

# Julee mcaleer

Sociology, Human Rights



Julee McAleer Javier English 111-4440 8 November, 2015 The Realities of Human Trafficking “ I’d like to tell you the story of these three children, Pranitha, Shaheen, and Anjali. Pranitha’s mother was a woman in prostitution, a prostituted person. She got infected with HIV, and towards the end of her life, when she was in the final stages of AIDS, she could not prostitute, so she sold four-year-old Pranitha to a broker. By the time we got the information, we reached there; Pranitha was already raped by three men. Shaheen’s background I don’t even know. We found her in a railway track, raped by many men, I don’t know how many. But the indications of it on her body were that her intestine was outside her body. And when we took her to the hospital she needed 32 stitches to put back her intestine into her body. We still don’t know who her parents are, who she is. All that we know that hundreds of men had used her brutally. Anjali’s father, a drunkard, sold his child for pornography. ”(Dr. Sunitha Krishnan). These stories, unfortunately, are reality to roughly two million women and children each year. Understanding the cause and effect in human trafficking is essential when working to end it. Dr. Sunitha Krishnan co-founder of Prajwala, or “ eternal flame,” a group in Hyderabad that rescues women and children from human trafficking, discusses how to look at human trafficking through the lenses of cause and effect to get to the real roots of the problem. Generating around thirty two billion dollars annually, human trafficking is the fastest growing criminal activity of today. Dr. Sunitha Krishnan explains many of the issues with this crime in her inspiring TED video called, “ The Fight against Sex Slavery”. There are four sides to the issue; the victims, the perpetrators, the governments, and non-profit organizations which are trying to stop the

epidemic. Dr. Krishnan also speaks about how society can help by becoming more aware of this horrific crime, and help others become more aware of this growing concern. The causes of human trafficking may seem obvious, but there are additional reasons, which may not be so evident. Some of these are economic desperation, coercion by family members, or some girls can be seen as a burden or liability to their family. Numerous women are promised good paying jobs in other countries, or great opportunities in other places. These aren't just poor women; some are women who come from very wealthy homes. They are told of wonderful modeling jobs, or exciting acting careers in other countries. The horrifying reality though, they end up thousands of miles away from their homes, their passports have been taken from them, and they are told they cannot leave till their debt is paid off. This debt is one that is not intended to ever be repaid. There are too many innocent women and children falling victim to this atrocious violation against human rights. A recruiter or pimp as they are called can make close to 250,000 dollars a year per victim. They prey on younger girls because they are easier to oppress and manipulate, but they are not limited to any specific age. The criminals become smarter after every victim they move and every day, in which they get away with this crime, therefore society has to do the same. To every cause there is an effect, and human trafficking has several effects. The first and arguably the most important effect would be the health of the victims. This is both physical and mental health concerns. Many of these victims have to cater to anywhere from eight to thirty men a day. The use of protection is negligible in this industry, leaving the exploited at a very high risk of contracting various sexually-transmitted diseases. More than one

third of these women and children have HIV/AIDS. Besides the diseases they also deal with the violence on a daily occurrence. Many suffer from broken bones, concussions, cigarette burns, sterility, forced abortions, malnourishment, and violent beatings. It does not stop here for most victims; many are forced into using drugs which then lead to drug addictions. Many women experience self-administered abortions or miscarriages since pregnancy is not an option. More than 80% of these women do not see a doctor, go to a medical clinic, or a hospital. If their injuries or diseases win then the unfortunate end for many is death. Not only do they suffer physically, but mentally as well. They are threatened with the lives of their families back home if they do not submit and obey. Every day that they are alive is a day that they live in dire fear. They develop deep psychological disorders in which they will struggle with for the rest of their lives. Many of them become withdrawn or even worse suicidal. The distressing fact is the longer a victim has been enslaved, then the greater their traumatic experience will be. People often do not see past the actual rescues of these women and children. Society does not want to deal with the rehabilitation of these victims, nor do they want the responsibility. It is much easier and quicker to prosecute them for prostitution and identification fraud. A lot of time they are just deported back to their own country to be trafficked again. America has a temporary visa for victims of human trafficking. The issue is there are only 5,000 of these visas allowed every year. In 2010 only 213 of these visas were granted. People, as a society, have PhDs in victimizing the victims. Many individuals want to talk about helping and look as if they are doing their part to help in the fight against human slavery, but

the reality is far from this. Many victims would rather go back to their owners, madams, or pimps than be saved. After being used to being treated like a victim for so long, people begin to lose their self-worth. Victims would rather stay where they are then step out of their comfort zones and seek aid. This is due to the desensitization and normalization of exploitation. Many victims have been forced to internalize their trauma, which then will never allow them to start healing. Society of course wants them to have a life after this horrifying experience, but not a life with the rest of society. Sure they should have normal jobs just not in the same companies or factories as the rest of society they should also be given medical care, but not were normal families receive their care. Victims should be allowed an education and their children as well, but not with other children in normal schools. Victims cannot ever be expected to become part of society when society ostracizes, stigmatizes and isolates them. They have no respite, because society does not allow them to come in. Trafficking of women and children in the globalized world is an act of slavery; which is a humiliation of their human dignity, and a sever threat to their existence. Trafficking of women and children is a social problem which needs arising awareness about its negative impact. It has detrimental and everlasting consequences on all of those affected. Once a person has experienced such a traumatic event, it is hard to break the cycle of dwelling on it. The after effects of trafficking are ones that are consequently going to follow the victim for the rest of their lives. This is where society needs to help the most and support these victims. The crime itself is global; therefore the help and support should be global as well. Dr. Krishnan says it all too well when she states, " I am a practicing

Hindu. I have this deep-rooted belief that my life is a providence by itself, and God has brought me in this world to do what I'm doing, and God will allow me to stay in this world so long as he believes that my mission is not done, and therefore I do believe that the day God believes that my work is done, I'll be killed or die naturally, or whichever way that is possible. "