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Dr Elaine Storkey, renowned theologian, author and broadcaster

Breathtaking – a rich tapestry of theory, theology, and practicality.
Dr Dan Allender, pioneer in theology, psychology and trauma



Stepping Out of the Traffick

PAUSING FOR THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION
ON CHRISTIAN RESPONSE TO SEXUAL
EXPLOITATION AND TRAFFICKING

Edited by Glenn Miles and Christa Foster Crawford
with Bill Prevette

Stepping Out of the Traffic

eeper in mire, splattering mud on those they serve.

ost of us willing to take the opportunity to...
ecade of the modern anti-trafficking movement...
ehicles and aborted tracks. Worse, there are...
n paved with good intentions that ignore the...
orted by anemic theologies that collapse in the...
route riddled with responses that are ineffectual.

we continue to barrel on, resigned to an ever-revolving door of disillusioned responses of naïve intentions gone wrong.

* * *

the ways we've always done things, we have the ways that are more ethical, more empowering, more

feels or being immobilized at a crossroads, we have the ability to re-consider where we are going and what is

Freedom with a label of Faith pasted on top, pretending that it is positively affecting Freedom, and that both in a way that can make each better and last a lifetime.

* * *

Step Out of the Traffick, engaging The Triangle to

do it well, of this we can surely have Faith.

About This Book

Gene Miles, with Christa Foster Crawford

...all the marvels of God!

...flowers and trees all over the earth, bans war from pole to pole, breaks
...weapons across his knee.

...the traffic! Take a long, loving look at me, your High God,
...iniquities, above everything."

Psalm 46: 8-10, The Message

...might be surprised to learn that the title of this book is taken from
... (Psalm 46: 8-10) which tells us to "Step out of the Traffic." Addressing
... is political. It involves governments and every department from
... immigration, from labour to education. Yet this verse encourages us
... all powerful and we should seek his loving mercy and justice above
... .

... good for us as practitioners to step out of the traffic for a while (Psalm
... pause and be with God, experiencing his rest and reflecting on God's
... love for those we minister to and to us as the ministers.

... we're often too busy "doing the good work" to want to take the time to
... When I decided to go to missionary training college, I wanted to do a one-
... course because I wanted to get straight into the "real" work. The professors
... interviewing me wisely encouraged me to complete the full two-year training.
... They could see that I hadn't taken any shortcuts with the professional training I
... had done in preparation so I shouldn't take shortcuts with my theological and
... mission training either. I was grateful for their encouragement, and I have
... subsequently sought a balance in my practitioner and theological readings and
... understandings to be more holistic. Before I went to college I worked for a while
... in a Cambodian refugee camp in Thailand with YWAM. I was relieved and
... delighted when I got to college to realise that God really cared for the refugees
... and some of the most vulnerable people on the planet. God was right there behind
... my puny attempt at passionate service, and it was good to know that. It was
... reassuring. By pausing our "doing good work", we give the opportunity for God
... to change us so that we can do good work better.

How This Book Came About

This book has been a long time in the making. It has taken place over the turning
of a decade and on at least three continents, with at least two sets of editors.

It is the third in a series of books¹ on identifying and wrestling with the problem of human trafficking and exploitation, particularly – but not exclusively – from a Christian perspective. But unlike the first two volumes, this book stands out as a separate project with its own history. This book was birthed at the 2015 ICAP conference² when Bill Prevette and Francesca Nuzzolese invited a diverse group of Christian practitioners, scholars, and others to contribute to an edited volume addressing theology and response to sexual exploitation. While my wife and series co-editor, Christa, assisted in initial planning meetings, Bill and Francesca served as lead editors, overseeing the framing and development of the book, including convening a group of practitioners, theologians, and scholars in Oxford, England later that year. (You can read more about the original framework of the book in the “Background of the Book” by Bill Prevette, and the “Reflections on the Book” by Haddon Willmer.)

Great progress was made on the book under Bill and Francesca’s leadership, including nearly-final forms of most of the chapters you hold in your hands – an amazing accomplishment given the full-time professional commitments of the editors and contributors (all of whom volunteer their labor). A few years in, Bill requested that Christa and I take the lead, making this book part of our existing series on Christian response to sexual exploitation and human trafficking, to which we gladly agreed.

But unfortunately, this book was deterred by forces beyond anyone’s control. Major events in the lives of each of editor. Troubles with technology and logistics. Serious illnesses, and even death, of editors, contributors, and family members. A global pandemic that shut down the world.

This book experienced many seasons of involuntary Pause.

But despite the nearly-decade of challenges, we have persisted. While the delivery of the book has often been unsure, one thing was certain: The need to consider and cultivate what it means to engage in anti-trafficking work from a Christian perspective – in other words, how do we understand and reconcile the problem of exploitation and the practice of addressing it from the paradigms of Christian faith? (More on this in Christa’s Introduction.)

We are honored to finally share with you the voices of experts from around the world, including survivors of exploitation, experienced practitioners, academics and theologians, and those who straddle in-between. We do not always agree with or endorse everything being said because we want to give voice to people from different contexts and churchmanships. But, if we are good practitioners, academics, and/or theologians then what we understand and believe to be right and true should evolve as we age and grow.

¹ Miles & Crawford, *Stopping the Traffick: A Christian Response to Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking* (Regnum 2014) and Crawford & Miles, *Finding Our Way Through the Traffick: Navigating the Complexities of a Christian Response to Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking* (Regnum 2017).

² International Christian Alliance on Prostitution.

series of books¹ on identifying and wrestling with trafficking and exploitation, particularly – but not exclusively – in the sex industry. But unlike the first two volumes, this book has its own history. This book was birthed at the feet of Bill Prevette and Francesca Nuzzolese invited a diverse group of practitioners, scholars, and others to contribute to an anthology and response to sexual exploitation. While my friend Christa, assisted in initial planning meetings, Bill and Francesca, overseeing the framing and development of the book, a group of practitioners, theologians, and scholars worked on it that year. (You can read more about the origins of the “Background of the Book” by Bill Prevette, and the “Background of the Book” by Haddon Willmer.)

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Seasons of involuntary Pause. In the face of challenges, we have persisted. While the future has been unsure, one thing was certain: The need to engage in anti-trafficking work from a variety of perspectives, how do we understand and reconcile the practice of addressing it from the paradigms of the Bible? (Christa’s Introduction.)

With you the voices of experts from around the world, those of exploitation, experienced practitioners, and those who straddle in-between. We do not want anything being said because we want to give voice to our texts and churchmanships. But, if we are good at listening to theologians then what we understand and how we evolve as we age and grow.

Book: A Christian Response to Sexual Exploitation
Christa Foster Crawford & Miles, Finding Our Way Through the
Book: A Christian Response to Sexual Exploitation
Introduction.

How This Book is Structured

Anyone who has attempted to edit a book will know that what they end up with is very different from how it started and this is no exception. However, there is a sense that what ended up in the volume was how it should have been. This volume invites us to pause and consider three key areas: Sexual Exploitation, Theology, and Response. Known as “The Triangle”, the relationship of each individually and together is explained in the Introduction by Christa, as well as the Background and Reflection by Bill and Haddon.

The book is organized around three parts:

- Part I: Seeing Sexual Exploitation in Scripture
- Part II: Thinking Theologically about Sexual Exploitation
- Part III: Raising Our Response to Sexual Exploitation

Part I: Seeing Sexual Exploitation in Scripture helps us to explore places in Scripture where sexual exploitation, sexual harm, and other forms of exploitation/trafficking take place, and understand their relevance for those who have experienced harm. **Christa Foster Crawford** and **Bryon Lippincott** use the story of Tamar and Judah to demonstrate that unless we see what “The-God-Who-Sees” sees we will get our practice very wrong. They also provide guidance for how to see and do better. **Jennifer Singh** introduces us to a bible study method that comes out of theology from the margins and helps us understand how women in prostitution in Ethiopia read the story of Hagar as encouragement that God makes a way where there is no way. **Andrew J. Schmutzer** takes a deep dive into the story of Sodom and other sexual violence in Scripture to analyze striking patterns and similarities of sin. **David Tombs** demonstrates how the stripping of Jesus at the crucifixion involves sexual humiliation and abuse, and explores the implications that this theological insight has for practice. **Glenn M. Harden** and **Leslie Harley** bring an academic and a survivor perspective together to explore the meaning of authority throughout Scripture and contrast it with the misuse of authority in both sexual exploitation and aftercare. **Joni L. Middleton** shows us how the *imago Dei* (image of God) found in the book of Genesis and the New Testament reinforce the importance of dignity in our practice. **Tim Davy** engages with Psalm 10 to show us the implications of the *missio Dei* (mission of God) for the church in advocating for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children who are at risk of trafficking, abuse and exploitation. And finally, **Amanda Avila Kaminski** uses a literary analysis of Lamentations to introduce us to the practice of lament prayer as a way for exploited women to express their grief, anger, and protest at what has happened to them.

Part II: Thinking Theologically about Sexual Exploitation helps us to examine how we think and talk about God and sexual exploitation, and how this shapes our theology and our practice. **Leah Edwards** uses Kingdom of God theology to explore and challenge the motivations of Christian abolitionists. **Dan Pratt** explains unhelpful theologies of the cross and demonstrates how Black Saturday provides a middle space where God’s presence can be experienced in

suffering and trauma. **Siobhan Miles and Jill Reimer** examine how Christian NGOs have portrayed their clients in a way that not always be dignifying. **Glenn Miles, Jarrett Davis and Hannah Swanson** reflect on how the story of Joseph's trafficking and exploitation challenges organizations that ignore the exploitation of boys and men, and presents research about the role of resilience and spirituality in providing services. **Heike Lippmann** explores the theological implications of our consumer culture and its role as a root cause of human trafficking. Lastly, **Myrto Theocharous** examines themes of patriarchy and refuge to understand sex trafficking and the responsibilities of the person who trafficks and God to respond.

Part III: Raising Our Response to Sexual Exploitation helps us to engage better in our disciplines and services as we seek to practice the gospel in the midst of sexual exploitation. **Vanntheory Lim, Glenn Miles and Chantale Nhanh** listen to what survivors in Cambodia have to teach us about the changing role of spirituality in recovery and how our responses can be more effective and less harmful. **Stephanie Goins** unpacks research on forgiveness from both academics and survivors, and offers forgiveness as a practice as a resource for people who have been exploited. **Genevieve James** introduces us to a tool that uses the story of David and Tamar to combat child rape. **Haddon Williams** describes the particulars of a response that works with parents as agents of change and examines the issue of working with secular NGOs. **Carl Jylman Halverson and Timothy Gaikwad** consider what scripture says about ministering to transgender people and provide principles for ministry using the case study of a ministry to *hijira* in India. Finally, but crucially important, **Samantha Miller and Glenn Miles** consider whether there is a place for forgiveness, healing and hope for perpetrators of sexual exploitation and trafficking.

What's Next

This book series has always sought to elevate diverse voices to speak to the toughest questions faced in a Christian response to sexual exploitation and human trafficking. When the first volume, *Stopping the Traffick*, was published in 2014, there was very little written about the intersection of sex trafficking and how people addressed it from a Christian or theological perspective. That volume's authors challenged us to make sense of sexual exploitation in the context of our beliefs and the importance of networking together to make the most of our resources. It started by looking at addressing demand and reaching those in the margins, and ended with a call to network and collaborate better. The second volume, *Finding Our Way Through the Traffick*, explored the challenges of responding well, being careful in our language and assumptions, considering prevention and safeguarding, and responding holistically and safely in aftercare and reintegration. This third volume, *Stepping Out of the Traffick*, answers a request to get more theological whilst still learning from the grassroots.

So where do we go from here? In the future, we are interested in developing another volume that focuses on listening to the voices of survivors, including their reflections on their experiences and where God was in it all. As Tombs

Phan Miles and Jill Reimer examine stigma and NGOs have portrayed their clients in a way that may **Glenn Miles, Jarrett Davis and Hannah Sworn** look at trafficking and exploitation challenges organizations face with boys and men, and presents research about the role of NGOs in providing services. **Heike Lippmann** explores the role of consumer culture and its role as a root cause of trafficking. **Myrto Theocharous** examines themes of patriarchy and the responsibilities of the people of NGOs. **Response to Sexual Exploitation** helps us to engage with NGOs as we seek to practice the gospel in the field. **Vanntheary Lim, Glenn Miles and Channtha** from Cambodia have to teach us about the changing landscape and how our responses can be more effective and more informed. **Genevieve James** introduces us to a toolkit for NGOs in Tamar to combat child rape. **Haddon Willmer** offers a response that works with parents as agents of change. **Carl Jylland** and **Ikwa** consider what scripture says about trafficking and provide principles for ministry using the **Scripture** in India. Finally, but crucially important, **Glenn Miles** consider whether there is a place for NGOs for perpetrators of sexual exploitation and

What's Next

To elevate diverse voices to speak to the tough issues of response to sexual exploitation and human trafficking, *Stopping the Traffick*, was published in 2014, exploring the intersection of sex trafficking and how NGOs can respond from a theological perspective. That volume's focus was on sexual exploitation in the context of our work together to make the most of our resources in addressing demand and reaching those in the field. *Stopping the Traffick*, explored the challenges of our language and assumptions, considering how we can respond holistically and safely in aftercare. *Stepping Out of the Traffick*, answers a question we are still learning from the grassroots. In the future, we are interested in developing a platform for the voices of survivors, including their stories and where God was in it all. As Tombs

points out in his chapter in this volume, we need to learn from those who are experts of their own experiences. We look forward to sharing those conversations with you.

We also recognize the need to get voices out more quickly than the process of an edited book volume allows. Perhaps someone is interested in developing a journal or other vehicle that explores the practice and theology of sexual exploitation/trafficking. Maybe that someone is you! We must continue to think, individually and as a movement, about these important issues. Thankfully the number of people doing so is increasing all the time, but they need a place to share their work.

We look forward to what God has in store for the future as, together, we continue to explore the promise and the pitfalls of Christian response to sexual exploitation and human trafficking.

THE STORY OF JOSEPH AND WHAT WE CAN ABOUT TRAFFICKING, SEXUAL ABUSE AND RESILIENCE OF YOUNG MEN

Glenn Miles, Jarrett Davis and Hannah Sw

Introduction

The problem of sexual abuse and the exploitation of boys and young men has been largely absent from the attention of the media, the awareness of the church, and the assistance of helping organizations. However, this problem is present in our modern-day context, it can also be found in the pages of the Bible. To better understand – and respond to – this problem will be the focus of this chapter, with perspectives from biblical reflection on the experience of Joseph, findings from the discipline of social science drawn from research on service providers, and an examination of the role of spirituality and resilience for survivors.

This chapter will look at the story of Joseph and how he was trafficked into slavery by his brothers, and later sexually abused and humiliated by his boss. This will challenge the way sexual exploitation and trafficking are addressed by faith-based organizations, which has focused predominantly on women and girls. Secondly, this chapter will survey research from Asia that provides evidence of how this disparity happens and will argue that males should not be ignored. Finally, this chapter will look at spirituality and resilience, based on evidence from research conducted with sexually exploited men in Manila into how their spirituality and resilience in a way that is not so dissimilar to Joseph's story.

Scope and Focus

The authors are not in any way suggesting that female sexual exploitation should be dismissed or minimized, but that the amount of attention (including funding, research, government and NGO support including Faith-Based Organizations) should be devoted to males in proportion to the extent of exploitation and abuse they experience.

The research considered is mainly from Cambodia, Thailand, and the Philippines where the religious contexts are Theravada Buddhism and Christianity/Catholicism. South Asia has not been included due to differences between the regions.

There are a large number of Christian FBOs working on anti-trafficking and anti-sexual exploitation issues, the majority of these non-profits focus exclusively or mainly with women and girl beneficiaries. This may be due to exclusionary and conservative cultural attitudes of organizations.

JOSEPH AND WHAT WE CAN LEARN TRAFFICKING, SEXUAL ABUSE, RESILIENCE OF YOUNG MEN

Jarrett Davis and Hannah Sworn

Introduction

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providers, and donors working in South-East Asia towards males as victims of
exploitation.

Gender Differences

Many organizations and individuals working in development believe that girls
and women require “more care and attention” than males. Grieger notes this as
“an instance where a young man’s very maleness and perceived (greater) agency
works against him”.¹ Many stakeholders working in the human rights sector paint
a polarized picture, where males are perpetrators of crimes and women and
children the victims. Grieger found that an NGO working with young men in
Chiang Mai, Thailand was told by others in the NGO community that these men
were not “real” victims and that they would only “steal from you and lie to you.
Nothing good comes from those boys”.² This outdated and reductionist
conception of victimhood may be one of the reasons that the majority of both
programming and research on sexual violence in the region exclusively focuses
on women and children.³ As Hilton et al. succinctly note in their seminal
qualitative explorative research on the sexual abuse of boys in Cambodia:

The vast majority of local contemporary academic discourse also contributes to
what may be described as the “feminization of victimization”, creating the
impression that boys are invulnerable, rarely abused, less seriously affected when
they are and/or more likely to be abusers of others than victims.⁴

This view is illustrated in the Cambodian proverb: “A girl is like a piece of
white linen: when it is soiled it is ruined forever. Whereas a boy is like a piece
of gold: if dropped in the mud it can be easily washed clean.” This proverb
emphasizes the vulnerability of girls and their lack of agency and resilience. For
boys, it assumes that they are able to get up, dust themselves off, and continue
on as if nothing has happened. This implies boys are resilient and lacking in
vulnerability, juxtaposed as the opposite of girls. In reality, boys can be just as
vulnerable as girls, but are often less likely to seek help because they don’t want
to be seen as weak. Furthermore, they are often less likely to be offered help
because they are assumed to be inherently strong.

The Role of Media

The notion of male sexual exploitation is commonly trivialized in media and
popular culture. Hollywood films such as “*Magic Mike*”, as well as popular
telenovellas and soap operas in South Korea, Philippines, and Japan have
glamorized the use of male escorts and sex workers and ascribed an inherent
agency to males who sell sex. Males in the sex trade are presented as manly,
aggressive, and in control of their bodies. Males who remove their clothes on
stage are thought to demonstrate pride or self-confidence at their willingness to
expose their bodies. There is a continuing subtext of agency and power, which

¹Grieger, 2012: 57).

²Grieger, 2012: 60-61).

³Piper, 2005: 209).

⁴Hilton et al., 2008: 8).

presents a caricature of masculinity and neglects the experiences of individuals involved. The experience of females is commonly the inverse of that of males. Females who trade sex are more likely to be seen as dirty or downtrodden. They are less likely to be seen as willing participants but are more likely to be seen as the victims of social economics.

The media, along with many international development agencies and organizations, continue to propagate the stereotype of the "acceptable" victim, making it increasingly hard to "recognize the exploitation of those who do not fit this (vulnerable female) archetype [...] their status as exploited individuals is delegitimized".⁵ This is somewhat due to the role of the media, especially as used by NGOs that sensationalize the exploitation of young girls and women who are portrayed as passive and innocent victims of the violence inflicted on them by the patriarchal societies they live in. In his article on the trafficking of men and boys, Jones describes this "powerful traditional narrative used by journalists, personalities and commentators to describe human trafficking through sensationalized accounts of heinous male predators molesting female captives while ignoring the significant number of male victims of forced labor and human trafficking".⁶

Inaccurate Images of Victimization

This "idealized" image and the stories associated with it "sell" to donors because they are simple and lend greater publicity and funding opportunities to the organizations involved. A more complex picture of exploitation, where individuals with diverse identities are victims of institutionalized patterns of exploitation with no obvious scapegoat to blame for the perpetration of these crimes is arguably less glamorous and might be seen as "simply too complex for most audiences to process".⁷ In this way, the image of the male victim is quite different from the female one and is often "too problematic to be understood" as it does not "meet the criteria of how a victim should act or look".⁸ These attitudes towards male survivors of sexual violence not only contribute to greater stigma and isolation of these individuals (which, in turn, can often leave them open to re-exploitation) but also present a narrow picture of exploitation that may lead many into thinking this type of exploitation does not exist. This in turn discounts or denies the seriousness of the exploitation of women and girls. Hilton *et al.* explain clearly in the preface to their research:

The existence of this study does not assume or imply that recognition, resources, services and protection for girls and women are adequate – for that is clearly not the case. It is hoped, however, that by recognizing and highlighting issues affecting males, this study may expand our understanding of the culture of sexual abuse and rape and contribute positively to the well-being of all victims and survivors of sexual abuse, whatever their identity.⁹

⁵ (Grieger, 2012: 60).

⁶ (Jones, 2010: 1144).

⁷ (Grieger, 2012: 57).

⁸ (Grieger, 2012: 58).

⁹ (Hilton *et al.*, 2008: 5).

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In this context, the qualitative nature of this research is particularly important. As Mahdavi and Sargent note, these groups of "problematic victims" have been generally "excluded from the opportunity to contribute their own narratives to the programmatic paradigms into which they have been scripted".¹⁰ Giving generally exploited males a chance to tell their own stories in their own words is essential as "[p]ractical policy responses to exploitation [...] cannot be crafted unless the reality is known – and that knowledge can only be learned from those directly affected".¹¹ In order to inform best practices in current and future service provision (both prevention and aftercare) for boys and men, it is crucial to listen to their accounts of abuse and the circumstances around these incidents as well as their specific needs for recovery and rehabilitation. In their 2008 study, Hilton et al. found that their respondents offered a rich and creative range of responses regarding what they wanted from their families, support staff, and authorities in order to have a positive recovery experience.¹²

Many participants stated that they needed caregivers to believe them, respect their confidentiality, and show them kindness and patience. Many NGO staff who were also interviewed saw boys as difficult, aggressive, and disobedient compared to generally "compliant and well behaved" girls, responding reactively to this behavior rather than seeking and addressing the root cause of it in a non-judgmental manner.¹³ When discussing the commercial sexual exploitation of boys in Vietnam, UNICEF states that:

Specialized care and protection measures are required which address the reception and administrative procedures for boys and their recovery and reintegration requirements. Boys equally deserve community care options and will require separate accommodation facilities. And, just as with girls, it is not satisfactory to place boys in centres for drug addicts or alongside children with other needs (child urbanians or children with disabilities). Boy victims of commercial sexual exploitation require the same level of specialized support as girls.¹⁴

Recognizing the Abuse and Exploitation of Boys and Men:

A Biblical Reflection

In this section, we will consider how the story of Joseph illustrates the vulnerability of males as well as females to abuse, exploitation, and trafficking, and note parallels that are relevant to the modern-day exploitation of boys and men.

But first, we cannot look at prostitution without also considering the injustice of poverty. Scripture is clear that those who have resources should provide for those who do not and that we are accountable to God to ensure that the rights of the poor and vulnerable are met. Although many abolitionists do not like the term

⁸ Mahdavi and Sargent, 2011 as cited in Grieger, 2012: 4).

⁹ Grieger, 2012: 9).

¹⁰ Hilton et al., 2008: 87-88; 107-109; 116-117; 123).

¹¹ Hilton et al., 2008: 156-157).

¹² UNICEF and MOLISA, 2011: 54).

“sex work” because it implies choice alongside other forms of work, the reality is that many of the people involved in prostitution do so because their bodies are the only commodity left for them to sell. Due to the assumptions applied to the male gender, it may seem unthinkable to many heterosexual men that they would be in a position where they would need to sell themselves as sex objects to someone willing to pay for it. However, this is the reality for many men – both those who identify as homosexual and those who identify as heterosexual – not because they enjoy it or because they have a real choice, but because they and their families need to survive and options available to them to earn money are restricted to things that are undesirable and dangerous.

In 1 Corinthians 6:15, we are reminded that our bodies are members of Christ. We are persuaded that it is never appropriate for a member of Christ to unite with a prostitute because they will become one body with her/him; the two will be one flesh (6:16). Earlier in the chapter, male prostitutes and “sodomites” are listed among the wrongdoers who will not inherit the Kingdom of God (6:9). It is of interest that Paul nevertheless is speaking out to members of the Corinthian church which would have included male prostitutes and “sodomites”, and he assumes they are present and not rejected from being a member of the church. Bearing in mind the previous comment about poverty, it is also of note that poverty is also on the list of wrongdoers. Forcing someone to prostitute themselves to someone else due to the poverty you have created and your greed is arguably more morally wrong than the person who has to do sex work to survive.

Now we can turn to the story of Joseph himself. In Genesis, Joseph was sold by his brothers for 20 pieces of silver to the Ishmalites (Midianite traders) to become a slave in Egypt (Gen. 37:12-36). Back then, as well as in the present, the families of children must be carefully considered for their potential involvement in the trafficking of children.¹⁵ Joseph was stripped of the beautiful garment that had been given to him by his father, likely as a way to humiliate him and symbolically take away the favor given to him. His brothers took the garment dipped in the blood of an animal as false “evidence” to their father that Joseph had been defiled.

Although victimhood in sexual abuse is generally assumed to be of females, by males, the story of Joseph is an example where this is turned on its head. The victim of trafficking is a young man who, like a number of people who are trafficked for other reasons, became embroiled in a situation where he was sexually harassed and abused, but in this case by the wife of his wealthy master, Potiphar (Gen. 39). Potiphar was captain of the palace guard, an official of the Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. Echoing Joseph’s childhood, Potiphar’s wife grabbed hold of his robe given to him by her husband and pulled it off him. He ran away from her, using it as false “evidence” that he had raped her. The stories of Joseph being stripped of his robes should be read in conjunction with David Tombs’ chapter addressing the nakedness of Christ, found earlier in this volume.

Certainly, many prostituted young men (and women) are longing for someone to provide what they see as the security of a wealthy country/home, and for their bodies to be taken away from their situation of poverty by a rich man or woman.

¹⁵ (Gozdziak, 2010; Rafferty, 2007; Reid *et al.*, 2015).

choice alongside other forms of work, the reality involved in prostitution do so because their bodies are sold to them to sell. Due to the assumptions applied to the thinkable to many heterosexual men that they might need to sell themselves as sex objects to survive, this is the reality for many men – both those who identify as heterosexual – not because they do not have a real choice, but because they and their families have no other options available to them to earn money are restricted and dangerous.

We are reminded that our bodies are members of Christ. It is never appropriate for a member of Christ to unite with someone who will not inherit the Kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:15). Paul is speaking out to members of the Corinthian church who included male prostitutes and “sodomites”, who were not rejected from being a member of the church. In his comment about poverty, it is also of note that greed is the root of all evil. Forcing someone to prostitute themselves is a result of the poverty you have created and your greed is arguing that you are a person who has to do sex work to survive.

The story of Joseph himself. In Genesis, Joseph was sold by his brothers to the Ishmalites (Midianite traders) to become a slave (2-36). Back then, as well as in the present-day, men are considered for their potential involvement in prostitution. Joseph was stripped of the beautiful garment that he wore, likely as a way to humiliate him and symbolically to strip him of his identity. His brothers took the garment dipped in blood and presented it as “evidence” to their father that Joseph had been killed. In the story of sexual abuse is generally assumed to be of female victims. This is an example where this is turned on its head. Joseph, a young man who, like a number of people who are trafficked, became embroiled in a situation where he was exploited, but in this case by the wife of his wealthy master. Joseph was captain of the palace guard, an officer of the king. Echoing Joseph’s childhood, Potiphar’s wife was sold to him by her husband and pulled it off him as “evidence” that he had raped her. These two stories of his robes should be read in conjunction with the story of the nakedness of Christ, found earlier in the Bible.

Young men (and women) are longing for someone who can provide the security of a wealthy country/home, and for them to escape the situation of poverty by a rich man or woman who

is the Hollywood movie “*Pretty Woman*.” Sadly, these situations might appear to be in the best interest of the person in the beginning but there are many examples where the situation becomes abusive and exploitive later on. We can only speculate what might have happened to the well-built and handsome Joseph had he agreed to provide regular sexual services to Potiphar’s wife. Although he may have made the right decision morally, choosing to not adhere to her demands had severe negative consequences whereby he ended up in jail. Our research in Cambodia has made us aware of young men being hired by lonely, wealthy women married to senior government ministers and businessmen but see very little of them. Research on this phenomenon is more prevalent in Africa than Asia.¹⁷ More research is needed but, as it involves people of wealth and power, the evidence is well hidden.

Understanding the Abuse and Exploitation of Boys and Men: A Review of the Research

Now that we have seen a picture of males as victims in the story of Joseph, we will turn to an examination of the problem in the modern context, based on a literature review of sexual violence against boys and men in Southeast Asia.

Regional

In a review of the literature on sexual abuse of children in the region, UNICEF estimates the prevalence of child sexual abuse of boys in East Asia and the Pacific to lie between 3%-16.5%, with this prevalence being slightly higher for males than females in low-income countries in the region compared to middle- and high-income countries.¹⁷ However, the report clearly outlines the various methodological issues with this type of meta-analysis, including underreporting, varying definitions of sexual abuse, and varying measuring systems.

In a more recent meta-analysis of studies on child maltreatment in East Asia and the Pacific, Fang *et al.* found child sexual abuse rates for males to be 16.46% in low-income countries, 14.58% in lower-middle income countries, 4.79% in upper-middle income countries, and 3.09% in high-income countries.¹⁸ However, there are also extensive methodological issues with grouping data according to these World Bank income brackets as well as with analyzing data from such diverse studies.¹⁹

A survey of men, women and children receiving post-trafficking services in Cambodia, Thailand, and Vietnam found that 14.6% of male respondents reported experiencing sexual violence prior to migrating, and 2.6% of males

¹⁷Barthelemy Kuate-Defo, 2004).

¹⁸UNICEF, 2014: 14).

¹⁹Fang *et al.*, 2015: 154).

²⁰Fang *et al.*, 2015: 157-160).

reported experiencing forced sex while in the trafficking situation. One male respondent in the study was trafficked for sexual purposes.²¹

World Vision found that the majority of respondents in their study in Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos “felt that girls were generally more vulnerable to abuse than boys”, and sexual abuse was not seen as a threat to or “something that could happen to boys”.²² Furthermore, participants viewed sexual abuse as something committed by those outside the family and community, “especially where the sexual abuse of children is concerned”.²³ The report identified these attitudes as leading to men feeling shame in reporting abuse and their reports not being taken seriously, recommending that “more attention should be paid to the sexual abuse of children, which is less known and has been less researched, especially as boys are more vulnerable due to increased stigma surrounding homosexuality”.²⁴

Cambodia

Child sex offenses by foreign pedophiles has been a significant issue in Cambodia, with local NGO Action Pour Les Enfants (APLE) reporting that 61.6% of victims of child sex offenses from 2003-2013 were boys and 38.4% were girls, with 70% of offenders being foreign preferential offenders.²⁵ The Johns Hopkins University Protection Project also notes that Western men are typically involved in street prostitution in Cambodia, targeting mainly underage boys.²⁶ Due to the high visibility of this issue, research on the sexual exploitation of boys in Cambodia generally focuses on this area.

In a study on street-based child sexual exploitation by foreigners (both foreigners and residents) in Phnom Penh and the beachside town Sihanoukville, researchers interviewed a group of child survivors of sexual exploitation, the majority of whom were males, which reflected the high number of cases (80%) involving boys that their partner NGO APLE had received prior to the study.²⁷ Regarding the demographics of the research, the following findings concern a majority of the group of survivors. The study identified a number of risk factors in the lives of sexually exploited children: the death of one parent and/or separation/divorce, large families with many siblings, alcoholism, domestic violence, debt, parents with no or low paying menial jobs, lack of education, and rural to urban migration.²⁸ Furthermore, only 38% of the survivors were regularly attending school at the time of abuse, and those not attending school or who never had were more likely to be living or working on the streets and using drugs. Particularly noteworthy was that 38% of the child survivors who were currently or previously using drugs regularly were male, and

²⁰ (Zimmerman *et al.*, 2014: 3-4).

²¹ (Zimmerman *et al.*, 2014: 31).

²² (World Vision, 2014: 70; 72).

²³ (World Vision, 2014: 70;).

²⁴ (World Vision, 2014: 12; 72).

²⁵ (APLE, 2014: 10).

²⁶ (John Hopkins University Protection Project, 2007: 108).

²⁷ (Keane, 2006: 6).

²⁸ (Keane, 2006: 13).

ed sex while in the trafficking situation.²⁰ Only one child was trafficked for sexual purposes.²¹ The majority of respondents in their study across Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia “felt that girls were generally seen as more vulnerable than boys”, and sexual abuse was not seen as something that could happen to boys.²² Furthermore, most respondents viewed sexual abuse as something committed by those outside of the family, especially where the sexual abuse of boys was concerned. Respondents identified these attitudes as leading to male victims of sexual abuse and their reports not being taken seriously. More attention should be paid to the sexual abuse of boys, as it has been less researched, especially as boys are more stigmatized by the stigma surrounding homosexuality.²⁴

Cambodia

Foreign pedophiles has been a significant issue in Cambodia. Action Pour Les Enfants (APLE) reporting that the majority of sex offenses from 2003-2013 were boys abused by foreigners.²⁵ The Johns Hopkins University Protection Project team men are typically involved in street pedophilia in Cambodia, especially with underage boys.²⁶ Due to the high visibility of child sexual exploitation of boys in Cambodia generally focuses on child sexual exploitation by foreigners (both tourists and locals). In Phnom Penh and the beachside town Sihanoukville, Keane identified survivors of sexual exploitation, the majority of whom reflected the high number of cases (80%) involving foreigners that APLE had received prior to the study.²⁷ Because of limited research, the following findings concern a majority male sample. Keane identified a number of risk factors in the families of child survivors: the death of one parent and/or parental divorce, families with many siblings, alcoholism, domestic violence, low or no paying menial jobs, lack of parental supervision, and migration.²⁸ Furthermore, only 38% of the children were attending school at the time of abuse, and those not attending school were more likely to be living or working on the street. A particularly noteworthy finding was that 38% of the child survivors who were regularly using drugs regularly were male, and 70% of

these were “already using drugs before the time that they were first sexually exploited”.²⁹ The author identified drug use as “a significant factor enhancing the vulnerability of children to sexual exploitation”.³⁰ Grooming was experienced by half of the children, often by an “uncle” or godfather figure who would provide food and shelter “to develop a relationship of trust and control” – the children had no expectation that this relationship would lead to sex.³¹ Children with a background of family violence and instability were noted to be “more prone to falling victim to a cycle of abuse and more open to grooming techniques”, as they were eager to engage with a person showing them attention, kindness, and giving them gifts, all generally out of their ordinary experiences.³² Twenty-seven per cent of the participants had also watched pornography with an offender.³³

A more recent study focusing solely on street-working boys in Sihanoukville found that 47% of respondents knew other boys who had been asked for sexual services by foreign adults, and 17% knew of boys who had been asked the same by locals.³⁴ Thirty-eight per cent of the participants surveyed reported being sexually touched by an adult and 26% of this group stated that the perpetrator had “gone further than just sexually touching them” (it is also significant that 22% declined to respond to this question).³⁵ Fourteen per cent of the participants reported having been “physically forced to do something sexual”, and 46% had been shown pornographic materials by mostly foreign adult tourists.³⁶ Respondents who didn’t have any family members as caretakers were significantly more likely to have exchanged sexual services for food, money and or gifts and those who had migrated from rural areas were more likely to have experienced all forms of sexual exploitation.³⁷ Participants who had reported sexual exploitation were more likely to have felt “shame, self blame, numbness, and suicidal thoughts”, and were more likely to use drugs and alcohol.³⁸

Although much of this research focuses on foreigners as perpetrators of child sex offences, APLE states that: “the issue of child sexual exploitation in Cambodia is much more country based than international based. Exploitation perpetrated by Cambodian nationals accounts for a far greater percentage of abuse in Cambodia than that perpetrated by foreigners”.³⁹

Prior to 2008, there was fairly limited information on sexual violence against boys and men outside of the realm of street-based exploitation by foreigners.

²⁰ Keane, 2006: 14).

²¹ Keane, 2006: 15).

²² Keane, 2006: 17).

²³ Keane, 2006: 17).

²⁴ Keane, 2006: 18).

²⁵ Davis and Miles, 2014: 24).

²⁶ Davis and Miles, 2014: 25).

²⁷ Davis and Miles, 2014: 26).

²⁸ Davis and Miles, 2014: 34; 36).

²⁹ Davis and Miles, 2014: 40-41).

³⁰ Renault, 2006: 12).

Miles and Sun found that more boys had experienced direct genital touching by an adult than girls, both after the age of nine (18.9% of boys and 13.5% of girls) and before the age of nine (15.7% of boys and 13.3% of girls).⁴⁰ This data was attributed to the cultural practice of touching a male child's genitals to soothe them or show affection, a practice that Hilton *et al.* found that boys do not like and find embarrassing and shameful.⁴¹ Furthermore, in Miles and Sun's study, a higher number of boys (1.8%) reported a direct experience of child rape than girls (0.6%).⁴² In focus-group discussions, children said that rape never happened to boys.⁴³ A 2004 government study found that 1.9% of boys reported being raped compared to 51.2% of girls.⁴⁴

One of the most valuable contributions to the literature in South-East Asia on sexual violence against men and boys is Hilton *et al.*'s 2008 qualitative study on the sexual abuse and exploitation of boys and young men in Cambodia. From 15 boys and young men shared their experiences with and views on sexual violence with researchers, who also interviewed over 100 staff from a "range of NGOs and service providers, including social workers, counsellors, carers, management team leaders, directors and lawyers".⁴⁵ The study set out not just to explore the experiences of these boys and service providers, but also to understand the needs for recovery and for providing better assistance to boys respectively. The study found that although most of the boys and young men had been abused by foreigners, "a significant number had been sexually abused by Khmer adults or other children or adolescents".⁴⁶ Abuse of boys was found to be treated with inadequate attention and seriousness due to cultural beliefs that Cambodians don't abuse boys, that abuse is not harmful if money is exchanged, that "it is impossible for a boy and a man to have sex", and that "it is only abuse if the boy ejaculates".⁴⁷ A recurring theme throughout the study was the denial of victim status to boys, who are expected to be strong enough to protect themselves from abuse and/or able to recover from abuse easily due to normative expectations of masculinity. The study identified a number of important risk factors from the data collected, including poverty, separation/divorce of parents, death of a parent/sibling(s), domestic violence, street-involved living, lack of access to education, and bullying/violence from older boys and gangs. These are similar to those identified by Keane, discussed above.

Boys who had experienced abuse often became "the target of discrimination, mocking and jokes from people in the community, resulting in further isolation and marginalisation",⁴⁸ as well as lacking options for income generation, resulting in some boys becoming more vulnerable to repeat abuse. The sexual

⁴⁰ (Miles and Sun, 2005: 28).

⁴¹ (Hilton *et al.*, 2008: 118).

⁴² (Miles and Sun, 2005: 29).

⁴³ (Miles and Sun, 2005: 25).

⁴⁴ (The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, UNICEF and UNESCO, 2004 as cited in UNICEF, 2012: 48).

⁴⁵ (Hilton *et al.*, 2008: 8-11).

⁴⁶ (Hilton *et al.*, 2008: 8-9).

⁴⁷ (Hilton *et al.*, 2008: 8).

⁴⁸ (Hilton *et al.*, 2008: 9).

more boys had experienced direct genital touching after the age of nine (18.9% of boys and 13.5% of girls) (15.7% of boys and 13.3% of girls).⁴⁰ This data on the practice of touching a male child's genitals to soothe is shameful.⁴¹ Furthermore, in Miles and Sun's study (8%) reported a direct experience of child rape. In our discussions, children said that rape never happens. A recent study found that 1.9% of boys reported being sexually abused by girls.⁴⁴

The contributions to the literature in South-East Asia on the abuse of boys is Hilton *et al.*'s 2008 qualitative study on the exploitation of boys and young men in Cambodia. They explored their experiences with and views on sexual violence. They interviewed over 100 staff from a "range of NGOs including social workers, counsellors, carers, managers, and lawyers".⁴⁵ The study set out not just to explore the experiences of boys and service providers, but also to understand their needs for providing better assistance to boys respectively. The study found that most of the boys and young men had been abused by older boys and young men. A small number had been sexually abused by Khmer adults and some had been sexually abused by Khmer adults and some by Khmer adults.⁴⁶ Abuse of boys was found to be treated with less seriousness due to cultural beliefs that Cambodia is not harmful if money is exchanged, that "it is only abuse if the boy is forced to have sex", and that "it is only abuse if the boy is forced to have sex". The theme throughout the study was the denial of victimhood by boys and young men. They were expected to be strong enough to protect themselves from abuse easily due to normative expectations. The study identified a number of important risk factors from the study: poverty, separation/divorce of parents, death of a parent, street-involved living, lack of access to education, and violence from older boys and gangs. These are similar to the findings discussed above.

Sexual abuse often became "the target of discrimination" by other people in the community, resulting in further isolation. The study also found that boys were lacking options for income generation, making them more vulnerable to repeat abuse. The sexual

abuse experienced by these boys resulted in painful and damaging physical effects, as well as psychological impacts including "shame and loss of honor [...] fear of repercussions of disclosing or being discovered, confusion relating to sex, identity and gender, self-blame, feelings of isolation [...] nightmares, wanting to commit suicide and use of drugs".⁴⁹

Older MSM-identifying⁵⁰ respondents discussed experiences of being sexually abused as children as well as recent instances of sexual abuse, rape and sexual gang rape. Participants shared invaluable information on their needs for support and help, with many identifying basic provisions of "physical and emotional safety, confidentiality, to be accepted and not judged and to receive dignity and respect [...] The need for protection, affection, love and a sense of belonging", and "help with education and work".⁵¹ Other respondents "wanted support to take the protection of boys seriously and recognize that they too are vulnerable to abuse and feel great shame and loss of honor".⁵²

A general lack of knowledge on and awareness of sexual abuse of boys was found among the service providers interviewed in this study, although rural service providers were significantly more unaware than those in urban sites. A major deficit in coordination and collaboration in the response to this issue both within and between organizations was identified, leading to boy victims being ignored or lost track of. While a small handful of staff members demonstrated understanding and awareness of this issue, they were often "isolated from each other" and "expressed frustration and helplessness" surrounding the lack of understanding of the behavioral problems of boy survivors by their peers.⁵³ This was also discussed by survivors, who wanted "helpers and supporters to be gentle rather than shout or be violent when they do something wrong".⁵⁴ Basic training on the abuse of boys was identified as a major need, as well as the development of "male friendly approaches for engaging boys and specific tools and ideas for helping them build relationships" and support for and networking between staff members working with boys. Lack of donor awareness on this issue as well as competition and lack of communication between organizations were also identified as barriers to addressing this issue sufficiently.

Importantly, Hilton *et al.* identified a number of instances of abuse that had taken place in pagodas by monks and others residing in or near the temple.⁵⁵ This issue was further highlighted by a February 2016 article in the *Southeast Asia* magazine on the topic of child abuse in pagodas that drew on Hilton *et al.*'s research and other recent cases of sexual abuse perpetrated by monks in Cambodia.⁵⁶ The article discusses the vulnerability that pagoda settings create by offering

⁴⁰Hilton *et al.*, 2008: 9).

⁴¹MSM is an abbreviation for "males who have sex with males" and includes a variety of sexualities, including those who identify as heterosexual.

⁴²Hilton *et al.*, 2008: 10).

⁴³Hilton *et al.*, 2008: 10).

⁴⁴Hilton *et al.*, 2008: 10).

⁴⁵Hilton *et al.*, 2008: 10).

⁴⁶Hilton *et al.*, 2008: 96-97; 102; 108; 112).

⁴⁷Hilton *et al.*, 2016).

“overwhelmingly boys – temporary residence and an education provincial Cambodians cannot often afford” without sufficient measures. The issue is further exacerbated by a lack of dialogue on this issue by monks, who failed to broach the topic at the annual meeting of Buddhist monks in December 2015, despite the high-profile cases of pagoda-based abuse coupled with Hilton *et al.*'s revelations. A respondent in a study by World Vision also reported knowing an 18-year-old boy who was raped by a monk, who was arrested but subsequently released upon payment of a bribe to the police by his family.⁵⁷

There have also been a few studies on male masseurs in Cambodia and their vulnerability to and experiences of sexual violence. The pioneering study on this topic was carried out in Phnom Penh from 2010 to 2011 and found that 62% of the male masseurs surveyed had been forced to have sex against their will, although this finding is limited by different understandings and definitions of “coercion” and “force” held by different participants.⁵⁸ The study also found that just over 30% of respondents' first sexual experiences had been with a male, just over 30% of respondents' first sexual partner was male.⁵⁹ In a study conducted by Davis and Miles on young males employed in massage parlors in the northern city of Siem Reap, 62% of those working in mixed-gender establishments reported having been forced or coerced into sex, compared to 28% in male-to-male massage establishments who experienced this. The authors posit that this is because sexual services are not as commonly offered in male-to-male establishments and sexual services are not commonly offered in mixed-gender establishments and sexual services are not commonly offered in male-to-male establishments. Furthermore, males working in mixed-gender establishments were more likely to experience greater rejection of sexual advances by male masseurs working in mixed-gender establishments. Furthermore, males working in mixed-gender establishments were more likely to experience more economic hardship and younger than those in male-to-male massage parlors.

World Vision's qualitative study on attitudes and beliefs regarding sexual abuse found that respondents in Cambodia felt the idea of a boy having intercourse to be inappropriate, meaning that boys “could be vulnerable to sexual abuse or hesitate to report abuse if they had been raped by a man”.⁶¹ Respondents generally felt that sexual abuse of boys couldn't really happen in Cambodia because Cambodian men don't commit these crimes, but rather that foreign men are the perpetrators of such crimes.

When conducting a study on male to female transgender individuals in the Phnom Penh sex industry, Davis *et al.* found that 55% of respondents reported experiencing forced or coercive sex (and knew of other transgender individuals who also had experienced this) and 32% had experienced gang rape.⁶²

⁵⁷ (World Vision, 2014: 68).

⁵⁸ (Miles and Blanch, 2011: 39).

⁵⁹ (Miles and Blanch, 2011: 34).

⁶⁰ (Davis and Miles, 2013a: 62-63).

⁶¹ (World Vision, 2014: 49).

⁶² (Davis *et al.*, 2014: 26).

Philippines

Davis and Miles contributed two studies to the topic of sexual violence against men and boys in the Philippines. Their 2013 baseline study on male masseurs in the Metro Manila area discussed the taboo nature of sexual abuse of boys and the blame of boys for their abuse, which is seen as a sign of weakness or homosexuality, leading to low levels of reporting due to fears of stigma and discrimination.⁶³ The authors explored how masculinity is often equated with heterosexuality and being “tough, macho, not showing emotion, having libido, and making a family”, although a man is able to have a same sex relationship without jeopardizing his masculine identity as long as he fulfills normative masculine characteristics and roles.⁶⁴ The study found that 38% of male masseurs surveyed reported having experienced forced or coerced sex and that 33% stated they were aware of other male masseurs experiencing forced sex.⁶⁵ During qualitative interviews participants described coercion via violence, physical force, bribery, verbal abuse, and threats of complaining to the management regarding the masseurs’ performance. There was also some indication that some of the respondents’ first sexual encounters had been coercive – despite their insistence that they were consensual – due to the very young ages (the youngest being three and six years old) or circumstances around them, for example being with teachers as a minor.⁶⁶

Davis and Miles’ 2015 baseline study on the vulnerabilities of street-involved boys to sexual exploitation in Manila found that 76% of respondents said that they knew other boys who had been asked for sexual services by adults, most of whom were local and opportunistic.⁶⁷ Sixty-five per cent of participants disclosed experiencing some form of sexual abuse, the most common form of which was being shown pornography by an adult (49%), followed by sexual touching (47%) and further abuse including forced intercourse and oral sex (37%).⁶⁸ Revealingly, only six (12%) of the boys in this study had ever sought help for an incident of abuse, and two of these were turned away where they sought help.⁶⁹ While most of the sexual exploitation was opportunistic and/or a result of “survival sex”, there were a few instances where a third-party broker was involved.⁷⁰ Sleeping on the street and social networking were both identified as factors associated with higher vulnerability to sexual abuse.⁷¹

In a study on intimate partner violence, 64.6% of females and 42.3% of males reported being sexually coerced by their partner. The author specifically notes that “young men can also be victims of sexual coercion”, with one respondent commenting that:

⁶³ Davis and Miles, 2013b: 5-6).

⁶⁴ Davis and Miles, 2013b: 6-7).

⁶⁵ Davis and Miles, 2013b: 19).

⁶⁶ Davis and Miles, 2013b: 28).

⁶⁷ Davis and Miles, 2015: 28-31).

⁶⁸ Davis and Miles, 2015: 41).

⁶⁹ Davis and Miles, 2015: 35).

⁷⁰ Davis and Miles, 2015: 42).

⁷¹ Davis and Miles, 2015: 43).

“overwhelmingly boys – temporary residence and an education that poor provincial Cambodians cannot often afford” without sufficient child protection measures. The issue is further exacerbated by a lack of dialogue and action on this issue by monks, who failed to broach the topic at the annual congress of Buddhist monks in December 2015, despite the high-profile nature of recent cases of pagoda-based abuse coupled with Hilton *et al.*'s revealing findings. A respondent in a study by World Vision also reported knowing of a seven-year-old boy who was raped by a monk, who was arrested but subsequently released upon payment of a bribe to the police by his family.⁵⁷

There have also been a few studies on male masseurs in Cambodia and their vulnerability to and experiences of sexual violence. The pioneering study on this topic was carried out in Phnom Penh from 2010 to 2011 and found that 13% of the male masseurs surveyed had been forced to have sex against their wish, although this finding is limited by different understandings and definitions of “coercion” and “force” held by different participants.⁵⁸ The study also found that just over 30% of respondents' first sexual experiences had been forced, and that this was more likely if their first sexual partner was male.⁵⁹ In later research conducted by Davis and Miles on young males employed in massage parlors in the northern city of Siem Reap, 62% of those working in mixed-gender massage establishments reported having been forced or coerced into sex, compared to 28% in male-to-male massage establishments who experienced the same.⁶⁰ The authors posit that this is because sexual services are not as implied in mixed-gender establishments and sexual services are not commonly offered, leading to greater rejection of sexual advances by male masseurs working there. Furthermore, males working in mixed-gender establishments were less educated, experiencing more economic hardship and younger than those in male-to-male massage parlors.

World Vision's qualitative study on attitudes and beliefs regarding sexual abuse found that respondents in Cambodia felt the idea of homosexual intercourse to be inappropriate, meaning that boys “could be vulnerable to abuse or hesitate to report abuse if they had been raped by a man”.⁶¹ Respondents generally felt that sexual abuse of boys couldn't really happen and that Cambodian men don't commit these crimes, but rather that foreigners were the perpetrators of such crimes.

When conducting a study on male to female transgender individuals in the Phnom Penh sex industry, Davis *et al.* found that 55% of respondents reported experiencing forced or coercive sex (and knew of other transgender persons who also had experienced this) and 32% had experienced gang rape.⁶²

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⁵⁹ (Miles and Blanch, 2011: 34).

⁶⁰ (Davis and Miles, 2013a: 62-63).

⁶¹ (World Vision, 2014: 49).

⁶² (Davis *et al.*, 2014: 26).

young men like me, are also victims of sexual coercion [...] But our stories are often unheard especially if it has been done by a woman. People believe that without coercion it is always the man who wins. But this is not true.⁷²

This and other qualitative interviews with male victims were part of a study with respondents reporting feeling "angry, shocked, afraid and regretful". Mechanisms of bribery in sexual coercion were significantly more common than in intimate partner violence against young men compared to women.⁷⁴

A study on adverse childhood experiences and health-risk behaviors among young adults found that 4.5% of males and 6% of females had experienced sexual abuse by an adult or someone five years older than them before the age of 18, suggesting a fairly close prevalence rate between the two genders. These individuals (of both sexes) were twelve times more likely to engage in risky behaviors and five times more likely to attempt to commit suicide.

Thailand

Although the literature relating to sexual violence against boys and girls in Thailand is limited, a number of NGO research reports and academic studies have touched on this subject in various ways. There are a few reports by the Thai government on reported numbers of child sexual abuse and of children seeking medical services for abuse in hospitals; however, no distinction is made between male and female children and thus they have not been included in this

Child sex tourism, which often involves young boys, has received a significant amount of attention in Thailand, and also provides some insight into the exploitation of boys. ECPAT estimates 60,000 minors to be involved in prostitution in Thailand, and noted that the majority of victims of child sex tourism traveling child sex offenders arrested between 2007-2008 were boys aged between the age of twelve and twenty years old.⁷⁶ The report also identified Pattaya and Phuket as areas where child sex tourism continues to be prevalent. In ethnographic qualitative research on underage sex workers in a Thai slum, half of the participants of the study were boys.⁷⁸ Although the main focus of attention on commercial child sexual exploitation lies with foreign children, ECPAT notes in its 2011 Global Monitoring report that "demand of sex from children does not only come from foreigners but also from local citizens." The report references "gender norms" and the inability of authorities to address these cases as contributing factors towards the "tolerance" of this form of

⁷² (Serquina-Ramiro, 2005: 488).

⁷³ (Serquina-Ramiro, 2005: 487; 491).

⁷⁴ (Serquina-Ramiro, 2005: 492).

⁷⁵ (Ramiro, Madrid and Brown, 2010: 847).

⁷⁶ (ECPAT, 2013: 13-14).

⁷⁷ (ECPAT, 2013: 14).

⁷⁸ (Montgomery, 2001).

⁷⁹ (ECPAT, 2013: 13).

victims of sexual coercion [...] But our sufferings are as been done by a woman. People believe that with the man who wins. But this is not true.⁷²

Interviews with male victims were particularly revealing "angry, shocked, afraid and remorseful" and coercion were significantly more common in young men compared to women.⁷⁴

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Thailand

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en involves young boys, has received a large d, and also provides some insight into the estimates 60,000 minors to be involved in oted that the majority of victims of alleged ted between 2007-2008 were boys and young d twenty years old.⁷⁶ The report also identifies e child sex tourism continues to be prevalent. ch on underage sex workers in a Thai urban e study were boys.⁷⁸ Although the majority of xual exploitation lies with foreign offenders, onitoring report that "demand of sex services from foreigners but also from locals".⁷⁹ The and the inability of authorities to act in these rds the "tolerance" of this form of demand.

suggesting that these cases could be significantly more widespread than previously thought, despite the low attention they receive.⁸⁰

A few studies on child sexual abuse also address sexual abuse of boys. In a study of youth in Northern Bangkok, Jirapramukpitak, Prince and Harpham found that 4.9% of male respondents had reported experiencing sexual abuse before the age of sixteen, almost the same percent as females, suggesting there is little difference in abuse prevalence rates between genders in this area.⁸¹ Conflictingly, a 2008 qualitative study of sexual abuse of children in Thailand included four boys who were victims of "substantiated cases of child sexual abuse" – this very low participant sample in comparison to the fifty-six girls interviewed in the research is problematic.⁸²

A small handful of studies offer more relevant information on the sexual exploitation of young men and boys in Thailand. A 2005 study on forced sex among MSM in Bangkok, Chiang Mai, and Phuket (sampling participants over the age of fifteen working in entertainment venues, parks, saunas, street locations and male-sex work venues) found that 18.4% of participants "reported a history of forced sex".⁸³ Of this group, 83.8% were forced by someone they knew, 67% had been forced more than once and 55.1% had experienced the first occurrence of forced sex during adolescence. Most participants had also been forced by a man and without the use of a condom, and those who had experienced forced sex were more likely to use drugs. The highest number of participants reporting having experienced forced sex was in Phuket, where participants were also more likely to have been forced before the age of eighteen compared to participants from Bangkok or Chiang Mai. Respondents reporting sex role identification as "bottom" or receptive partner were also more likely to have experienced forced sex.

Another revealing finding was that transgender participants were most likely to have experienced forced sex compared to male sex worker participants. The researchers speculate that "male sex workers, as a group, adhere more to the male heterosexual role and thus less subjected to gender-role conforming social and sexual pressure." They suggest that "Thai men who perceived themselves to be female or transgender may, in fact, take on traditional gender roles of a Thai woman in both the private and public contexts, and hence may be more prone to forced sex from their male partners".⁸⁴ Because this study is venue-based, the results may not be reflective of the experiences of those outside these venues and its cross-sectional nature means causal inferences cannot be drawn from the data.⁸⁵ It is also worth considering the above findings of van Griensven *et al.* and Manopaiboon *et al.* in this respect, both of which found sexual coercion to be higher in self-identifying homosexual and/or bisexual male participants. Guadamuz *et al.* also note that research on "the cultural meanings of identities

⁷² ECPAT, 2013: 13).

⁷³ Jirapramukpitak, Prince and Harpham, 2005 as cited in UNICEF, 2012: 51).

⁷⁴ Trangkasombat, 2008).

⁷⁵ Guadamuz *et al.*, 2011: 259-261).

⁷⁶ Guadamuz *et al.*, 2011: 264-265).

⁷⁷ Guadamuz *et al.*, 2011: 265).

and gender norms and their relationships to sexual domination, power control and the spaces (e.g., public, private/intimate, virtual) where these domains transpire in the context of sexual health risks is desperately needed.

Grieger contributes a comprehensive and nuanced qualitative study on human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of young ethnic men in Chiang Mai to the literature on male sexual exploitation. Although this study does not focus specifically on sexual violence, Grieger found that his twelve participants described experiencing sexual violence from clients while undertaking sex work in Chiang Mai.⁸⁷ Interestingly, a number of participants noted that they had more frequently heard of Thai male sex workers attacking and beating their expatriate clients, while a few others stated that they had been victimized by their *farang* (Western) clients, with one young man even stating that “If they’re going to hurt me I’ll hurt them first. The guys who come to the bar look like tough men but since they’re gay, when we go to the room they act like a girl.” It is important to consider these findings in relation to most studies on sex workers, as participants preferring or mainly engaging with foreign clients rather than local ones, as they are generally less or not aware of Thai social hierarchy.

A survey of male entertainment workers in Chiang Mai between the ages of fifteen to thirty-five found that two respondents’ first sexual encounters were forced by an adult female perpetrator while they were between fifteen to twenty years of age, and 21% of all first sexual experiences qualified as adult sexual abuse.⁸⁸ The study also found that one in four respondents experienced forced/coerced sex by clients, with six participants (12%) reporting that this happens “always”, one stating that this happens “very often” and one reporting this happening “sometimes”.⁸⁹ Bar-based sex workers were found to be younger but were also found to experience significantly higher instances of forced sex than the overall group, with three out of four participants reporting forced sex compared to one in four overall. Over half (60%) of participants reported experiencing unwanted sexual touching within the last year, with one third stating that it happens “always” and one third stating “often.” However, a limitation to this study is that respondents only participated from entertainment venues that allowed the researchers permission to interview sex workers from their establishments – the authors note that “four-out-of-five bars denied the research team access to employees with many massage workers doing the same”.⁹⁰ Furthermore, these results rely on what may be considered unreliable self-reporting data collection methods.⁹¹ Other literature also suggests that male sex workers are “frequently victims of physical and sexual violence from their customers (men)” primarily because customers feel the need to assert that they are the dominant man in the situation, prove they have more power and “become tougher”.⁹²

⁸⁶ (Guadamuz *et al.*, 2011: 265).

⁸⁷ (Grieger, 2012: 110-112).

⁸⁸ (Miles, Glotfelty and Davis, 2013: 26).

⁸⁹ (Miles, Glotfelty and Davis, 2013: 30).

⁹⁰ (Miles, Glotfelty and Davis, 2013: 20).

⁹¹ (Miles, Glotfelty and Davis, 2013: 21).

⁹² (Cameron, 2006: 57-58).

relationships to sexual domination, power and (public, private/intimate, virtual) where there is a need for a context of sexual health risks is desperately needed".⁸⁶ A comprehensive and nuanced qualitative study on the commercial sexual exploitation of young ethnic Akha literature on male sexual exploitation. Although the literature on sexual violence, Grieger found that two of the participants had experienced sexual violence from clients while in Chiang Mai.⁸⁷ Interestingly, a number of participants had frequently heard of Thai male sex workers attacking or abusing clients, while a few others stated that they hadn't been abused by (Western) clients, with one young man even saying "I'll hurt them first. The guys who come to the room since they're gay, when we go to the room, they act like they're gay".⁸⁸ These findings in relation to most of these participants are primarily engaging with foreign clients rather than Thai clients, and are not aware of Thai social hierarchy. The relationship between sex workers in Chiang Mai between the ages of 18 and 25, where two respondents' first sexual encounters were with a perpetrator while they were between fifteen to sixteen years old. The first sexual experiences qualified as adult-to-child sexual abuse, with one respondent reporting that this happens "very often" and four others reporting that it happens "sometimes".⁸⁹ Bar-based sex workers were not only found to experience significantly higher instances of sexual violence, with three out of four participants reporting sexual violence in four overall. Over half (60%) of participants reported sexual touching within the last year, mostly with one third stating that it happens "always" and 11% reporting that it happens "sometimes".⁹⁰ A limitation to this study is that respondents only participated in the study that allowed the researchers permission to interview sex workers – the authors note that "four-out-of-five show that they have access to employees with many massage parlors".⁹¹ Moreover, these results rely on what may be considered a convenience collection methods.⁹¹ Other literature also suggests that sex workers are frequently victims of physical and sexual violence, primarily because customers feel the need to "prove their masculinity in the situation, prove they have more power and are

A qualitative study by World Vision on the beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge of children and adults in Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand towards child sexual abuse found that respondents in Chiang Mai saw the sexual abuse of boys to not only be a problem for other countries as they had never heard of such issues in their circles.⁹³

Overcoming Abuse and Exploitation of Boys and Men: The Role of Resilience and Spirituality

The final task of this chapter is to examine the provision of services in light of the story of Joseph, towards the goal of addressing the problem of sexual exploitation.

Despite the generally negative research findings presented in the literature review, our research conducted in the Philippines with men involved in prostitution demonstrates that even those who have been sex trafficked and abused can and do develop the resilience reflected in the story of Joseph who went on to become a significant leader.⁹⁴

We chose to explore the spiritual wellbeing of the respondents because of the numerous studies that indicate spiritual wellbeing as playing a core role in developing resiliencies among vulnerable people groups.⁹⁵ Given the strong influence of Catholicism and Christianity on the Philippine context, the Spiritual Well-Being Scale (SWBS)⁹⁶ was introduced to understand what role, if any, perceptions of God were playing in the existential realities of males in sexually-exploitative careers in the Philippines. An understanding of the respondents' sense of themselves was further desirable because it facilitated a mutual exploration of their spiritual and psychological assets, inviting both the respondents and researchers to go beyond awareness of the negative elements of the respondents' experience to view, perhaps with new eyes, the positive.⁹⁷

We hypothesized that the respondents' greatest vulnerabilities and resiliencies would lie within the social capital they possessed within their respective communities. Given our assumptions about the expectations of highly religious societies in the Judeo-Christian tradition, we hypothesized finding a low self-esteem coupled with a high sense of shame and guilt among respondents. We further hypothesized that feelings of connection with God would be, at best, limited. Specifically, and pointedly, we were concerned about their place within their families and in the church, two institutions posited to be central within Filipino life.

⁸⁶ World Vision, 2014: 49).

⁸⁷ Editor's Note: For more on the spirituality of survivors of sex trafficking, see the chapter by Lim, Miles and Nhanh elsewhere in this volume.

⁸⁸ Davis and Hill, 2012; Smith, 2011; Kass, 2007).

⁸⁹ Paloutzian and Ellison, 1982).

⁹⁰ Green, 2006).

Affiliation

Of those professing religious affiliation (n=45), the majority, or 54%, of respondents indicated affiliation with Catholicism, 9% with other Christian denominations, 6% indicated Indigenous, and other religious affiliations, and 2% (or one person) indicated affiliation with Islam. These findings for male masseurs almost exactly mirrored the general religious landscape of the Philippines. Outside of the family, the church remains, it seems, a pervasive institution in Filipino society.

Regarding affiliation as a construct of spirituality – that is, affiliation refers to a person’s belief that they are loved and cared for by God and that they experience a positive relationship with God – 54% state that they strongly agree that they receive strength and support from God. An almost equal percentage (52%) strongly believe that God is interested in them personally. Forty percent of the respondents strongly feel that they have a satisfying prayer life.

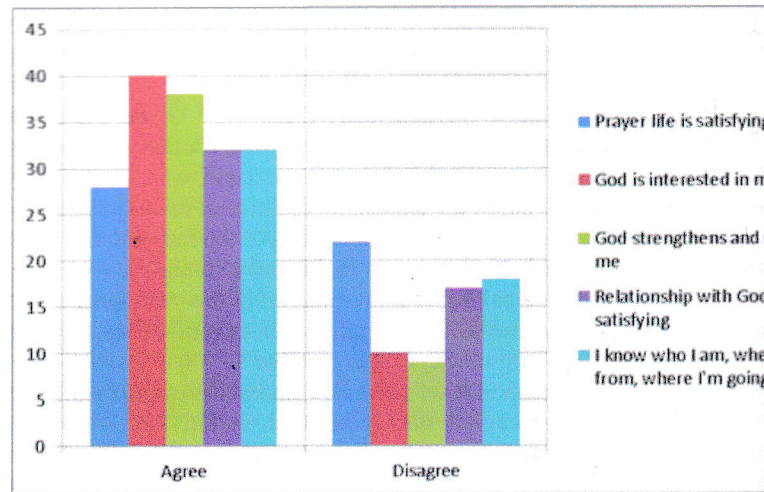


Figure 1: Alienation

Social Capital in the Church

Every respondent in this study received moderate to high scores on the spirituality scale, meaning this population has a relatively good sense of spirituality. Respondents indicated not only having “a faith” but also that it played an important role in their sense of self. Notably, although they felt that the church played a significant role in allaying their sense of guilt, it did not have a significant effect on their sense of shame. As such, the church was not acknowledged amongst these respondents as a place of nurturing community.

Church attendance however, and the regular practice of personal prayer, seemed to be consistent with the respondents’ respective religious traditions. While researchers in this study anticipated finding instances of guilt and

Affiliation

religious affiliation (n=45), the majority, or 82% of respondents indicated affiliation with Catholicism, 9% with other various religions, 5% indicated Indigenous, and other religious traditions. 13% indicated affiliation with Islam. These findings among respondents mirrored the general religious landscape of the United States. In the family, the church remains, it seems, the most important institution in the Filipino society.

As a construct of spirituality – that is, affiliation as a relationship with God – 54% state that they strongly believe that they are loved and cared for by God and that they receive strength and support from God. An almost equivalent 54% believe that God is interested in them personally. Respondents strongly feel that they have a satisfying prayer

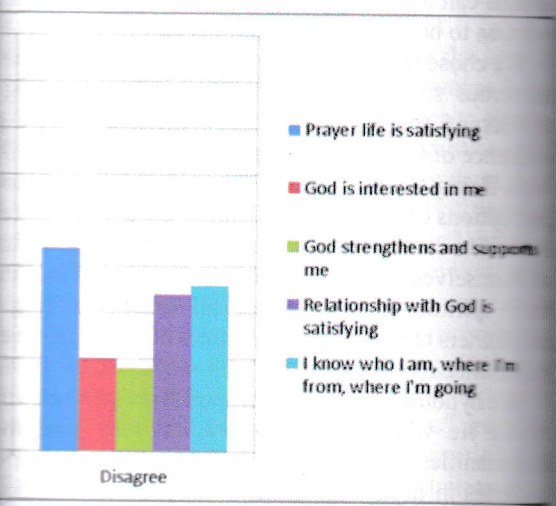


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associated with attendance in their respective places of worship, this assumption proved to be true of only a minority. The majority of respondents indicated that their attendance at worship to be, in some sense, healing. They used descriptions such as “lightened, free, feeling forgiven”, etc. to describe their feelings after leaving their respective places of worship, and seemed to indicate these feelings to be their primary impetus for the pursuit of worship.

Given the societal (religious) stigma and discrimination associated with the overt expression of the sexuality explored here, one wonders at the high sense of spiritual wellbeing possessed by the respondents. Perhaps the priority that meaning-making takes when one has to grapple with “differentness” may be presumed to have some effect, and may be a more plausible explanation for the high levels of spiritual awareness indicated by this group, as is often ascribed to people within LGBT communities.⁹⁸

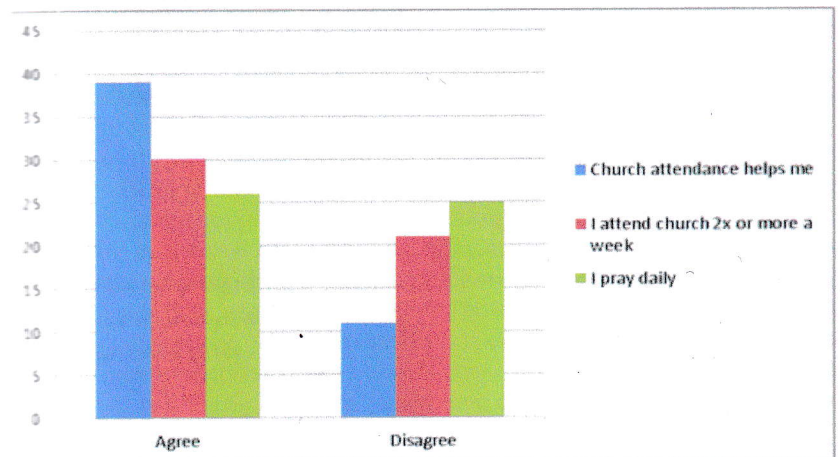


Figure 2: Religious Coping Strategies

Social Capital in Their Families

For a majority of the respondents, either their families or their housemates were aware of their involvement in the sex industry. Where it did not negatively affect intimacy, the respondents felt valued as husbands, fathers, brothers, and relatives who supported the nuclear and extended family financially as expected, even though such support cost both the individual respondents and their families their presence. The fact that so large number of these respondents indicated an active functioning in heterosexual marriages may explain this unique situation. By and large, the average MSM in this survey does not feel alienated from his family, despite admission of an awareness of complications it posed to intimacy with their wives and lovers.

* McNeill, 1988; Williams, 2011).

Dissatisfaction with Life

With regard to their perceptions of their present life situations, 41% of respondents affirm that they are enjoying themselves and generally do not expect their lives to be full of conflict or unhappiness. Thirty-two percent strongly disagree with this statement. The locus of their dissatisfaction however is the financial uncertainty of their present situation.

Of those that responded to questions exploring their orientation to life (n=45), 80% feel strongly that their lives have purpose, and that purpose is derived from providing for their dependents. As such, it appears, the respondents are able to circumvent the stigma of their work by rationalizing its role in helping them to fulfill what they perceive to be their financial obligations to their dependents. As indicated earlier, between 80-98% of the respondents functioned in the socially prescribed roles of heterosexual males while simultaneously maintaining their identity within the MSM sub-culture, with admittedly manageable dissonance between the two identities.

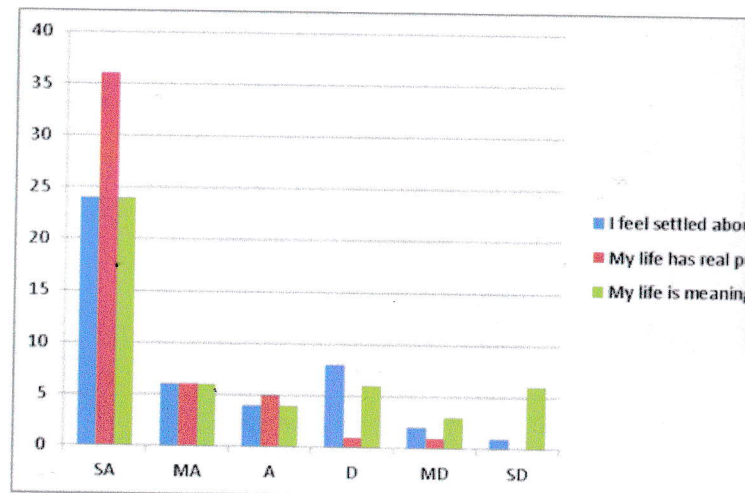


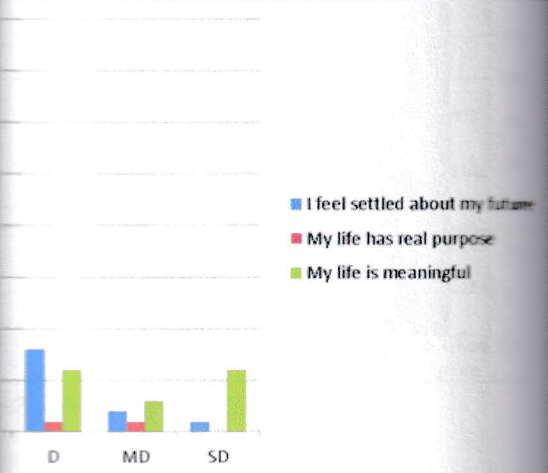
Figure 4: Dissatisfaction with life (future orientation)

Conclusions

No respondents scored low on the SWBS overall. During data collection and initial analysis, we felt that these high self-evaluations could have been due to the euphemistic nature of Philippine culture and that respondents may have been simply responding with idealistic, religiously-pleasing answers, rather than answers which they felt to be true. In further analysis, we compared the spiritual results of male masseurs in Manila, with published SWBS results of other people groups from varying cultures, faiths, socio-economic groups, and educational levels. While there were a few apparent similarities with other groups, in isolated cases, only one group had near statistically identical results to those of the male masseurs amongst sexually-abused outpatients. Male masseurs in Metro-Manila

Dissatisfaction with Life

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found to be within one percentage of all scales and subscales, including standards
of deviation of this group as shown below.

Male Masseurs in Metro Manila (N=51)	Sexually-Abused Outpatients (N=50)
RWB - Mean: 46.54; SD: 12.28	RWB - Mean: 46.46; SD: 11.48
EWB - Mean: 40.62; SD: 11.85	EWB - Mean: 39.26; SD: 10.5
SWB - Mean: 87.17; SD: 23.41	SWB - Mean: 85.82; SD: 19.61

Perhaps these similarities reiterate the importance of recognizing
vulnerability, but also the potential for resilience in persons who live under
sexually-exploitive circumstances despite the distinctly different manifestation
of said vulnerabilities.⁹⁹

Reconsidering the story of Joseph: he had gone through a series of difficulties,
becoming a slave and being whisked off to Egypt. After the traumatic experience
of false accusation by Potipher's wife, he then goes to jail and works his way out
because he explains Pharaoh's dreams to him and ends up getting promoted to
become the second most powerful person in the land. In our research, we have
the story of the boys who surprisingly indicate having an intimate relationship
with God. Then, in the challenges of their work and marginalization, they may
actually become stronger through it and stronger in their relationship to God.
Perhaps this connects them to the story of Joseph.

Rather than writing them off because they are tainted and have "no more use",
we should see their acquired resiliency. Those who prove themselves worthy
should, like Joseph, be offered leadership positions to have an impact on society.

It is of interest that Hard Places Community in Cambodia¹⁰⁰ have worked with
a number of previously exploited young men and many are now in impressive
positions of leadership in their work, supporting new boys as they grow.

Reflection Questions

1. How can we increase the awareness of ourselves and others that boys and young men can be vulnerable as well as resilient?
2. What lessons can be learned from the story of Joseph that are relevant to the abuse, exploitation, and trafficking of boys and young men in your context?
3. What can we do to strengthen families to reduce the risk of them trafficking members of their own family?
4. How can we work with spirituality to make it an effective part of the process of developing resilience and leadership?

⁹⁹ Valente, 2005; Dube et al., 2005).

¹⁰⁰ "Punlok Thmey Men", *The Hard Places Website*. [Available at: <http://thehardplaces.org/punlok-thmey-men/>], [Last accessed: 20th October 2022].

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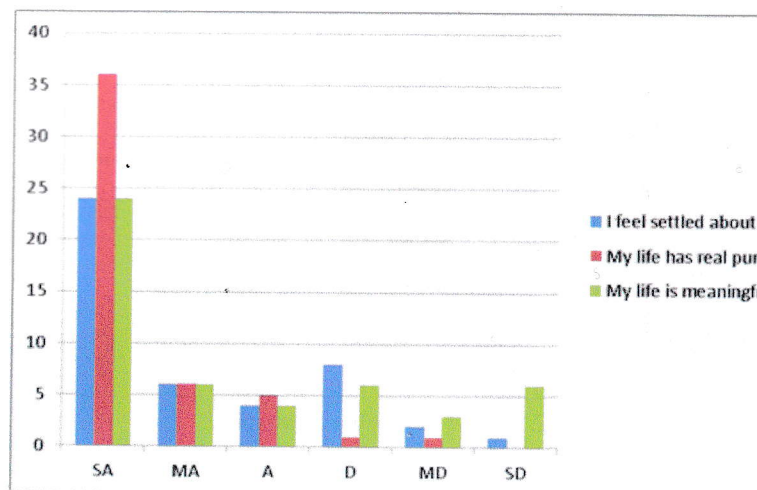


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"RESERVED FOR A SPECIAL PLACE IN HELL"

PERPETRATORS WHO ABUSE: WHAT IS THE PLACE OF

FORGIVENESS, HEALING, HOPE?

Samantha Miller and Glenn Miles

Introduction

Is there a place for understanding the exploiter better? Not the vile monster and perversely popularly demonized in current media but the ordinary man, including the Christian man, who is vulnerable (a seemingly out of place word in the context) to engaging a person in prostitution or who is a sexual exploiter who has already "crossed the line"? How can men be challenged to make better choices, to treat people with dignity both practically and theologically? When they are apparently "addicted" to sex, where is the path to redemption? Why do they so often feel unwelcomed by the church who claims to be open to "whosoever" are repentant?

When speaking at churches and with people working with survivors (practitioners), we encourage them to get involved in the demand side of human trafficking, perhaps with a ministry reaching out to men in red-light districts. In response, we have received a number of reactions, most frequently exasperation. A common question is: "Why spend time and resources with those 'perverts'?" One person flatly stated: "There is a special place in hell for those kinds of men." We have heard responses such as: "I'd like to have a few minutes in a room with one of those guys and give them some of the pain they've inflicted on others" and "A bullet is too good for them." Others have told us that we must have developed a kind of liberal pastoral theology, a long way from proper systematic conservative theology, to want to be involved in reaching out to the exploiters. Even the men we have met in the red-light areas tell us to focus our attention on the "victims."

In a discussion about sexual exploitation and theology, is there a place for understanding the exploiter better? There are many objections to committing time and other resources to understanding the exploiter. First of all, sexual exploitation is vastly underreported and largely unpunished. In a modern-world context where victim advocates must cite a "rape culture" in order to raise awareness to the injustice present in even the most obvious forms of sexual exploitation, should there be space to challenge common assumptions about offenders? Many organizations fighting sexual exploitation face serious difficulties in raising the necessary resources to offer services to the victims of sexual exploitation. Why should organizations expand their theology and their

practice to include restoration of exploiters as a vital component of demand reduction?

This chapter will include an honest look at offenders as part of the complexity of the problem of sexual exploitation. We will consider the Hebrew word *shalom* in the Bible and examine Jesus' example as a way of understanding biblical justice. *Shalom* is commonly translated as peace and refers to completeness, a state where nothing is missing and nothing is broken. Jesus' ministry prioritized the broken and included the ignored. The gap in current response efforts of Christian ministries hints at an incomplete theology undermining the understanding of biblical justice and reconciliation. We want to challenge the theological presuppositions of Christian practitioners and call ministries to reconsider their response to Jesus' call to join him in his work of reconciliation.

Theological Presuppositions

Where are we, as the authors of this chapter, coming from? What theology drives us to write this chapter and challenge the assumptions of others? Put most basically, we believe Jesus came for sinners. Many see sexual exploiters and put them beyond redemption; who could not be shocked by their immoral behavior? God looks at the sexual exploiter and sees yet another sinner in need of a savior. Jesus confronts sinners and is not shocked by their immoral behavior.

We think about the act of sexually exploiting another person and consider it one of the worst evils imaginable.

Jesus points out that we too are sinners (John 8:7) and all sins are morally equal in his eyes. Jesus challenges our assumptions with his parables and says that those forgiven of much will love him more. God asks his followers to love mercy and walk humbly with him. Jesus asks his followers to join him in his mission of reconciliation. God alone is the judge and vengeance is his alone.

We, with our human limitations, do not know the extent of pain and brokenness. Research indicates that most exploiters have been exploited themselves and are in deep pain; they have numbed their pain and exploiting others is their form of coping. Research done on the victim-to-victimizer cycle shows that having been a victim of child sexual abuse was a strong predictor of becoming a perpetrator.

God sees all of the brokenness and has compassion for offenders. His grace changes hearts. A changed life has the power to connect with God and reach others for God. Think about how Paul's salvation and restoration changed the Church.

We see sexual exploitation and get angry.

God sees this brokenness and missing pieces and longs for restoration and shalom.

Complexity Surrounding Exploiters

The first step in expanding the discussion of sexual exploitation and theology to better understand the exploiter requires acknowledging the complexity of sexual exploitation. Exploiters include everyone from the "john" to the trafficker, and all the pimps, madams, and recruiters in between. But what about the casual pornography viewer or the patron of an erotic massage? With the inclusion of these categories, it may be easier to agree that exploiters could include a Christian man who is vulnerable to sexual addiction and becoming a client of prostitutes. Even Christian expatriates, those working for development organizations doing significant work in poverty eradication programs and even those developing policy, are vulnerable to erotic massage and other types of prostitution, particularly in areas of the world where it is relatively cheap and accessible.¹

Purchasers of sexual services vary widely, so it is difficult to identify specific demographic similarities between these individuals. However, current studies suggest that men are much more likely to purchase sexual services than women. Additionally, studies suggest that men who work in occupations that require them to travel often or be separated from their families for long periods of time are often inclined to purchase sexual services. These occupations may include the armed forces, traveling businessmen, truckers, seafarers, and migrant workers. Men working in occupations that are associated with hyper-masculinity or that are sex-segregated may also be more likely to purchase sexual services. In a London study, 20 percent of participants had purchased sex while they were serving in the military. Lack of a relationship or sexual partner does not seem to be a determining factor in men's decision to purchase sexual services. In the study "Men Who Buy Sex", over half of the participants were in a relationship and still purchased sex. Local men provide an even larger customer base for sexual services.²

Without in any way minimizing the fact that the majority of abusers may be men, we need to be more open to the possibility that women can also be abusers. If we deny it, then abuse of boys by women will continue to be trivialized and under-reported. Those who minimize what has happened accentuate a survivor's suffering and make reporting harder. The problem is more complex than we often anticipate. A biblical example is the case of Joseph in Genesis 39. After being sold as a slave by the Ishmaelites to Potiphar, the captain of Pharaoh's guards, 17-year-old Joseph found favor with his master as well as with God. He lived in the house of his Egyptian master and became his attendant. Joseph was handsome and well-built and Potiphar's wife wanted Joseph to come to bed with her. Day after day, she sexually harassed him, even though he refused and pushed her away. Being the one with the power and not getting what she wanted, Potiphar's wife accused him of raping her. As a result, he was put into prison and was left there for several years (before he was released to interpret Pharaoh's dreams). This story portrays what might be considered an unusual case where the wealthy, powerful woman is the exploiter and the vulnerable slave is a young

¹ (Ainsworth, Miles and Taylor, 2016: 153).

² (Farley, Bindel and Golding, 2009).

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man, but there are increasing reports that sexual abuse and exploitation of boys and young men by female teachers, youth leaders, counselors, and tourists may not be as uncommon as we would like to think.

The complexity of the problem of sexual exploitation also needs to include a discussion of those who pay to use children sexually. There are various reasons for sexual exploitation of children. In some settings, the person being sold for sex is under the age of 18 and the purchaser does not realize that that person is a minor. In other cases, the purchaser practices pedophilia and prefers to sexually abuse children. Pedophiles are often characterized by a consistent behavioral pattern: a preference for sex with children, a refined method of securing victims, and sexual fantasies about children. Although generalizations about pedophiles may not be helpful, common behaviors may include an inability to socialize within their own society's standards, a self-identification as child-lovers, difficulty in identifying the gaps between their behavior and normal behavior, and a strong need for visual stimulation.

Perspectives on Prostitution

While the profile of an exploiter varies widely, attitudes towards prostitution appear to have some similarities throughout the world. Societal assumptions often suggest that men are naturally inclined to stronger sexual urges that must be satisfied, while women (apart from those in prostitution) are viewed as more passive and controlled in their sexual behaviors. In our discussions with men in red-light areas, sexual behavior can be segregated into two categories: sex in marriage for comfort and procreation, and sex buying for fun and recreation with friends. Most societies view prostitution negatively as it compromises the treasured virginity and purity of women. Nonetheless, prostitution has often been seen as a "necessary evil", including by those in the church, as it serves to satiate men's excess sexual urges, which, if not satisfied, may cause additional societal or familial problems. These views often result in men who purchase sex being dismissed or let off lightly from punishment on the basis of their need for sexual release, while women who work as prostitutes are viewed as culturally and naturally deviant.

In the West, prostitution appears to be increasingly acceptable. In a London, UK, study by Farley (2009), men shared that after visiting a place where prostitution was actively promoted, such as a red-light area, they were more inclined to seek out prostitution, even if it was illegal. Sixty-five percent of men in this study also believed that the majority of men buy sex, even though the actual number of men who purchase sex may be less. Perhaps this belief that prostitution is common normalizes it and further encourages its use. Views on prostitution are typically understood to be socially constructed and are affected by beliefs about gender relations, familial relations, and attitudes toward minority groups. In another London study, respondents acknowledged that they do think prostitution and paying for sex is wrong but believe it is inevitable.³ The

³ (Coy, Hovarth and Kelly, 2002).

majority of men interviewed expressed feelings of guilt or shame over purchasing sex. Others claim that their use of prostitutes is the result of a sexual addiction. Legalization and increasing tolerance of prostitution seems to be one of the factors that enables men to purchase sex.

Role of Pornography

Pornography does appear to be linked to prostitution.⁴ Research among Cambodian men revealed several connections.⁵ Some men used pornography as a stimulus before seeking a prostitute. Some men used pornography as a way of educating themselves about how to do sex, but because they believed that their wives and partners would not want to do certain sexual techniques, they sought out a prostitute to relieve sexual tension. The Gottman Effect states that the more someone views images, the more disinteresting those images become, which leads to more violent and alternative types of sexual behavior, and might lead someone to seek after other forms of sexual stimulation, such as prostitution.⁶

A number of programs in the United States have focused on enabling men to stop using pornography. Many of these have a Christian focus (e.g. Covenant Eyes). Research conducted with and by these organizations suggests that there is very little difference between those who say they are Christians, and those who do not. Those in Christian leadership are also prone to use pornography.⁷

Having been involved in the MST Project and then GLUE Ministries in Cambodia, we noticed the challenges we had in keeping expatriate men and women volunteers. Although we have not been able to do systematic research on this issue, discussion with some church leaders have led us to think that for some men their struggle with lust, pornography, and shame makes it difficult for them to continue or even start volunteering with us (even though confessing to each other and praying before outreach is part of the ministry). Today's Internet provides an unprecedented opportunity to access pornography. Internet pornography goes beyond the still photographs in magazines of the past. Viewing pornography can alter the brain to produce an addiction; teenage brains are especially vulnerable. This type of addiction, perhaps especially in the church context, often develops in secret.

Disciplines and Services

The exploiter is the ordinary man or woman, not the vile monster and pervasively popularly demonized in current media. The exploiter can be a Christian who is vulnerable to buying sex. If any ordinary person is capable of being an exploiter, then why is there such a gap in current response efforts? Organizations work

⁴ Editor's note: Also see Part 3 of the first volume in this series regarding the connections between pornography and prostitution. Miles and Crawford, *Stopping the Traffick* (Regnum 2014).

⁵ (Davis, Miles and Miller, 2016).

⁶ (Gottman, 2016).

⁷ (Barna, 2016).

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to address the injustice of sexual exploitation disproportionately focus on women and children being exploited. Reaching out to exploiters is rarely a part of the mission of organizations and it appears that the perspective of the exploiter is preferably unheard.

In Cambodia, there are around 50 organizations working under the umbrella of the *Chab Dai* coalition to address sexual exploitation. Only three of these are working to address the "demand" side; one with the police and the law, and the other two with pimps and sex tourists/expatriates in their context. There is a need for further research on the demand for the sex industry, specifically the psychology behind why men pay for sex.

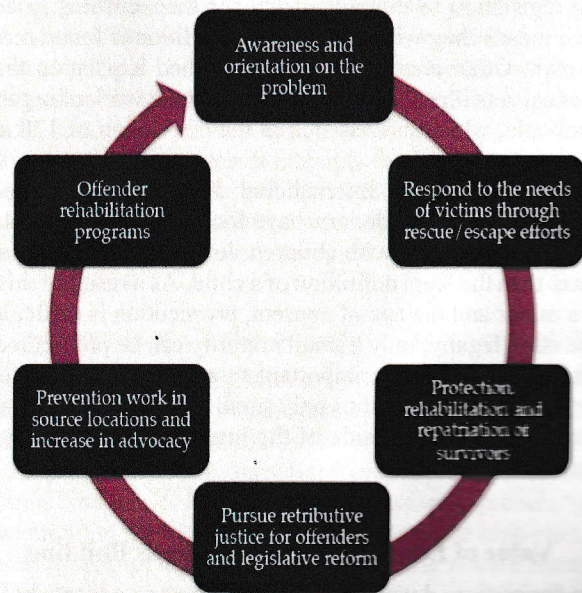


Figure 1: Cycle of response to trafficking⁸

To further explain the gap in response efforts, Figure 1 shows the cycle of response to one example of sexual exploitation, sex trafficking. At the beginning of the cycle, there is an acknowledgement that the awareness of the problem of sex trafficking leads to some type of response. Individuals and organizations combating sexual exploitation respond to the problem by meeting the needs of victims through rescue efforts. Rescued victims and other survivors are offered protection, rehabilitation, and repatriation to their countries of origin. As rehabilitation progresses and the stories of survivors are told, the desire for retributive justice for exploiters increases. Legislative reform is often needed to properly address the injustice. At this point in the cycle, the response must step back and there is a renewed focus on preventing the problem.

⁸ Adapted from Miller, 2013: 73.

... the first volume in this series regarding the ... and prostitution. Miles and Crawford, *Stopping the*

groups begin education programs in source communities and initiate demand reduction techniques. While each of these steps follows an understandable cycle of response, there is a gap in response efforts because those offering services rarely offer rehabilitation or a path to redemption to exploiters. The focus tends to be on retribution and only on child sex offenders, because having sex with children under 12 years in particular is seen as much more serious than buying sex from adults.

Why is there a gap in programs addressing the demand? Many factors are necessary to consider in an effort to address the demand for prostitution, sex trafficking, and sex tourism. An increase in legislation regarding ethical tourism could be helpful in curbing the demand for sex tourism. Some governments are implementing legislation to make it illegal for their citizens to engage in sex tourism, which means they will experience extradition if found out in countries outside their own. Other countries have established legislation that makes the purchase of sexual acts illegal. These laws support the work of organizations like APLE in Cambodia, which has assisted in the conviction of 128 sex offenders from 2003 to October 2011.

Organizations such as the International Justice Mission, due to limited resources, public concern, and donors, have focused their energy on prosecuting those who choose to have sex with children. In some countries, the legal age of consent is lower than the legal definition of a child. As a result of this discrepancy in the age of a minor and the age of consent, prosecution is difficult. In terms of addressing the issue legally, only a small minority can be prosecuted in countries where prostitution is legal. It is important to acknowledge that legal action is expensive and time consuming; thus only small number of cases make it through the legal system. This punitive side of the justice system does not address the root of the problem.

Value of Education and Awareness Building

In addition to legislation, development of programs to address both supply and demand sides of trafficking is necessary. Before comprehensive programs can be developed, the anti-trafficking community needs to seriously consider including outreach to the exploiter in demand reduction. The International Christian Alliance on Prostitution (ICAP) "exists to care for and connect practitioners who serve survivors of commercial sexual exploitation around the world, promoting collaboration, providing encouragement, offering resources and creating environments for worship" and yet ICAP recognizes the need to include those working with the exploiter as speakers during their global conference. How much more comprehensive could response efforts be if other anti-trafficking conferences were intentionally including speakers who work in restorative ways to reduce the demand side of sexual exploitation?

Discussion addressing the demand side of sexual exploitation can lead to useful programming. While more research is needed to determine the effectiveness and appropriateness of various types of interventions to address demand, the following are a few examples. One intervention that may be effective involves providing educational programs that deter men from buying

grams in source communities and initiate demand reduction efforts. Each of these steps follows an understandable cycle of response efforts because those offering services provide a path to redemption to exploiters. The focus tends to be on child sex offenders, because having sex with a child is seen as much more serious than buying sex from an adult.

What programs addressing the demand? Many factors are involved in the effort to address the demand for prostitution, such as an increase in legislation regarding ethical tourism and the demand for sex tourism. Some governments are making it illegal for their citizens to engage in sex tourism. All experience extradition if found out in countries where these laws support the work of organizations like the International Justice Mission, which has assisted in the conviction of 128 sex offenders.

International Justice Mission, due to limited resources, have focused their energy on prosecuting sex offenders with children. In some countries, the legal age of a child is different from the definition of a child. As a result of this discrepancy in the age of consent, prosecution is difficult. In terms of legal action, only a small minority can be prosecuted in countries where it is important to acknowledge that legal action is not always possible. Thus only a small number of cases make it through the justice system does not address the demand side of the justice system.

Education and Awareness Building

Development of programs to address both supply and demand is necessary. Before comprehensive programs can be implemented, the community needs to seriously consider the role of the exploiter in demand reduction. The International Center for the Elimination of Commercial Sexual Exploitation (ICAP) "exists to care for and connect victims of commercial sexual exploitation around the world, providing encouragement, offering resources and support, and yet ICAP recognizes the need to educate the exploiter as speakers during their global tours. Comprehensive response efforts be if other programs intentionally including speakers who work in the demand side of sexual exploitation?"

Development of programs to address both supply and demand is necessary. Before comprehensive programs can be implemented, the community needs to seriously consider the role of the exploiter in demand reduction. The International Center for the Elimination of Commercial Sexual Exploitation (ICAP) "exists to care for and connect victims of commercial sexual exploitation around the world, providing encouragement, offering resources and support, and yet ICAP recognizes the need to educate the exploiter as speakers during their global tours. Comprehensive response efforts be if other programs intentionally including speakers who work in the demand side of sexual exploitation?"

sex, especially with men who have mixed feelings about prostitution, e.g. posters used in Cambodia to discuss the positive and negative aspects of using prostituted people.⁹

If these men were provided with reasons to avoid purchasing sexual services, they may be less inclined to support prostitution. Community programs have developed through neighborhood safety organizations and publication of the names of sex offenders. Other programs to address demand have included faith-based healing and treatment programs, which work with men to address behaviors regarding sexual sin or addiction. Additionally, campaigns have been developed in many countries to promote awareness and prevention of child sex tourism in an effort to prevent sex offenses rather than merely respond to men who have already been arrested for an offense. The solution to demand is not a simple one and requires much more attention and research.

Another approach is to use John Schools, educational interventions, and diversion programs for men arrested for soliciting the services of a prostitute. These schools are several days where "Johns" are exposed to the dangers to themselves and to the prostitutes. It attempts to elicit a compassionate response from sex buyers of the real risks and life cycle of prostitutes so that they do not choose to do it in the future. Limited resources are available to those who are addicted to sex and looking for counseling.

Effectiveness of Circles of Support and Accountability

There is also a model for working with sex offenders after they are released from prison. Circles of Support and Accountability (COSA) is a collaborative model of risk management and restoration. A Mennonite community in Canada conceived the project and it is now used in many communities and in many countries around the world. In this restorative justice approach, "professionally-supported community members volunteer time to assist high-risk, high-need sex offenders as they attempt to integrate to society after release from prison".¹⁰ The COSA model is based on the idea that ex-offenders need housing, employment, and pro-social support in order to successfully re-enter a community. Studies comparing the relative rates of reoffending between COSA Core Members and matched-comparison subjects showed that COSA Core Members had significantly lower rates of any type of reoffending than did the comparison subjects, specifically a 70% reduction in sexual recidivism. A recent study on the Minnesota Department of Corrections COSA showed participation in a COSA significantly reduced sex offense recidivism, lowering the rate of being rearrested by 88%. COSA has given community members a tangible and positive

⁹ "What Men Should Consider", posters. Available at: [<http://gmmiles.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Man-Eg.pdf>] and [<http://gmmiles.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Soldier-Eg.pdf>], [Last accessed: 28th October 2022]. In addition, a Volume II in this series includes a section on demand (*Stopping the Traffick*, 2014).

¹⁰ R.J. Wilson, "Circles of Support & Accountability" Website: [<http://www.robinjwilson.com/circles.shtml>].

way to engage with ex-offenders and provides a balance between accountability and support that results in increased community safety.

Despite the proven success, most practitioners believe that it would not work. In a recent informal survey, contacts of the authors were asked whether or not the COSA program would be successful, and the majority indicated their belief that the recidivism rate would be very high. The view of many is that if one is a pedophile, change is unlikely. But the above research indicates differently. We are not suggesting that people should be put in situations where they could be tempted, but we must question why it is so hard for us to think that change is possible for this group of people. Is it because we find it easier to separate ourselves from them if they continue to be evil, are othered and demonized?

There is an assumption (that is most certainly not challenged in public discourse, especially highlighted in the threads of social media posts on the internet) that pedophiles can never change. This assumption, taken to its natural conclusion, normalizes extraordinary punishments for child sex offenders. For example, in June 2019, Governor Kay Ivey of the US state of Alabama signed a law that put chemical castration into law. The law requires those who are convicted of certain types of sexual offenses, including child sex offenses, to be chemically castrated as a term of their parole. Chemical castration uses a drug to reduce testosterone to affect the sex drive. In 2016, Indonesian President Joko Widodo signed an executive decree allowing judges to hand down a sentence of chemical castration at their discretion to convicted child sex offenders. Russia, Poland, Australia, South Korea, Israel, the UK and other states in the United States have used chemical castration on sex offenders. There is a belief that these severe punishments like chemical castration will deter perpetrators from committing crimes against children and that therefore, in some way, society will be a safer place. Once again, this is an example of a justice measure that does not deal with the root cause of the problem of sexual offending. Does a chemical castration law satiate society's desire for vengeance? AP News published an interview with Steve Hurst, the Alabama representative who introduced the chemical castration bill, who said, "If they're going to mark these children for life, they need to be marked for life."¹¹ Does public outrage justify a total loss of interest in preventative work? In this article, we want to challenge this lack of interest and call on the Christian community to be counter-cultural in its thinking about sex offenders.

Organizational Approaches

Even though there is an increasing amount of research that Christians are vulnerable to losing their sexual integrity, there is limited evidence that understanding and maintaining sexual integrity is being included in training or being screened for during the application process. Christian organizations need to think creatively about child protection and sexuality well before an individual is accepted into ministry. The Child Safety and Protection Network is an example of an inter-agency response to issues of child abuse and safety in Christ

¹¹ <https://apnews.com/article/77cd155339744a9396399ae641096230>.

ers and provides a balance between accountability and increased community safety.

Most practitioners believe that it would not work. When contacts of the authors were asked whether or not it would be successful, and the majority indicated their belief would be very high. The view of many is that if one is a predator, but the above research indicates differently. We believe they should be put in situations where they could be held accountable. Why is it so hard for us to think that change might come? Is it because we find it easier to separate people? Is it because we find it easier to separate people who continue to be evil, are othered and demonized?

What is most certainly not challenged in public discourse is in the threads of social media posts on the topic of change. This assumption, taken to its natural conclusion, is ordinary punishments for child sex offenders. For example, Governor Kay Ivey of the US state of Alabama signed a law into law. The law requires those who were convicted of sexual offenses, including child sex offenders, to be removed from their parole. Chemical castration uses a drug to suppress the sex drive. In 2016, Indonesian President Joko Widodo signed a decree allowing judges to hand down a sentence of chemical castration to convicted child sex offenders. Russia, China, Israel, the UK and other states in the United States have also implemented chemical castration on sex offenders. There is a belief that chemical castration will deter perpetrators from reoffending and that therefore, in some way, society will be safer. This is an example of a justice measure that does not address the problem of sexual offending. Does a chemical castration satisfy our desire for vengeance? AP News published an article about the Alabama representative who introduced the law. He said, "If they're going to mark these children for life." Does public outrage justify a total lack of mercy? In this article, we want to challenge this lack of mercy in our community to be counter-cultural in its thinking.

Organizational Approaches

An increasing amount of research that Christians are not addressing sexual integrity, there is limited evidence that sexual integrity is being included in training and application process. Christian organizations need to address protection and sexuality well before an individual is involved. Child Safety and Protection Network is an example of an organization that addresses issues of child abuse and safety in Christian

missions. Christian missionary agencies and mission-related schools are encouraged to collaborate in developing child safety curriculum, sharing quality resources, and developing effective response and care protocols.

Ultimately, there are limits to screening and training. All you have to do is simply speak with the children's ministry director at a church about their child safety policy and you will be told matter of factly that they conduct background checks on all volunteers. Should that make you feel safe as a parent leaving your child with strangers at church? Conducting background checks for previous sexual convictions would rule out only a very small number of individuals who could pose a risk to children. Many with addictions to child pornography for instance may have never been caught. Those with child pornography addictions do not have a safe place to turn for counseling due to mandatory reporting laws (which is an entirely larger conversation in the discussion of the "demand" side of sexual exploitation).

Often, protecting an organization from sexual exploiters comes after a devastating incident has been uncovered. For example, the Christian organization Kanakuk Kamps responded to sexual misconduct within its organization by developing a comprehensive child safety system to prevent, detect or respond to child abuse in a camp setting. They now empower and equip camping organizations throughout the United States with a training program that includes a demand-focused prevention strategy. Specifically, the Kanakuk Child Protection Plan provides an "Opt Out" opportunity for those struggling with pedophilic tendencies or desire to harm children to opt out of employment or service before harm occurs.¹² This type of innovative approach is needed in other ministry settings. Missionaries and development workers working in high-risk environments where prostitution and erotic massages are cheap and very accessible should take organizational approaches that recognize the vulnerability.

The biblical example of Amnon and Tamar contributes to a holistic theological understanding of reaching out to the exploiter (2 Sam. 13). Amnon "became so obsessed with his sister Tamar that he made himself ill" and his advisor Jonadab asked him why he looked so terrible day after day. Amnon admitted being "in love with Tamar" and, together, Amnon and Jonadab came up with a scenario that gave Amnon access to his virgin half-sister. Amnon pretended to be ill and asked his father, David, to send his sister Tamar to give him something to eat. David sent Tamar to Amnon's house and Amnon went on to rape his sister. This example shows multiple points where intervention could have prevented the sexual exploitation of Tamar. After Amnon raped Tamar, Tamar's brother Absalom told her to stay quiet. Absalom hated Amnon because he had disgraced his sister and went on to order his men to murder Amnon. The lack of properly addressing Amnon's wrongdoing led to intense hatred and death, no *shalom*. Absalom fled and King David longed for both Amnon and Absalom. In this situation, the result was further brokenness and damage to all of those surrounding the exploitation. How do we contribute to the culture of

¹² <https://kanakukchildprotection.org/the-plan/>.

exploitation? How can addressing the demand side of sexual exploitation include a conversation with the community about ways everyone plays a part in the problem, if only indirectly.

In Christian ministries, where there is a lack of any form of discussion or training about sexual exploitation and transparency, it is unlikely that someone who has a developing problem with sexual temptation will receive the assistance needed to prevent sexual exploitation. In conducting training in Cambodia, one participant described to one of the authors about how difficult it had been for him to come to the training, even though it was a general discussion about the issue rather than being described as a session for those with a problem.

Christian programs about sexual integrity tend to be aimed at youth and focus on abstinence and preventing access to pornography. The majority focus on heterosexual youth; talking with adults is usually done in the confines of "marriage preparation" courses, where sexual activity outside of marriage seems improbable.

Clergy abuse has taken center stage in the media, especially with the Catholic Church and more recently with the Southern Baptist Convention in the United States. This may largely be because money is involved; research into clergy abuse has been conducted to try to reduce the number of insurance payouts. Imagine how implementing and researching restorative justice programs with clergy who have been removed from their positions and been punished punitively could benefit practitioners addressing sexual exploitation.

There is room for improvement in the services offered to prevent sexual exploitation and properly address its impact. However, improving current response efforts begins with challenging theological assumptions and beliefs about exploiters.

Christian Theology

The lack of disciplines and services related to the restoration of exploiters hints at the Church's limited theological perspective on this matter. People and organizations working in this field should ask: "What is justice and whose justice should be pursued?" Is it possible practitioners are missing part of God's call and heart for restoration and reconciliation? Jesus came to earth as the example of the perfect human, offering reconciliation to all people. In Jesus' teachings, actions, and death, his followers learned about God's character and how to join him in his work of reconciliation.

Thinking deeply about Jesus' approach to restoration and reconciliation includes his response to both the sexually exploited and the exploiter. He makes the comment regarding the woman caught in adultery in John 8:7: "Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." Although we are unclear about the context of this story and why the man is not being addressed, Jesus' comment to the teachers of the law to throw the first stone is a reminder that we have all sinned and have no right to judge others. This is left to God and, in this story, Jesus says he too will not throw a stone.

The parables included in Luke 15 offer a picture of Jesus seeking and saving the lost as a crucial aspect of his approach to restoration and reconciliation. The

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model of forgiveness includes the prodigal son who went off to a far country and spent the inheritance money on women and wine. The prodigal son could be described as a sex tourist in modern language. Jesus seems to warn his audience that his followers should expect the "older brother" type of response when there is celebration to mark the restoration of the lost in the prodigal son parable. We were challenged to think even deeper about this story of the prodigal son by one reviewer of this chapter. Not only should we expect to receive the "older brother" response to the work of restoring offenders but, unless we are welcoming the returning "prodigal son" and rejoicing with the father, we are excluding ourselves from the party – and thus will be like the son who went into a far country.

The Old Testament example of Tamar and Judah is another example of a sex tourist (Gen. 38). After the death of her husband, and her brother-in-law's refusal to father children for his brother, Tamar was left childless. Her father-in-law, Judah, refused to give her his other son and told her to return to her father's house. After Judah's wife died, he went to another town to shear his sheep. Tamar concealed her identity and dressed as a prostitute, waiting for Judah. Judah did not recognize her and propositioned her for sex. Tamar became pregnant from Judah; and, being a widowed woman, was therefore considered guilty of prostitution. Judah wanted Tamar burned to death, until she sent a message to him notifying him that he was the one who had impregnated her. Judah was confronted with his wrongdoing, recognized his guilt in the situation, and did not sleep with her again. Judah considered Tamar more righteous than himself, and God blessed Tamar with twin sons.

Jesus is often criticized for dining with prostitutes and tax collectors (Mt. 9:10-17, Lk. 19:10, Mt. 21:32). Tax collectors were often linked to prostitution: "tax collectors are connected in Greco-Roman literature to those who trafficked in prostitution and slavery, particularly to brothel keepers and pimps, those most responsible for supplying women and slaves for banquets".¹³ In Luke 19, the fact that Jesus not only noticed Zacchaeus, but also chose to enter his home and share a meal with him suggests another often overlooked group who need to be considered. Jesus went to where Zacchaeus, the chief tax collector, lived and all the people begin to mutter because he went to be the guest of a sinner. Those working with exploiters often experience Christians objecting to their work. Jesus came to help souls find their worth, even exploiters. In Jesus Christ's incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection, he fully identifies with victim and offender. He takes the place of an offender on the cross, including his direct comment to the perpetrator on one side of him, although Jesus is an innocent victim. The Church has a lot to learn from Christ's example of love and his willingness to search for those who are lost.

Those responding to sexual exploitation should question whether their view of justice is as just as they think. Only God is all knowing; humans often have a distorted and limited view of the world. Oftentimes, this leads to perpetuating injustice in the name of justice. One way that this is done is by dehumanizing the

¹³ (Corley, 2002).

exploiters and putting them beyond redemption. Justice includes naming the deed as evil and protecting the innocent but also seeking to forgive and reconcile with the exploiter. Restoration means re-establishing right relationships with God and others. How often do practitioners hold a view of justice that includes the exploiter in a restorative way?

Christian organizations combating sexual exploitation will often use Micah 6:8 as a guiding verse for their work. They tell supporters that the requirement is to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God. In doing so, they overlook the implication of the very meaning of mercy – God not punishing sinners as they deserve. If Christians are supposed to love mercy, what does that mean for offering restoration to exploiters? Revenge is God's (Rom. 12:19) and his followers are given the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18-21). Christians are called to seek and struggle for God's justice, not their own. The sinner – even the sexual exploiter – is justified by the blood of Jesus; this is God's justice.

What about another often-quoted Bible verse by anti-trafficking practitioners? This verse says if anyone causes a little one to stumble it would be better for them to have a millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea (Mt. 18:6). The context of this conversation is Jesus speaking to his disciples (after they ask him which one of them is the greatest) about having the humility of a child to enter the kingdom of heaven. He uses the example of the innocence of childhood as a representation of how those converted must be made like little children to enter heaven. Jesus says he desires his followers to be simple and humble as children. As *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible* points out, "little ones" is not only an indication of age but also of the esteem in the world.¹⁴ Jesus does not want the laying of a stumbling block before anyone and elsewhere he shows his deep love for children. But this verse (Mt. 18:6) must not be the damning evidence justifying the harsh type of justice that forgets the sex offender in the work of reconciliation. The story of Jesus talking to the man being crucified alongside him is one of reconciliation and forgiveness that was completely undeserved.

The seemingly impossible task of loving the exploiter (Mt. 5:43-48) is possible with God. Jesus was the perfect example of what it looks like to sacrifice for sinners (Rom. 5:6-11). Croatian theologian Miroslav Volf put it this way: "we believe rightly in Jesus Christ who unconditionally embraced us, the god-perpetrators, our hearts will be open to receive others, even enemies, and our eyes will be open to see from their perspective."¹⁵ Jesus came to seek and save the lost, even the exploiter. Can we ever offer forgiveness, healing, and hope to these exploiters theologically, if not legally? Are we willing to step back from the seemingly-righteous anger we feel toward those who offend sexually and see God what he sees in someone so "offensive?" Can we see their humanity and brokenness and work with them for restoration?

¹⁴ (Gill, 2016).

¹⁵ (Volf, 1996).

Conclusion: How Do We Face the Challenges Going Forward?

Have you noticed that we like to put sin into a hierarchy telling ourselves that we are not so bad? When we talk to men in the red-light area in Cambodia, some tell us that they would never hurt children, not seeing that the person they are having sex with tonight likely started their career in prostitution as a child. Even Christian leaders, in the safety of our home offices, change the website to something sexy. We may forget that those images were created using real people and are not as untainted as they might seem; they are likely to have involved coercion and pain.

There seems to be a view in the anti-trafficking community that if a ministry only reaches or rescues one girl, woman, or victim, that is enough. Why is this same logic not applied to the exploiters? If only one man was stopped, how many children (or victims in general) could be spared? For example, the documentary film "Nefarious: Merchant of Souls" addresses the sex industry and includes an interview with Ohad Shaul, a man who was involved in trafficking for 11 years. He is now a Christian, is married and, together with his wife, works with vulnerable youth in Sea of Galilee, Israel to prevent them from entering the sex industry. In addition, the community underestimates the value a reformed offender could have, the ways in which this person's insights could improve response and rescue efforts. The inside knowledge of a trafficker, for instance, could lead to better prevention education among those at risk as well as more effective identification of other exploiters.

Another example is former porn producer Donny Pauling. He advertised his pornographic content on Christian web pages and forums and said he had success recruiting some of his greatest number of clients on these sites. His time working in the porn industry led him to his view that it is degrading and damaging to all parties involved. He was drawn to the tolerance message being preached to a church called *XXXChurch*. Author Tim Smith quoted Pauling as saying, "The Christians I grew up around would never talk to a porn producer, much less broadcast it to their listeners [...] but they were doing things in such a different way. They were actually loving people [...] I couldn't help but say, if I was going to be a Christian, this is the kind of Christian I would want to be."¹⁶ Pauling went on to convert to Christianity and left the porn industry. He became a pastor and anti-porn activist.

Sadly, in December 2014, Pauling was arrested on three felony sex charges including statutory rape. In 2015, he pleaded no contest and agreed to a prison sentence; he said he was "motivated by an unnatural or abnormal interest in children" according to his plea. We wonder if there was anyone in his Christian ministry circle who he felt he could approach about his sexual interest in children. This was a man who toured the world using words like sex and porn and addiction, yet it seems he did not have a mechanism for naming or addressing his root sin and brokenness. After his conviction, Christian ministries understandably distanced themselves from him. Our culture likes to assign guilt and shift blame and this impacts Christians living in this culture. His affiliate

¹⁶ (Smith, 2014).

ministries prepared public statements, should they be asked to comment. Do Donny Pauling deserve to serve time for his crimes and to be removed from ministry positions? These questions seem easy to answer; almost a gut reaction will give you the answer. But we are compelled by a deeper question that needs to be asked, beyond the easy assigning of guilt and blame: does Pauling deserve someone to come alongside him to help him find another experience of the healing grace and love of God?

What does the limited response to sexual offenders from Christian groups say about our theological presuppositions? There seems to be an assumption that the exploiter deserves to die or spend their afterlife in hell because a sexual sin ruins a life (a sexual sin is worse on the hierarchy than other offenses). Is being exploited the end of a life? Where is the hope for restoration? This view of the irreversible impact of sexual exploitation seems to be limiting the restoration efforts for victims as well as offenders/exploiters.

In order to thoroughly address issues of prostitution and sex trafficking, the demand for sexual services must also be addressed. There is not a simple fix to such a complex problem with so many individuals involved. Programs to support those working in prostitution or those who have been trafficked have been established, and while these programs may not yet be sufficient for the need, they are more prevalent than programs available to support men and women who exploit others sexually. Through outreach in red-light districts in Thailand and Cambodia, the MST Project and GLUE Ministries seek to understand and support men who frequent these areas. As information about these men has been gathered, there has been more opportunity to discover their needs, to educate them about alternatives, and to provide them support.

As existing literature suggests, it is difficult to label a specific type of person as a sexual exploiter. However, recent research in Thailand and Cambodia reveals some possible trends about men who frequent red-light districts. There are a significant number of men who view prostitution negatively, which means they acknowledge there are concerns. Providing them with information has the potential to be very helpful, and it may leave room for further opportunities to provide additional educational and support programs. While this data provides a foundation, there is still much room for further research and understanding about the best ways to address demand and to provide effective programs for men who purchase sex.

God's justice is holistic and transformational, and his followers are called to join him in his work of reconciliation. People who exploit are created in the image of God, broken and in need of a savior. The solution starts with a Christian's desire to include the exploiter in the response to the problem. Should justice hurt or heal? Is it about retribution or rehabilitation? Where is the place for forgiveness? How can exploiters be challenged to make better choices, and treat people with dignity both practically and theologically? It may be more easily understood theologically than practically, especially in the case of the abuse of children, but seriously considering the restoration of offenders will expose Christians to their own views of the hierarchy of sin and approach to hidden sin. Serious reflection could result in a very transformative view of human nature without God, not to mention the great task God has invited his

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followers to join. Understanding God's compassion for the exploiter will open a world of possibilities for a holistic, wise, and constructive response to sexual exploitation.

Reflection Questions

1. How do you define justice? What is the purpose of justice? Should it be punitive or restorative? In what ways should justice hurt and in what ways should it heal? Describe your understanding of biblical justice and reconciliation.
2. Do you feel that the Church welcomes the sexual offender who is repentant? What does repentance mean? What does it require?
3. Do you think Christian ministries are interested in creating programs to help offenders experience the healing of God's restoration and justice? If not, why? What is needed to do so?
4. After reading the chapter, did you feel any new stirring of the Holy Spirit regarding how you can join in his work of reconciliation? How can you respond in practical ways?

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