Graham, 2006)

A few common **misconceptions...**

- Whether we like it or not, these common misconceptions (and others) often impact the findings of research.
 - Impact on the **researcher**
 - Research often views males in the sex industry as liabilities for sexual health, rather than vulnerable human beings that are at risk of violence, stigma and abuse.
 - Impact on the **respondents**
 - Male victims of females often viewed as “lucky” (V. Jones, 2010)

Why are Commercially Sexually Exploited Boys **so frequently ignored?**

- ❖ The unwillingness of boys to self-identify as sexually exploited due to shame and stigma about being gay or being perceived as gay by family and community.
- ❖ A lack of screening and intake by law enforcement and social services agencies rooted in the belief that boys are not victims of CSE.
- ❖ Limited outreach by anti-trafficking organizations to areas, venues and tracks known for male prostitution.
- ❖ Oversimplification of the reality that boys are not generally pimped hides the needs and misinforms
- ❖ Lack of potential services.

Social Service agencies and NGOs need to acknowledge the risk of sexual exploitation

- ❖ **Social service/third sector providers must examine why they tend to ignore male sexual exploitation, how these attitudes lead to exploitation, and how sexual abuse affects young men later in life. Boys tend to enter into prostitution either as a means of escaping abuse at home, or as a result of early life experiences that lead them to prostitution.**

Source: Lillywhite, R., & Skidmore, P. (2006). Boys are not sexually exploited? A challenge to practitioners. Child Abuse Review, 15(5).

Research on Male Vulnerability (Miles & Davis)

See

www.gmmiles.co.uk

- Started with research listening to young men who were most visible – **masseur industry** *Phnom Penh, Mumbai, Chiang Mai, Manila*
- Then **street boys** in cities, border areas and beaches *Kompong Som, Manila, Bangkok & Poipet (Phnom Penh next)*
- As well as more **masculine young men** we discovered **transgender women** exceedingly at risk. *Bangkok, Phnom Penh*
- Sexual exploitation can happen to **anyone irrespective of gender, age, ethnicity and ability/disability.**
- We have come to realize how **selective** the abolitionist movement has been in **focusing only on girls**

www.goodtouchbadtouchflipchart.org

Asia? Africa? Europe?



TouchTalk
child protection flipbook

A story of
three friends...
Precious,
Gift & Mercy

Tehila
protecting children together

involving children in
their own protection

Normalising the idea that...
boys and girls can be sexually abused

